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YONKERS RISING

PRESORTED
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
White Plains, NY
Permit #7164

Vol 108 Number 15

www.RisingMediaGroup.com

Friday, April 12, 2013

Mayor Spano Honors Five Volunteers From the Community



From left, Eva Jozsef, Councilman Michael Sabatino, Wilma Allen, Gloria Jordan, Mayor Mike Spano, Maria Ganzi, Councilman Mike Breen, Majority Leader Wilson Terrero, Jeanette Gilbert and Dora Mejicovsky. Photo by Donna Davis.

Five local volunteers who donate their time with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Westchester were recently honored by Mayor Mike Spano, in a celebration sponsored by The Volunteer Center of United Way. All of the awarded honorees contribute to Yonkers non-profit organizations, assisting those in the local community.

Participating in the first Mayor's Day of

and Community Service, Spano joined mayors across the country in spotlighting the impact of national service and thanking those who serve in their communities.

"Today we honor those unsung heroes of Yonkers – the volunteers who give of themselves to their communities each and every day to our children, seniors, neighborhoods and civic issues," he said. "It is apparent these

The Science Barge Reawakens This Weekend



The Science Barge, on the Yonkers waterfront.

By Molly Lindsay

Come out of winter hibernation and enjoy a uniquely fun experience when the Science Barge, a sustainable urban farm and environmental education center, reopens for its fifth year on the waterfront in downtown Yonkers, on Saturday, April 13.

At this year's opening, activities will include:

- Mayor Mike Spano welcoming guests on

board for the ribbon-cutting at 2 p.m.

- Super-high kite-flying with kite expert and nationally recognized boomeranger "Flyin'" Brian Cavallaro
- Live music from the Nepperhan Community Center Drum Corps
- Students of the India Center of Westchester performing an Indian classical dance

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MIT Students Give the Science Barge a Makeover



Natasha Gunther, Kelsey Seto, and Nathan Landman help install a new hydroponic growing system



The crew poses in front of the Science Barge. Front, left to right: Science Barge Director Bob Walters, Kathy Young, Natzem Lima, Kristen Cotner, Kelsey Seto, Natasha Gunther, and Jennifer Kao. Rear, left to right: Emele Uka and Nathan Landman

By: Molly Lindsay

When you picture a typical college spring break, it probably doesn't include installing hydroponic growing systems, scrubbing a greenhouse or capturing glass eels, but for eight MIT students, working on the Science Barge was a fun and rewarding way to spend their week off.

The students worked from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. from March 24 to 29, prepping the Sci-

ence Barge, a floating urban farm docked on the Hudson in downtown Yonkers, for its upcoming season.

"No task was too gritty for these students. There was a lot of scrubbing and technical work," said Science Barge Director Bob Walters.

Emele Uka, a freshman at the Massachu-

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The Nepperhan Community Drum Band once again welcomes visitors to board the Science Barge at its season opening.



Meena Chen and Deviki Arora, students of Nalini Rau at the India Center of Westchester in Elmsford, will perform a short piece in the ancient Indian classical dance form Bharatha Natyam in the hydroponic greenhouse at the Science Barge season opening event.

The Science Barge

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- Hunting for glass eels
- Build-a-boat
- Riding the energy bike
- Build-your-own take-home hydroponic garden
- Light refreshments
- Free walk-on tours will be held from 2 to 6 p.m.

Each year the Science Barge grows an abundance of fresh produce for local food pantries, using solar, wind energy and biofuels, and rainwater irrigation. The only fully-functioning demonstration of renewable-energy-supported food production in New York, the Science Barge provides educational programs for young people of all ages and hosts more than 8,000 visitors an-

nually. The Science Barge is funded by grants from New York Power Authority, Con Edison, City of Yonkers, Domino Sugar, and the USDA.

Support Science Literacy at the Barge Book Fair

Prepare to have a blast as the Science Barge hosts its first book fair Saturday, April 13 and Sunday, April 14 at Barnes & Noble, 2614 Central Ave., Yonkers. Join barge educator Jennifer Sloan from noon to 4 p.m. Sunday to pot hydroponic basil, power light bulbs on the Energy Bike, and play with composting red wiggler worms.

Present a voucher and a percentage of sales from any purchase will go to the Science Barge. You can also shop online at bn.com/bookfair between April 14 and 19 using Bookfair ID 11058609.

Enter for a chance to win prizes through the book fair contest. Participants with a purchase of \$100 or

more will be eligible to receive a Nook HD or a two-hour venue rental for a Science Barge party. Select prizes will be raffled off to supporters who spend \$30 or more.

For details, visit www.groundworkhv.org/2013/03/bookfaircontest.

It's a great opportunity to get your gardening books for the upcoming season, snag an eco-friendly gift for Earth Day, or simply have coffee at the Barnes & Noble café—all while advocating for science literacy and raising money for a great, green cause! All ages are encouraged to attend.

The Science Barge is a project of Groundwork Hudson Valley. It is located at 99 Dock St.

Molly Lindsay is a Yonkers resident and intern at Groundwork Hudson Valley. She is a recent graduate of SUNY New Paltz and is passionate about sustainable agriculture.

MIT Students

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sets Institute of Technology and a Mt. Vernon native, volunteered on the Science Barge during high school. He organized the five-day volunteer trip through the Alternative Spring Break Program at MIT.

"I was glad that I could bring a group of MIT students to the place that offered me countless memories," he said.

The MIT program aims to help communities by offering an opportunity for students to participate in community service trips during school breaks.

The students installed four hydroponic systems within the greenhouse. The nutrient film technique is the quickest hydroponic method on the barge and was donated by American Hydroponics. It is used to grow greens such as lettuce, basil and bok choy. The other installations include the Verti-Gro, which holds 48 plants in a 1-foot-by-3-foot space, the Ebb and Flow aquaponics system, and the Beto Bucket – used to produce vine crops such as tomatoes and peas.

They also helped repair the barge's wetland, the Living Machine.

"This doesn't feel like mindless volunteering because of the cause. It has been a great opportunity for me to learn more about urban agriculture, which is something I want to see more often in cities in the future," said MIT sophomore Nathan Landman.

The week was a mix of work and fun as the students spent time off exploring New York City and downtown Yonkers. They supported Yonkers businesses by hitting up the local eateries for meals. On the list of favorites were Wholesome Goodness, Khangri Japanese and Giovanni's Pizza.

To cap off the week, Walters demonstrated how to hunt for baby glass eels. The group fished out seven tiny eels using a mop that mimics their natural habitat. The eels never fail to amaze as their beating hearts and inner workings are visible through their transparent skin.

Each student was presented a framed 2013 Science Barge Crew Certificate, which Walters hopes they will hang next to their MIT diploma. "We're sad to see them go, but they had such a great time. I'd have them back in a heartbeat," he said.

The Science Barge, a sustainable urban farm and environmental education center docked along Yonkers' waterfront, is funded by grants from New York Power Authority, Con Edison, City of Yonkers, Domino Sugar, and the USDA. Each year the Barge grows an abundance of fresh produce for local food pantries, using solar, wind energy and biofuels, and rainwater irrigation.

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Yonkers Rising - USPS Permit #7164
is published weekly by Rising Media
Group, LLC 25 Warburton Ave., Yonkers,
N.Y. 10701

Periodicals Postage Paid • Yonkers, N.Y.
POSTMASTER
Send address changes to:
Rising Media Group, LLC,
25 Warburton Ave., Yonkers, N.Y. 10701