



Newsletter

April 2008

Culture of Poverty Awareness Training

The *Community Impact Coalition* is bringing the Culture of Poverty to Alexandria on April 28, 2008. This session is based upon the work of Dr. Rudy Payne and others. Dr Payne is an educator who has done extensive research on ways to understand how people in poverty, middle class, and wealth differ in how they live, learn, and survive.

The goal of this presentation is to provide a better understanding of children and families of poverty. This goal is based on the belief that, despite the obstacles poverty can create, there are specific strategies to help overcome them.

People from Poverty often are not given the same chance for employment, academic, and social success as those from middle class. Our workplace and schools are typically based upon Middle-class norms and values. The middle-class service

provider with families from poverty often expect them to behave in middle-class ways and are perplexed when they do not. "Hidden Rules" exist in economic classes. When those in positions of power come from a class with rules different from those with whom they work, understanding and communication can break down. Children from poverty often come to school lacking the resources that are crucial for their academic success.

This awareness session is offered from 9:00 a.m. to Noon, or 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. on April 28, 2007. It will be held in the Alexandria Technical College auditorium, room 743A. Cost is \$5.00.

For more information on the sessions and/or to register, please call the United Way office at 320-763-4840 or email us at united-3@rea-alp.com.

Activities & Events Calendar

Free Tax Preparation Clinics

Thursdays, Noon to 8:00 p.m.
Saturdays, Noon to 4:00 p.m.
Marian Building, 700 Cedar Street

United Way Allocations

Douglas County: April 7th & 8th
First Congregational Church, Alexandria

Pope County: April 14th
Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Glenwood

8th Annual UW Golf Classic

Geneva Golf Club, June 16

Partner Agency Events:

[Young People's Place Spaghetti Supper](#), April 18th
Eagles Club - Alexandria

WINGS Family Supportive Services

1st Annual Dinner & Silent Auction
May 17th - Eagles Club, Alexandria

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Update



The program continues to grow beyond our expectations as there are currently 997 Douglas County children and 340 Pope County children who are receiving their

very own book in the mail each and every month until age 5.

These numbers are nearing what was anticipated for the second year. This is exciting when you take into account the program was introduced in September 2007!

Just as the value of this program is recognized throughout the community, many service organizations and businesses have

been providing financial support, including:

Douglas County:

- Alexandria Jaycees (Jingle Bells) - \$1,200
- Alexandria Rotary - \$300
- Alex Technical College - \$100
- Knights of Columbus #4718 - \$150
- Newcomer's Club - \$100
- Tastefully Simple - \$34,000
- Women's Club of Alexandria - \$150

Pope County:

- Glenwood Rotary - \$900 annually
- Minnewaska Jaycees - \$300
- Starbuck Study Club - \$30

Thanks to everyone who is helping to make a difference in the lives of so many children, not only today but in the years to come.

For more information or to sponsor one or more children, please contact our office at 376-4840.

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Douglas County Building Connections

Douglas County Building Connections performance in the area of child development is one to be acknowledged. This program is an asset to our community as it addresses the ever increasing need to support our children and youth. *Douglas County Building Connections* is an Early Childhood Initiative serving families with children ages birth to 5 years old in Douglas County that supports forming stronger connections between families, communities, businesses, and governing bodies.

United Way of Douglas and Pope Counties recently completed a community survey that indicated nurturing children and youth was a high priority of our community. Children and youth are valued by our community, yet many of these children are not afforded the same opportunities as many of their peers. *Douglas County Building Connections* recognizes the diversity of our community and strives to provide all children with increased access to opportunities and experiences. Most recently *Douglas County Building Connections* partnered with numerous community groups to develop activities in celebration of The Week of the Young Child, April 13 thru 19. Please see the list of local activities below. If you have young children or grandchildren, you will want to attend one or more of these events. They all promise to be a lot of fun.

Part of our mission at United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties is to support efforts within our local communities that improve people's lives. Nurturing children and youth is an important piece of that mission and we support *Douglas County Building Connections* as it understands that investing in our children and youth will have a positive impact on the community for years to come.

For more information on *Douglas County Building Connections* log onto <http://www.buildingconnectionseci.org/>



Sunday, April 13 **Family concert** at Alex Tech College Auditorium
 2:30 p.m. Info booths, kid's games & activities
 3:00 p.m. Jungle Sam & his Safari Band Concert (*Free Book for every child*)
 \$1.00 per family suggested donation

Monday, April 14 **Continental breakfast**
 Watch for details at your EC Program

Tuesday, April 15 **The Patient Parent: Training at Alex Tech College Auditorium**
 Resources & Tips for patient parenting and childcare
 Christine Hierlmaier Nelson – Presenter

6:30 p.m. **Book signing**
 7 to 8:30 pm **Presentation**
 FREE event! All parents, grandparents, providers welcome

Wednesday, April 16 **Family Night**
 Stay home and unplug the TV, video games, and computers
 Have a family meal, play a game, read a book

Thursday April 17 **Story Hour at Douglas County Library**
 10:30 a.m. No registration needed
 Call 762-3014 with questions

Friday April 18 - **Family Dance at Lakes Area Recreation**
 6 to 7:30 p.m. Wolf's Rochhaus & Preschool playground in the gym
 FREE Admission

Saturday April 19 **Arty Pants at the Viking Plaza Mall**
 10 to Noon Art activities to make with your child
 Children's art displayed throughout the mall

UW Hosts Senior College Courses on Poverty

United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties hosted three sessions focused on poverty during the Senior College Series at Alexandria Technical College. Over 80 local residents were actively involved in presentations, panel discussions and small group breakout meetings over the three week period in March. Each session had a specific focus.

On March 6, Pat Anderson, Manager of Education Services for Lakes Country Services Cooperative presented information on gaining a better understanding of children and families from poverty. She shared that people in poverty have many obstacles not faced by the middle class in the areas of employment, education and social success. Despite these obstacles, there are strategies that can be applied to lead them out of poverty.

The following Wednesday, March 13, brought the issue of poverty a little closer to home. Brad Barth, Alexandria Technical College provided participants with an opportunity to understand the intricacies of privilege in American society. After allowing some time for participants to process the information, there was a

discussion on how "tight budgets" challenge more and more individuals as they struggle to meet their daily needs.

The final session opened with a discussion led by professionals who shared experiences and perspectives based upon their work with local residents in need. Session participants then broke into small groups to share ideas and express viewpoints on poverty in this community. They were also asked to provide recommendations to the *Community Impact Coalition* regarding what can be done to address poverty in this area.

Thank you to everyone at Alexandria Technical College for providing this opportunity to raise the awareness level. Thanks also to the many individuals who shared their experiences over the three weeks.

There is much work to do if we are going to make a difference in the lives of those who live in poverty. Please contact United Way at 763-4840 to find out more or to become actively involved with the *Community Impact Coalition*.

Boy Scouts, Northern Lights Council

The Boys Scouts of America will be celebrating their 100th anniversary in February 2010. Just seems like it was yesterday that William Boyce was lost on a London street and was helped by a Boy Scout.

Today there are over 750 boys and girls enrolled one of the Scouting programs offered in the Alexandria and surrounding area. Boys in 1st thru 5th grade are Cub Scouts. Boys in 6th thru 12th grade or age of 18 are in the Boy Scouts. Boys and Girls age 14 to 21 can be a Venture Scout. Everyone knows about the Cub and Boy Scouts but few know or understand the Venture program the BSA offer, and yes it is for girls too.

Venturing's purpose is to provide positive experiences to help young people mature and to prepare them to become responsible and caring adults.

The Venture program was developed to give organizations such as churches, sportsmen clubs, museums, schools, and many other special interest clubs a new comprehensive program developed with the needs of teenager in mind. Venturing is based on a unique and dynamic relationship between youth, adult leaders, and organizations in their communities. Local community organizations establish a Venturing crew by matching their people and program resources to the interests of young people in the community. The result is a program of exciting and meaningful activities that helps

youth pursue their special interests, grow, develop leadership skills, and become good citizens.

Venturing crews can specialize in a variety of avocation or hobby interests. The Venturing program is unique because it utilizes extreme outdoor adventure as the method for building character, peer-to-peer bonds, and independence. An important goal of Venturing is to help young adults be responsible and caring persons, both now and in the future. Venturing uses "ethical controversies" to help young adults develop the ability to make responsible choices that reflect their concern for what is a risk and how it will affect others involved. Because an ethical controversy is a problem-solving situation, leaders expect young adults to employ empathy, invention, and selection when they think through their position and work toward a solution.

The Lakes District including Alexandria currently has over 270 adult volunteers registered in many roles. These can range from direct contact with youth in small groups to committee members helping to make their individual units run smoothly. The Boy Scouts are always looking for one more committed adult to help make the program exceptional for the boys.

Contact Jim Stratton at 320 808 5096 for more information.

National Child Abuse Prevention Month

WINGS Family Support Services has many projects planned for April to raise awareness of child abuse, including:

- Pinwheel gardens: Garden boxes will be placed at area schools, clinics and government offices. Each will have pinwheels and a yard sign from End Child Abuse Minnesota. Schools will also have statistics and information on child abuse.
- Poster Contest: Elementary children, grades 3 and above will create posters and compete for prizes.
- PSA's: Information will also be distributed in local papers and radio stations.

Since 1974 when the Federal Government passed the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), there has been an ever-increasing effort to raise the awareness level nationally regarding the need to ensure safety of children. Subsequently, April 1982 was proclaimed National Child Abuse Prevention Month and by Presidential Declaration, continues to this day.

Unfortunately, the rate of abuse continues to increase each year.

Contact WINGS at 763-6638 for more information or to see how you can help to eliminate child abuse.

Volunteer Appreciation Week

April 14-18 is Volunteer Appreciation Week. United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties extends its sincere gratitude to the hundreds of community members who generously give thousands of hours each and every year helping make a difference in lives of the people who need it most.

Volunteers know the joy in helping others. Please take a moment, not only this week but throughout the year, to say Thank You to the volunteers you know. Share the joy of volunteering with others and encourage them to get involved in their community. There's always a need!

"A volunteer is a person who can see what others cannot see; who can feel what others cannot feel. Often, such gifted persons do not think of themselves as volunteers, but as citizens - citizens in the fullest sense; partners in civilization.

George Herbert Walker Bush

Volunteer Spotlight



David Kent

David is a recent addition to the United Way Board of Directors. A job transfer brought him to Alexandria.

Why the United Way? "I have a desire to have a positive impact on my community. My employer (3M) has a strong commitment to Alexandria and the United Way. I feel serving in this capacity is the best way to leverage my skills to meet our mutual objectives—a better community for our families.

David, his wife Ronda and their two children, Katie and Zachary, are busy settling into their home and new community.

Thank you, David, for *leading by example*, serving your local community.

Honoring Friends and Family with Special Gifts

Memorial Gifts

Some things do last forever. By making a memorial gift you can honor a special friend or loved one even after they are gone. Their community was important to them. By giving to United Way, you honor them by supporting people who need it most in their home community. Memorial Gifts to the United Way are listed in our monthly newsletter.

Gifts Honoring Special Person or Event

Honor a special event such as a birthday, baptism, or wedding anniversary with a gift that will help others. A great idea for that "hard to buy for" person! These will also be listed in our newsletter.

Leave a Legacy

Planned Gifts can take many forms. It can be as basic as designating United Way as a beneficiary in a will or life insurance policy. It can also be more complex, such as designating funds from a trust account. Often times, there can be significant tax advantages as well, depending on asset donated. An experienced financial planner or tax advisor can play a valuable role in determining the most appropriate plan.

Please contact our office at 763-4840 for additional information.

Board of Directors

Board President: Tom Peterman	Douglas Machine
Vice President: Lisa DeKrey	Tastefully Simple
Secretary: Trudy Blanshan	KIKV/Cool 94.3
Treasurer: Donald Kleine	Wells Fargo Bank
Board Members: Dale Erickson	Henry's Foods
Bill Finley	Unicel
Mark Grandgenett	Bremer Bank, Alexandria
David Gray	Douglas County Hospital
Jody Hanson	Echo Press
Jennifer Haugen	Pope County
Denise Holtkamp	American Diversity Business Solutions
Terry Kennedy	Retired Surgeon
David Kent	3M
Tom Larson	Pope County Sheriff
Sheila Marciniak	American Family Insurance
Terry Quist	School District #206
Chris Schroeder	Merrill Lynch
Susan Skoglund	Viking Savings Association
Mike Woods	Douglas County Social Services

Campaign Cabinet

Campaign Co-Chairs: Terry Kennedy	Retired Surgeon
Pat Kennedy	
Leadership in Giving: Trudy Blanshan	KIKV/Cool 94.3
Jody Hanson	Echo Press
Susan Skoglund	Viking Savings Association
Annual Golf Classic: Dale Erickson	Henry's Foods
Chili Feed: Marcia Gae Schmitt	Brophy Bay, Inc.
Silent Auction: Sheila Marciniak	American Family Insurance

United Way Staff

Linda Roles	Executive Director
Jessica Boyer	Community Impact Director
Randy Bredeson	Technology & Financial Assistant
Craig Erickson	Administrative Assistant & Event Coordinator

Mission Statement

Mobilizing Douglas and Pope County resources to create sustained changes in community conditions to improve lives.

2007/08 Agencies and Programs

Alexandria Area Uncompensated Care	Miracle Horse Riders
Alexandria Family School	North Country Food Bank
Alexandria Literacy Project	Osakis ECFE
Alexandria Senior Center	Red Cross of Douglas County
Boy Scouts, Northern Lights Council	Salvation Army
Brandon, Evansville, Ashby - ECFE	School District #206 - <i>Community Education & Middle School at Risk</i>
Caritas Family Services	Someplace Safe (New 2007/08)
Club 1	TePPAC (<i>Teen Pregnancy Prevention Action Council</i>)
Confidence Learning Center	The Windmill Project
Douglas County Jail - <i>Anger Management & Inmate Transition Programs</i>	The Village Family Service Center
Elder Network	Wings (formerly Listening Ear Crisis Center) <i>Domestic Violence</i>
Foster Grandparent Program	Young People's Place
Girl Scouts, Land of Lakes Council	
Lakes Area Recreation - <i>Scholarship Program & The Zone</i>	
Legal Services of NW Minnesota	
Lutheran Social Service - <i>Counseling; In Home Family & Parenting</i>	

United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties thanks the many supporters who helped us help those who need it most by providing \$350,000 to fund these local health and human services programs.



United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties

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