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# Quick lessons in teamwork are about to pay off

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**MERIDEN** — They met at a rock-climbing exercise at the Meriden YMCA camp in October, and got a fast lesson in teamwork.

Today, the eight members of Leadership Greater Meriden are pulling together for their class project, a bash titled “With a Little Help from Our Friends.”

The leadership class has organized planned and promoted — and some members will even perform in — a benefit concert on March 22 from 7 to 10 p.m. at Lincoln Middle School.

“We’re trying to use everything we learned as a group to make up a team,” Daisy Olivo said. “We’re of one mind to make something happen.”

The group came up with the idea to draw upon the guitar talents of George Filippides and vocal ability of fellow member Marissa Cardona.

“We were toying around with a couple of ideas. Some people remembered a project I did last year at Ben Franklin School,” Filippides said. “It was a big success.”

Filippides belongs to Number Nine, an eight-member Beatles-tribute band that will play for two hours. The opening act, Los Tres Cardonas, with special guest Edwin Rios, will perform Latin folk music from 7 to 8 p.m.

Proceeds from the event will go to support Noah’s Ark of Hope, Operation Pantry, Rick Carlson Foundation and Birthright.

Leadership Greater Meriden is in its eighth year and consists of presentations, panel discussions and workshops designed to develop and bolster leadership skills. The program is open to people in the business, government, academic and nonprofit sectors.

To complement the training, the class chooses a project that uses the new skills, said Sean Moore, president of the Greater Meriden Chamber of Commerce, which runs the program. Some past class projects included landscaping, a Bicentennial poster and a template for a community television program.

“This is a pretty aggressive project, considering these folks didn’t even know each other in October,” Moore said. “They jelled very quickly and as there was musical talent in the leadership class, it was anatural choice.” Members Dawn Reynolds and Filippides made fliers and tickets . Other members, including Olivo, Pernilla Nyberg and Dean Stone, were responsible for finding sponsors and promotions. Giancarlo Di Roma had contacts in the middle school and helped secure the venue. And member Ty Bongiovanni will emcee the event. Tickets are going well, as are sponsorships and the group is grateful for the response and support it’s gotten so far, Filippides said. The group is also pleased it can use the middle school auditorium, which is well-suited for concerts, Moore said. Filippides participation in the Parent Leadership Training Institute run by the city’s Children First Initiative led him to perform a similar concert last year. He is now an advocate for both programs. “It’s been an awesome experience,” Filippides said of Leadership Greater Meriden. “Look at the good that’s come about from it. For someone who wants community involvement, that class is a must.

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