



MAERDY NEWSLETTER

CHRISTMAS 2006

Together we can make a difference



Maerdy Mini Starz Showcase

On Thursday 19th October, young people from Maerdy and Penrhys Partnerships performed song and dance routines to a packed audience in the local community centre.

The performers, assisted by Maerdy Communities First & Penrhys Youth Work teams,



rehearsed all summer in preparation for the spectacular Stars in Our Valley Showcase event on 3rd November.



A number of dance acts thrilled the audience with their choreographed moves including Cheryl Lyndsay's Disco Divas, Jiggle with a Wiggle, plus a dance medley by Infectious. Many thanks to all the young people who took part, the Staff and volunteers and the stage management support - Angela, Simon, Gwyn and Alyn from Penrhys Partnership.



We would love to hear from if you are aged 0-25yrs and interested in: performing, writing original music, or dance.

Call Debra Hanney: 01443 755687 or 07786 523988

OPEN PARTNERSHIP MEETING – EVERYONE WELCOME

Maerdy C1st Partnership is holding an Open (public) Meeting on 25th January 2007 at Ferndale Community School at 6 PM.

The Communities First Team and Partners will be on hand to give updates on all the projects and activities.

Owen Davies from Hyder Consultants will be providing an update about potential developments on Maerdy Colliery Site.



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M.A.P.

Aged 16–25?

Turn to Page 5 and find out about the **Maerdy Advocacy Project**

PLAYSCHEME

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you'll find the dates, times and venues for **EXCITING SUMMER FUN!**

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TANG SOO DO

The latest on **MAERDY'S MARTIAL ARTS CLASS**



COMMUNITIES IST & KIDS'R'US PLAY SCHEME



A total of 12 days play provision has been delivered during the summer and the October half term holidays. A band of 18 volunteers and local play workers engaged over 183 young people, and helped the children make pizza and fresh fruit smoothies, print t-shirts, make a garden mural, build their own zip line and garden hammock, plant flowers, undertook rehearsals for Stars In Our Valley and more.



The young people reported that they "... made friends" ... "learnt to dance and sing" ... "felt more confident" ... "made a zip line" ... "found a boyfriend" and "I don't have so many butterflies in my stomach". Well Done to all those volunteers who gave their time to support these activities.



CHILDREN IN NEED

Fundraising night held during half term playscheme

A TOTAL OF £305.37 WAS RAISED ON THE NIGHT

Activities included: Selling Slaves, Face painting, Pin a bandage on Pudsey and Waxing Male Staff

A good time was had by all

Many thanks to Amy Blaney for taking the lead on this highly successful fundraising night!

WELL DONE EVERYONE!



Operation Christmas Child: Shoe Box Appeal

The appeal has gone ahead again this year; over 100 boxes are ready for collection at Seion Chapel. The residents of Maerdy Court have donated twenty of these.

Thank you to all who have contributed so bringing joy to children who have virtually nothing! A special thank you to Nova Williams who has replaced Sian John as the appeal co-ordinator.



Mrs Susan Belcher
Maerdy Junior School

NEW HEADS

We wish to welcome our two new head teachers: Mrs Susan Belcher at Maerdy Junior School and Mrs Janet Phillips at Maerdy Infant School. Both Mrs Belcher and Mrs Phillips were deputy heads at their respective schools.

We are sure that they will do a first class job and provide a sound education for our children.



Mrs Janet Phillips
Maerdy Infants School

Bryn Jones

(Chair of Governors Maerdy Junior and infant Schools.)

NEW COMMUNITIES FIRST WORKER... Well sort of!



The Welsh Assembly Government has agreed additional funding to enable Communities First Maerdy to employ a development worker to support the existing full-time team.

There were 36 applications for the new post and five people were invited to interview.

We are very pleased to announce that Kristen Jones has been appointed to the post. Kristen was previously employed as Admin Support worker. The post of admin support worker will be filled in the New Year.

ALL SAINTS CHURCH

Thursday 21st Dec at 7pm
Community Carol Service

Featuring Maerdy Junior School,
Teify House Singers and All Saints MU

Christmas Eve at 9.30pm
Eucharist Service

Sunday 31st Dec at 9.30am
Eucharist Service

Notices will be made available for any
further services

SEION CHAPEL MAERDY

Come and join our celebrations

Tuesday 12th Dec at 6pm

"A Night to Remember"

The Story of Christmas

presented by

Tuesday Junior Nighters

Sunday 17th December at 5.30pm

Traditional Carol Service

Sunday Christmas Eve at 11am

Morning Worship

Christmas Day at 10am

"It's a Very Special Day"

COUNCILLOR'S SURGERIES

Councillor Kevin Williams holds regular surgeries for the residents of Maerdy Surgeries are held in Teify House at 6.pm on the following dates: -

Thursday 14th December 2006 • Thursday 18th January 2007 • Thursday 15th February 2007



TRAINING, JOBS & BUSINESS



FREEPHONE 0800 328

Want 2 Work support is available to Maerdy residents who are in receipt of:

- * Incapacity Benefit
- * Disability Living Allowance
- * Severe Disability Allowance
- * Income Support
- * or those who receive no benefits.

If you Want 2 Work, Want 2 Train, Want 2 Volunteer or just Want 2 Gain Confidence and new skills drop in and see your Advisers Ann and Alison at

Tenants & Residents	(The Base) 9 Maes y Rhedyn	Tuesday	10am to 12 pm
Maerdy C1st First Office	Teify House	Tuesday	1 pm to 3 pm
Want 2 Work Bus	Highfield (Cemetery)	Thursday	10 am to 12 pm
Want 2 Work Bus	Maerdy Road Flats	Thursday	1 pm to 3 pm



toogoodtowaste



People on a very low income & struggling financially may qualify to receive free furniture from toogoodtowaste. We are currently working with BBC's Children in Need to provide 16-18 year-olds who live alone and do not qualify for financial support, free furniture. The charity is now joining forces with community groups, housing associations and organisations in the area to fund free furniture for individuals and families of all ages struggling to make ends meet.

For more information about toogoodtowaste or its services contact its customer service team on 01443 7336

toogoodtowaste . . . working *with* the community *for* the community!

Training Schedule – 2007

Cache Level 2 In Playwork:

This 18 session course starts Monday 8th January at Teify House. Sessions run from 6.00-8.30pm. The course will aid anyone wishing to undertake work within a play scheme environment.

Working with Primary School Children:

This is an 8-10 week course and is aimed at families and volunteers who wish to learn appropriate skills for working with children. Learn to plan and develop activities for your child's development and about Health and Safety issues.



TRAINING, JOBS & BUSINESS

Maerdy Advocacy Project (MAP)

The MAP project has engaged over 71 young people aged 16-25 who need support in job search, training or general support, and advice.

The MAP advisors consist of Maerdy Communities First, RCT Youth Offending Team, Rhondda Housing Association, and Want2Work who are available for information & advice each Thursday 1-4pm at Teify House.

Activities include form filling, creating your CV, accessing computers, training courses to build skills and personal advice are delivered by friendly supportive staff.

Training: OCN Woodwork



Over the past four Mondays some of the MAP group have been working towards an accredited OCN in Woodwork with Groundwork and Youth Offending Team.



They have built bird boxes for our Enviroquest Day,

built a bridge near Bwlifa Farm in Gelli and are now in the process of making stools using a variety of tools and techniques.

If you are 16-25yrs and would like support then come along on Thursday from 1pm for a chat and to meet the group.



Alternatively call Debra on 07786 523988, or Allison on 07795 391697.



Do You Recognise this Lady?

She is Angela Gee formally Angela Knight.

Mr & Mrs Gee are the new managers of the Christian Book-Shop in Wrexham, opened by the Evangelical Movement of Wales this month.

Angela is the sister of Cheryl Evans and the daughter of Edward Knight (Totty) both of Pentre Road.

Best wishes to them from friends and family in Maerdy



A Christmas Story



A long, long time ago in Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph were patiently waiting for their baby, 'Jesus' to be born. In those days, our world was a very different place! The oceans were full of brightly coloured fish waiting to be caught; animals roamed in the wild and everyone respected nature and its precious gifts.

Back then the Holly Tree was not as we know it today - then it had smooth, soft leaves and beautiful, juicy white berries - and it was a very pretty tree indeed!

Mary and Joseph had Baby Jesus and were visited by three wise men.

The wise men brought gifts to the newborn, and they were supposed to go back to evil King Herod and tell him where the new baby King was. However - that night, an Angel visited the wise men and they all saw the vision. In the dream, the Angel warned them not to go back and tell Herod, the Angel proclaimed that the little baby was the Son of God and need their help to survive, so they took a different route home to escape King Herod's evil clutch. At the same time Joseph, was warned to get out of Israel with his family and to hide, which he did.

King Herod was furious when he found out that the Wise Men had escaped without telling him where the baby was. In retaliation, he ordered that all the newborn baby boys in Bethlehem be killed. In the meantime, Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus were travelling to Egypt. But Herod's soldiers had seen them and began to follow them! Joseph saw the soldiers were coming so took his family and escaped into a dense wood of Holly Trees. However, the soldiers saw them and gave chase.

The Holly Trees had other ideas! Soon after the Holy family had passed by, each Holly Tree curled up its leaves to make sharp prickles and squeezed together into a dense mass so the soldiers could not get through!

The soldiers tried to get through the holly with its now prickly leaves and all they did was cut themselves and bleed. Their blood fell onto the white berries of the holly and turned them red. Eventually the soldiers gave up and Jesus and his family were safe in Egypt.

God said that the Holly should keep its' prickly leaves and red berries in memory of that day and as a reward for saving Jesus, would never lose it's leaves.

That is why we have the holly we know today and why we use holly to decorate our houses at Christmas. In memory of how it guarded Mary, Joseph and the little baby Jesus.

Story Contributed by Clarry Godfrey



ENVIROQUEST November 2006

The Enviro Quest day was planned to raise awareness of the Cydcoed project in the local community, to get the community involved with environmental issues and to take ownership of the project. Over 52 people participated on the day

Organisations on hand included; Ground Work Trust, Keep Wales Tidy, Forestry Commission, South Wales Police, Youth Offending Team, School Cluster Worker, Duke of Edinburgh, Community Safety Partnership, St. John Ambulance, Clydach Walking Group, Clydach

Communities First and RCT Sports Development.



Activities included: River Dipping, Forestry Conservation Work, Brushing, Bird Box Building and a Litter Pick.

Other Activity days are planned for 11th April and 8th August 2007

CHRISTMAS COFFEE MORNING



MAERDY COMMUNITIES FIRST is holding a Christmas Coffee morning on Wednesday December 13th from 10am in Teify House

FREE FREE FREE - ALL ARE WELCOME

ST. Dwynwen Day Tea Dance

Ferndale Community School are holding a

TEA DANCE

on Thursday 25th January in School Hall

The theme this time is ST. DWYNWEN the Welsh St Valentine

If you would like to attend, please call Communities First for more details - 755687

WEB SITE

www.maerdycommunitiesfirst.co.uk

The website is now updated and live - have a look!

If you belong to a group or organisation and would like to include your contact details or current events please get in touch with the office 755687.

Book Club THE READING ROOM

Starting 15th January, in Teify House

Come along - meet new people who share an interest in books

MAERDY COMMUNITY FETE

SATURDAY, 14th JULY 2007

GET INVOLVED

PLANNING MEETING

30th JANUARY 2007

Police Column

MERRY CHRISTMAS

from
CPSO LEE CLARKE, PC GAVIN DAVID
and Sgnt GARY BLACK

From Late January 2007, CPSO Lee Clarke will be based full time in Maerdy.



PACT meeting

PACT Meetings are held on the first Monday of each month at 6pm. If you have any issues that you wish to raise, please look out for the posters giving details of venues and come along to the meetings.

MAERDY TANG SOO DO

at Maerdy Community Centre

Mondays & Wednesdays

Class times:

Tigers: ages 4-6 from 6:30 – 7:00 pm

Dragons: age 6-12 from 6:30 – 7:30

Adults: 7:30 – 8:30



CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

Advice available
every Thursday
from 4pm
in Teify House

A special thank you to Celia Murphy for this contribution:

Christmas is always special but childhood memories of my Christmases have always been a joy to me. I was lucky to have a close and loving family who enjoyed spending Christmas together. My earliest memories were the smells of cooking in the bakery owned by my Grandparents. Christmas morning when we had opened our presents we all went down to Bristol House to see them. They didn't have a lot of time to make a fuss of us because it was a very busy day. These were the days when not many people had cookers, but had ranges with open fires and an oven to the side of them, and so they weren't able to cook their Turkeys and their Christmas Cakes. Eating poultry was a special treat, and not the everyday meal it is now. Early in the morning the turkeys would start arriving, obviously to big for their small ovens but for the huge bread ovens not a problem at all. We would put a raffle ticket on the turkey with a skewer and give the owner of the bird the counterfoil, I think there were probably more than one person who went home with the wrong turkey that day. The Christmas cakes would have been brought in the week before and the smells from the bakery were mouth watering. I remember the excitement of the children with their parents and the special feeling of goodwill, with everyone wishing each other Merry Christmas.

At home my parents had the shop and apart from the everyday food items, they sold Christmas selection boxes, sweet shops, sugar mice and all the chocolates you could wish for. The customers would put sweets away weeks in advance of the big day and on Christmas eve many a slightly tipsy man would come in to buy his wife a big box of Cadbury's Dairy Milk. I know when we look back with nostalgia everything seems better, but when I think of Christmases past, I think the simplicity of them is what made them so special.

Thanks to all the contributors for this edition – if you would like to get involved with the Communication Group please contact KRISTEN in the Communities First office on 755687

