

Gladstone Community Education program announces spring classes

Spring is coming, and so is the March launch of a variety of fun and affordable recreation classes for youths, seniors, and adults.

Opportunities for youths include Spring Break Soccer and Pole Vault camps, Driver Education, SAT Prep, Ballet, Hip Hop, Guitar, Ukulele, Ballet, Tumbling, Aikido, Tae Kwon Do, Skyhawks sports, and more. A \$75 Driver Education discount is available for students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

“We’d like to see every student in Gladstone engaged in an organized after school activity, whether that’s a Community Education class, a sports team, a library book club, or one of the many clubs and activities available at all levels in Gladstone schools,” said Director of Student and Family Support Lenny Bjornsen. “These fun opportunities help kids build strong connections with mentors, skill mastery, and a plan for their future.”

Adult classes include Cooking with Jack Campbell; Computer classes; Genealogy with Sue LeBlanc; Spanish; Aerobics; Country Dance; Zumba; Tai Chi; Yoga; Guitar; Ukulele; Oil Painting; Card Making; Quilting; Watercolor; Investing for the Future; Medic First Aid/CPR; Small Engine Repair; Wills, Trusts & Estate Planning; Birding; Spring Gardening, and more.

A complete list of program offerings from Gladstone Community Education programs is available at <http://gladstone.k12.or.us/images/Spring-2014.pdf>.

For information about how to register, call Sue Surratt at 503-650-2570.

Family Care grant supports Gladstone families

For families in crisis, navigating the tangled web of support systems can be an impossible challenge. However, thanks to a \$30,000 grant from Family Care, Northwest Family Services will be able to extend the services of their Family Resource Coordinator through the 2014 calendar year.

The innovative program started a year ago, with the goal of building bridges between schools, health care, and social service agencies that serve struggling families. As a navigator, Family Resource Coordinator Ellyn Jeck helps families find the supports they need, and follows up with clients to make sure they connected.

“Sometimes resolving an issue in a time of desperate need can help a family get back on track before the situation worsens,” said Jeck. “That may mean finding transportation support so a parent does not lose her job, or connecting a family with free counseling or health coverage.”

The program, part of the Gladstone Center for Children and Families, serves families with children age 8 and under, part of GCCF’s mission to ensure healthy babies, kindergarten readiness, and school success by grade 3.

“FamilyCare has partnered with the Gladstone Center because we share a vision to improve the health of individuals, families and the greater community,” said Jeff Heatherington, President and CEO of FamilyCare, Inc. “Youngsters who get a healthy start have a better chance of becoming healthy adults. It’s important to invest in our young children so that they can have a healthier future.”

For assistance from the Family Resource Coordinator, contact Ellyn Jeck at 503-496-3945.

Gladstone Center offers story hour, weekly play groups

Children six and under are invited to an after school Story Hour event at the Gladstone Center for Children and Families (GCCF). All children will receive a free book, donated by the Gladstone/Oak Grove Rotary Club.

This event will focus on the stories of Dr. Seuss, including fun activities to build early literacy skills. Story Hour is scheduled for 4:15 p.m. on Thursday, March 6. The GCCF is located at 18905 Portland Avenue, in Gladstone.

“The first five years of life, children’s brains develop quickly,” said GCCF Director Don Brown. “Early exposure to books and language helps them develop their vocabulary, learn listening skills, and build essential pre-literacy skills that will put them on track for kindergarten and learning to read.”

The early childhood center also offers free drop-in play groups for preschoolers age five and under. The groups meet weekly from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. on Mondays in the indoor play area, and weekly from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Thursdays in the covered outdoor play park and indoor play area.

To volunteer, call Susan Trone at 503.496.3939, ext. 306.

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Raising a Reader workshop planned for Thursday at Gladstone Center

Parents of infants, toddlers, and three-year-olds are invited to a free workshop on raising a reader and building the early literacy skills that lead to school success.

“We will discuss techniques and best loved books for every age and stage of development,” said presenter Chelsea Hamilton. “Snuggly infants, busy toddlers, and curious preschool children all need a parent who reads to them so they grow up to love reading.”

The event will take place on Thursday, March 6 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Gladstone Center for Children & Families, located at 18905 Portland Avenue, in Gladstone. Free dinner and childcare are provided. To reserve your place, call Chelsea Hamilton at 503-496-5764.