Our mission is to provide a fun, safe, positive place for all children of the North Country, under the guidance of caring adults.

Reopening During COVID-19

Last March, when we made the difficult decision to close due to COVID concerns, we certainly did not anticipate the long road to reopening ahead. During those six months, we got creative to ensure that we were still able to support our members and families. Our staff kicked off virtual programming, held a car parade, offered live online yoga classes, launched a bike loaner program, distributed food and school supplies, made facility improvements, and more. Of course nothing compared to the feeling when we were able to see our members in person on October 5th, when we reopened for members from Littleton and Lisbon schools. We are so grateful to our families and our community for their patience and support while we continue to navigate these uncharted waters. In the coming months, we look forward to exploring more creative ways to support our members, as they learn remotely.

BGCNC Goes Virtual

Welcome to the Virtual Clubhouse! Our blog, which was open to children and families, regardless of BGCNC affiliation, had over 400 unique visitors. It featured resources for parents, as well as activities led by BGCNC counselors.

We Miss You Parade

On Wednesday, April 29th, the BGCNC staff and volunteers held a “We Miss You Parade” for members and their families. Cars met at the Clubhouse in Lisbon and took to the road, flanked on each end by BGCNC vans. The parade had over 50 turn by turn directions to visit members in Lisbon, Bath, Landaff, Franconia, Bethlehem, and Littleton. The parade was even featured in Boys & Girls Clubs of America’s weekly Feel Good Friday news e-blast!

*SAVE THE DATE*
9th Annual Tee It Up For Kids
Sunday, June 6, 2021
A Message From the Executive Director, Sara Shovlin

In our fifteen years of operation, we have never seen a crisis of this magnitude and scale. As you can see from the stories in this newsletter, it has been a rollercoaster of a year for our Club and families. From facility improvements to thinking about programming differently, our community and team has continued to thrive and adapt to the ever changing circumstances that this pandemic has presented.

Even though our Clubhouse is temporarily closed, we continue to provide critical support to our members and families, who need us most. We know that there are hundreds of families that rely on us for academic support, mentoring, snacks, and a safe place for kids. Our innovative responses include food distributions, virtual homework help, daily “check ins” with our caring Youth Development Professionals, and more.

With this year’s unprecedented challenges, an increasing number of families are experiencing food insecurities, fueling concerns about children’s health and academic success. Fifty two percent of our members do not know where their next meal is coming from. But you can change that. Our year end appeal outlines the need for food services in the North Country.

Friends and supporters of our Club have already generated over $100,000 for the kitchen campaign, bringing us 70% of the way to our fundraising goal.

Recently, I have seen and read a lot about the importance of hope during extremely challenging times. Our Club has always been resilient and I think part of the reason for that is because we have the best role models anyone could ever want—the kids and teens we serve. It is a privilege to work on behalf of such resourceful and inspiring individuals, from whom we can draw needed strength, optimism, and courage.

With your gift today, in any amount, we can bring hope to the children and families of the North Country and help break the cycle of poverty and food insecurity in the North Country.

On behalf of our Club members, staff, and Board, I extend my personal and heartfelt thanks for your contribution that instills hope and makes our impact in the community possible.

Donor Spotlight – Joel and Catherine Bedor

Both Joel and I are North Country natives. While we were growing up in Littleton, we didn’t realize how lucky we were to have our mothers waiting for us with goodies like fresh chocolate chip cookies when we came home from school and lemonade when we came in from playing in the summer. Our backyards were playgrounds for all the neighborhood kids until they reluctantly had to go home for supper. When there were basketball games, football games, and choral events, whether in Town or on the road, our parents had a full car with friends heading to distant towns to support us.

Although we lived out of the area for a few years after we were married, we soon realized that we wanted to return home to our roots. Our son, Bill, enjoyed the same benefits we had, growing up in Littleton.

Fast forward through several business ventures – Bedor and Associates CPAs, Mount Washington Cog Railway, Bretton Woods Ski Area, Mount Washington Hotel, and Adair Country Inn — and finally retirement, we were anxious to find a way to give back, especially to youngsters in the area. Our son, Bill and daughter in law, Tina, brought a unique opportunity for us to consider. They had joined with a group of dedicated North Country folks who had recently formed an organization to meet the needs of children in the area.

The Boys and Girls Club of the North Country was born. From the beginning in 2005, we were excited to financially support this vital project. And a few years ago, we were able to assist BGCNC in purchasing their permanent home.

Over the years, BGCNC has grown dramatically from serving a few students to now serving over 250 youth from several North Country towns. These students are spending after school hours and vacations experiencing multifaceted activities that encourage their interests and growth into healthy, productive adults. The Club has truly become a home away from home for the many students whose parents both work and need the support from a caring, enthusiastic, dedicated staff.

Please join us and the many enthusiastic supporters as we continue to invest in our North Country youth.

Joel & Cathy
Honoring 15 Years of Service

This year, we are celebrating the retirement of one of our most tenured Board members, Kevin O'Brien. Kevin was a founding member of the Boys & Girls Club of the North Country and has served on the Board for fifteen consecutive years! Among one of his greatest accomplishments, in 2010, Kevin rallied the Board of Directors and community supporters around the idea of owning our Club. Through his creative efforts, we purchased our building and grew to a Club with over 250 members!

During his time with BGCNC, Kevin served as Treasurer, Vice Chair, Chairman, head of the Facility and Safety Committee, and was an active member of our Finance Committee. Kevin has helped raise awareness about the importance of a Boys & Girls Club in the North Country and continues to advocate on behalf of our Club. Kevin says, “it’s been my privilege to be involved. Seeing the resurgence of young people returning to our community is rewarding and I will continue to strongly support the Boys & Girls Club of the North Country and their mission.” Thank you, Kevin, for your dedication and commitment to our Club and the children and families of the North Country. We are so grateful for your service!

An Evening With Spirit

In October 2019, Littleton’s own Josh Simonds held a benefit reading for the Boys & Girls Club of the North Country. The Psychic Medium packed The Littleton Opera House with 170 individuals, hoping for a chance to receive a message from a loved one on the other side. Josh’s event raised over $3,000 for the BGCNC’s scholarship fund.

When COVID hit in 2020, Josh got creative and offered to hold another benefit with 100% of the proceeds benefitting the Club. The virtual event was held on October 29 via Zoom Video Conferencing. With 58 attendees, Josh helped raise over $1,100 for our scholarship fund. With this donation, we were able to waive two years worth of membership fees for a BGCNC family in need. Thank you, Josh, for sharing your gift and generosity with our Club.

2020 Tee It Up For Kids

Even in the midst of a pandemic, our golfers turned out in record breaking numbers for the 8th Annual Tee It Up For Kids Golf Tournament! We even had our first ever hole in one! Thanks to everyone who came out for the event to support BGCNC and enjoy a day on the course!

Special thanks to all of our corporate, hole, and prize sponsors for making this event so successful!

Welcoming New Staff

Please join us in welcoming our new Unit Director, Annette! Annette relocated to the North Country in 1979 and considers herself a native. She was born in Rhode Island and is the youngest girl out of eleven children in her family. Needless to say, she has been around children all of her life!

Annette previously worked at The Family Resource Center (FRC) of Coos and Upper Grafton County as a Family Support Specialist. She provided support to families, assisting them in making community connections, building their parenting skills, and offering opportunities to work toward goals they set for themselves. Annette offered caregivers the opportunity to engage in parenting classes and activities, empowering them to work on relationship building, communication, early childhood education, child development and so much more.

In her free time, Annette enjoys outdoor activities, painting, reading and taking on home projects. She loves to spend time with her family, which includes two daughters and two grandchildren. When asked what’s been the highlight of her time with BGCNC, Annette said, “it’s seeing the members faces and smiles when they arrive at the Club. I love to greet them by name and let them know they are valued here! I enjoy helping them process their emotions and helping them come up with a solution to what ever the problem might be.” Welcome to BGCNC, Annette!
Facility Improvements

BGCNC underwent a facelift when we closed to ensure that our Club would be as safe as possible when we reopened. In the photos below, from left to right, you’ll see our new Administrative Hallway, featuring a security door waiting area; our beautiful new floors that extend from the art room to the cafeteria; and one of our sanitation stations, where our members check in, perform health screenings, obtain PPE, and sanitize! Not pictured are internet upgrades, furniture improvements, carpet cleaning, air quality testing, and driveway drainage solutions.

Kitchen Fundraising is Heating Up!

We are over 70% of the way to our fundraising goal for the commercial kitchen but we need your help to reach the finish line! Did you know that 52% of our Club members struggle with hunger and do not know where their next meal will come from? BGCNC is currently the only Boys & Girls Club in the state that does not have a commercial kitchen or the ability to serve hot meals to its members. Please know that by supporting our campaign, you’re helping to break the cycle of poverty and food insecurity in the North Country. Donate today!

Thanks, Local Supporters!

**Staples** — At the start of the school year, Staples held a Back to School drive, where members of the community could purchase supply packs for BGCNC members. Staples delivered hundreds of packs to the Club so that our members were prepared to go back to school. As the year went on, Staples continued to donate cases of water, cleaning supplies, paper, tissues, and office supplies to the Club.

**Friends in Council** — Last winter, BGCNC welcomed the Friends in Council/General Federation of Women’s Club New Hampshire to the Club. In the picture below (pre COVID), Sigrid Salmela, President of Friends in Council, presents Sara Shovlin with a check for $500 in recognition of the Club’s outstanding contribution to our children through mentoring and enrichment programs. The donation will go toward BGCNC’s scholarship fund, ensuring that no child is turned away, regardless of ability to pay. Thank you, FIC!

**Sugar Hill Mask Makers** — When the Sugar Hill Mask Makers heard that we would be reopening this fall, they designed and donated 30 children’s masks to BGCNC to help keep our members healthy. They are beautiful and functional! Thank you for this generous contribution!

How You Can Help

There are several ways you can support the Boys & Girls Club of the North Country.

**INVEST IN BGCNC.** We pride ourselves on being able to offer a no-turnaway policy, which allows us to serve all children of the North Country, especially those who need us most. By donating to the Boys & Girls Club, you can invest in our scholarship program and help us keep up with the cost of our growing numbers. You can also invest your time and talent by becoming a Board member!

**SPREAD THE WORD.** In our community, word of mouth can make all the difference. Help us grow by advocating for us at town meetings, sharing social media posts, and recommending us to friends and family.

We thrive off of **DONATIONS.** Please keep an eye out for: sports equipment, bookshelves, game tables, and arts & craft supplies!

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Jeff Woodward - Chairman • Dayna Flumerfelt - Vice Chair • William Bedor, CPA - Treasurer • Dee McKown - Secretary
Tina Bedor • Stacey Fish • Joe Garrison • Teri Gaston • Lisa Jacobs
Jill Kimball • Kathe Tortorice • Gary Way • Sara Shovlin, Executive Director