

Non-profit Hoping for \$125,000 Anti-drug Addiction Grant *Hopes to dole it out to others, build community*

By Keith Whitcomb Jr.

BENNINGTON >> A local nonprofit hopes to be awarded a grant that will let it dole out \$75,000 per year over the next five — and possibly 10 — years to projects aimed at preventing drug addiction.

The Alliance for Community Transformation has applied for a Drug Free Community Grant from the Office of National Drug Control Policy, said Cindy Krautheim, volunteer media coordinator for ACT. The group expects to hear whether or not the grant was awarded by August.

ACT is asking for \$125,000. Of that, \$50,000 will go toward the hiring of a full-time coordinator with the rest being awarded to local programs. Krautheim said the grant runs for five years, and can be applied for a second time for another five.

The money can be applied to a variety of things related to preventing drug addiction in the community, said Krautheim. ACT is working with the Southshire Substance Abuse Coalition on the application and together they would award grant money to applicants.

For example, Krautheim said, if one of the local schools, or another organization were running an after-school program they might have some kids who could participate because they had no way of getting home afterward. Perhaps they live in Shaftsbury, or Pownal, and their parents' schedules don't allow for the needed transportation. Krautheim said the grant money could be used to pay Green Mountain Express, possibly, to provide that.

Krautheim said that between ACT and the Southshire Substance Abuse Coalition, just about all sectors of the community are involved, those being local and state government, schools, businesses, the media, faith groups, young people, parents, law enforcement, youth services, volunteers, and health care.

ACT is being assisted by HAYC3, a non-profit based in Hoosick Falls, N.Y., which was awarded a mentoring grant to aid other coalitions in reducing drug use in their communities. In April, ACT, along with other members of the Bennington community, toured the Hoosick Falls Armory where HAYC3 operates and runs its community building initiatives. The New York group showed the visitors how they can work to build coalitions and help other nonprofits with everything from finding volunteers to writing press releases.

On May 28, at 6 p.m., the local coalition will meet at the Unitarian Universalist meeting house at 108 School Street to discuss the grant application. The public is welcome to attend. For more information, people are asked to contact ACT Director Kiah Morris, at 802-442-0713 ext. 9 or email at kmorris@bcrcvt.org.