



# Newsletter

April 2009

## LIVE UNITED

There are many aspects of the LIVE UNITED theme we have been using the past year as United Way works to advance the common good in tough economic times by leveraging our strengths for today and tomorrow.

LIVING UNITED is about making a decision to get involved in the community and help advance the common good for our children and families. LIVE UNITED focuses on the building blocks of a better life - education, health, and income.

LIVE UNITED created opportunities. We all win when children achieve their potential, families and individuals become more financially stable and independent, and people have improved health.

United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties is committed to creating a better life for all. With the help of dedicated volunteers and your support, we are insuring a positive change for today and for the future. With each life that improves, we are all strengthened.

LIVE UNITED at home, at work, and in the community. LIVE UNITED and show others that you care.

**HOW TO LIVE UNITED:**  
**JOIN HANDS.**  
**OPEN YOUR HEART.**  
**LEND YOUR MUSCLE.**  
**FIND YOUR VOICE.**  
**GIVE 10% GIVE 100%**  
**GIVE 110%**  
**GIVE AN HOUR.**  
**GIVE A SATURDAY.**  
**THINK OF WE BEFORE ME.**  
**REACH OUT A HAND TO ONE AND**  
**INFLUENCE**  
**THE CONDITION OF ALL.**  
**GIVE.ADVOCATE.VOLUNTEER.**  
**LIVE UNITED**

United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties  
 PO Box 1148 • Alexandria, Minnesota • 55017-0148 • www.uwdp.org

## Week of Young Child

Many activities are planned for Week of the Young Child which is April 19-25. **The first event is Mister Jim Con on April 19th. Jim is a children's performer, songwriter and recording artist** and a three time nominee for Best Children's Performer, by Minnesota Music Awards. His performance starts at 3:00 p.m. at the ATC auditorium, resource booths for families and agencies involved in Building Connections open at 2:30. There is a \$1.00 per family optional donation.

**Story Hours** will be held April 21st at the Douglas County Library at 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

**Family Dance** at Lakes Area Recreation Gym. Friday April 24 from 5:30- 7 p.m. Bring the family out for some foot stomp-ing and fun with Wolf's Musical Family Fun DJ show.

These events are all sponsored by Lake Region Association for the Education of Young Children, Building Connections, Early Childhood Initiative and Lakes Area Professional Child Care Association.

During the year the Community Impact Coalition works for families and children on many projects such as The Back Pack Attack (see page 3) and Stuff the Bus.

The Dolly Parton Imagination Library (see page 2) is also an ongoing project to educate children and prepare them for learning and school. Dolly Parton provides age appropriate books for regis-tered children every month from birth to age 5.

## Activities & Events Calendar

### April 3-4

Windmill Project Parent Retreat  
 • Lake Geneva Camp

Limited Scholarships are available by calling 763-9228 or emailing windmillo4@embarqmail.com

### April 6, 7, 12, 13, 20, 21,

United Way Allocations. For more information, call 763-4840

### April 30

Someplace Safe Awards Banquet a Celebration of Stars

- Broadway Ballroom
- 5:30 pm reception, dinner at 6
- Tickets are \$20 person

For more information visit: [www.someplacesafe.info](http://www.someplacesafe.info).

### June 15

United Way Golf Classic

### October 6

Chili Feed & Silent Auction

### October 15

Coat Distribution Alexandria

### October 16

Coat Distribution Glenwood

## Inside this Issue:

Sexual Assault Awareness.....2  
 Child Abuse / Dolly Parton Books.... 2  
 Volunteers/Memorials/Back Pack.... 3  
 Board of Directors.....4  
 Funded Agencies .....4

## Sexual Assault Awareness Month

**April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month!** Sexual assault is any forced or unwanted sexual contact or activity, involving a person who does not or cannot consent. It may also involve verbal or visual behaviors, or any type of pressure designed to force or coerce someone to join in unwanted sexual contact or activity. Close to 90% of victims know their offenders, typically being family members, friends or acquaintances. Nationally, sexual assault is the most under reported crime, with less than a third of all assaults being reported to law enforcement.

Join us at Someplace Safe in recognizing this important issue this month! We invite you to participate in one of several activities planned throughout the month

Another event taking place will be an **art exhibit at the Douglas County Library from April 20th through 24th**. This is a project called Creative H.O.P.E. Someplace Safe would like to invite entries for this art exhibition to heighten public awareness about crime victims and their rights and to commemorate Sexual Assault Awareness Month, as well as Crime Victims' Rights Week. Anyone can submit artwork, especially individuals or artists who have been victims of crime, or who have artwork relating to the impact of crime and violence, and would like to express their experiences through the arts. Submitted work may include literature (poetry, short stories, or essays), or visual arts (drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, fabric/textiles, and photographs).

Be sure to look for our free "Bloom Into Awareness" flower seed packets, which will be available at various locations around the county for the entire month of April! Advocates at Someplace Safe are available to speak to your organization, group, class, or business about sexual assault awareness, or any other related topic. Please contact Someplace Safe at 320-762-1995 or [amity.s@someplacesafe.info](mailto:amity.s@someplacesafe.info) and have a great April!

## Prevent Child Abuse Month

**April is Prevent Child Abuse Month.** "Child Abuse casts a shadow the length of a lifetime" by Herbert Ward. No words were ever truer than these.

You should know in Minnesota 8 children die from abuse each year, 28 children and youth are murdered, 47 children and youth commit suicide, 47 children and youth die from guns, 199 children and youth die violent deaths, 502 babies die before their first birthdays, 11,217 children are abused or neglected, 12,000 children are homeless for at least one night.

What does this mean to our society? A child who is abused or neglected is 59% more likely to be arrested as a juvenile than other children. Abuse and neglect increases the likelihood of adult criminal behavior by 28% and violent crime by 30%. As many as two-thirds of people in drug treatment programs reported being abused as children. An estimated one-third of abused and neglected children will eventually victimize their own children. It is estimated that \$94 billion dollars is spent each year in out-of-home care, health and mental health care, special education, juvenile justice and adult crime to address the effects of child maltreatment.

Here in Douglas County and surrounding counties we are trying to raise awareness. Look for pinwheel gardens around the county, in schools and at county offices. If you are interested in putting a "Prevent Child Abuse" sign in your yard, call 320-763-1429. You can end child abuse by getting involved, report suspect child abuse or neglect and donate time and funds to local non-profits in the area.

## Imagination Library

One of United Way of Douglas and Pope Counties' top priority areas is education. With this dedication, United Way has focused many projects on children and youth in Douglas & Pope Counties. One such program that has received nation wide success is Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

United Way is working with the Dollywood Foundation to deliver the Imagination Library books to families living in Douglas & Pope Counties. Children from birth to their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday are eligible. All parents have to do is complete a registration form and the child will receive a new, carefully selected, age-appropriate book once a month.

The Imagination Library Program is designed to improve school readiness by encouraging preschool reading and parental involvement in their children's education. The healthy, positive time spent with children provides the foundation necessary for a lifetime of growth and learning.

Research shows that 50% of Minnesota's children arrive on their first day of kindergarten unprepared to learn. Additional research shows children who are read to regularly have a vocabulary of 10,000 words when entering kindergarten, compared to only 3,000 for children lacking this activity.

Getting books into the hands of children increase their likelihood of being read to by four times. It sounds almost too simple to be true, but by reading with a child regularly during their early years, they not only enjoy a great story, but also learn basic pre-reading skills.

This is a great opportunity to help children who are at risk of not being ready for school and provide them with the tools they need for success. Imagination Library is a gift to the children in our local communities. Currently, 64% of the eligible children in Pope and Douglas County are registered.

To register your child, call United Way at 763-4840

## Back Pack Attack

The United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties has partnered with North Country Food Bank and Minnewaska school district on a program called "Backpack Attack." The mission is to provide nutritional, child-friendly food for low-income students over the weekend and school holidays.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports, "Hunger and nutritional deprivation, specifically during a child's developing years, results in: impaired physical growth, brain development and cognitive functioning, long-term emotional and health problems, and increased need for special education."

Insuring proper nutritional health NOW can save millions of dollars in cost later for mental, social, and educational services.

Because of the Backpack Attack program we hope to see long term results which include but are not limited to improved attendance, academic performance and test results.

Currently, this pilot program is serving 199 children in Pope County at the Minnewaska elementary, middle and day treatment schools. Each qualified child is given a backpack filled with child-friendly, nonperishable, vitamin-fortified food for the weekend free-of-charge.

The Backpack Attack program is working to eliminate child hunger in our community. Contact 763-4840 to make a contribution or for more information.

## Memorials

The following memorial gifts were recently received at the United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties:

**In Memory of Beth Liefkort** by:  
Keith & Linda Roles

Memorials are listed annually in the UW Leadership in Giving brochure and monthly in our newsletter.

A sincere thank you goes out to everyone who chooses to make a difference in our community through gifts given in memory of a loved one.

## 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.

### Leave a Legacy

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 appropriate plan.

## Volunteers Needed

**The Glenwood Retirement Home** needs volunteers willing to visit their residents. There are many people who don't have visitors and would welcome someone to visit with them. People who play cards, do arts and crafts and can read to residents are needed as volunteers. Call Kristeen at 320-634-5131 for more information.

**Elder Network Training** - Are you looking for a volunteer experience that provides support for older adults while making an impact in our community? Join our amazing network of older adults willing to help peers in need. Elder Network is planning Spring Volunteer Training for individuals age 55 and older interested in providing support and respite services for their peer counterparts. For information on dates, please call Elder Network at (320)763-9084.

**Young Peoples' Place** is looking for volunteers to help work with children in the after school setting, at lunch time, at nap time and crafts and activities time. Call Dawn at 763-7252 for information.

## Volunteer Spotlight



**Bill Finley**

Bill Finley is our featured volunteer this month. Bill works at Verizon and has served as a board member on the United Way Board since 2006. He has been instrumental in making changes in the allocations process and grant committee.

Bill is involved in the community as a youth hockey coach, member of the Alexandria Area Hockey Association, and ATC advisory committee. Prior to moving to Alexandria Bill was involved with the allocations process in the St. Cloud United Way and he and his wife were involved with the Big Brother/Big Sister program in St. Cloud.

Bill brings past allocations and new program funding experience to the United Way plus 20 years of finance and accounting experience. He is excited and happy to serve on the United Way Board.

## National Volunteer

April 19-25 is National Volunteer Week. It seems like we can never say thank you enough to all who volunteer for the United Way and all of our agencies. Without your dedication our work would not be possible. This year's theme is Celebrating People in Action. It celebrates and honors individuals who take action and solve problems in their community.

We are especially aware of volunteers as we prepare for the United Way Allocations and are so fortunate to have more than 108 volunteers helping.

A special thanks goes out to volunteer in our office, and those at special events of the United Way. We join with the rest of the nation to celebrate you who dedicate yourselves to taking action to solve problems in your community to help others. **Thanks a million volunteers!!!**

## Board of Directors

<b>Board President:</b> Lisa DeKrey	Tastefully Simple
<b>Vice President:</b> Don Kleine	American Foods Group
<b>Secretary:</b> David Kent	3-M
<b>Treasurer:</b> Carol Juul	Bremer Bank, Alexandria
<b>Board Members:</b> Susan Boerhave	Viking Savings Association
Dale Erickson	Henry's Foods
Bill Finley	Verizon
David Gray	Douglas County Hospital
Jennifer Haugen	Pope County
Marc Illies	Alexandria Extrusion
Terry Kennedy	Retired Surgeon
Karin Tank	City of Alexandria
Sheila Marciniak	American Family Insurance
Tom Peterman	Douglas Machine, Inc.
Terry Quist	School District #206
Chris Schroeder	Merrill Lynch
Carol Meissner	Douglas County Public Health
John Wosepka	Douglas County

## Campaign Cabinet

<b>Campaign Chair:</b> Don Kleine	American Foods Group
<b>Leadership in Giving:</b> Terry Kennedy	Retired Surgeon
Pat Kennedy	
<b>Annual Golf Classic:</b> Dale Erickson	Henry's Foods, Inc.
<b>Chili Feed:</b> Marcia Gae Schmitt	
<b>Silent Auction:</b> Kelly Janssen	Glenwood State Bank

## United Way Staff

Linda Roles	Executive Director
Jessica Boyer	Community Impact Director
Randy Bredeson	Technology & Financial Assistant
Corliss Stark	Special Events and Volunteer Coordinator

### Mission Statement

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

## 2008/09 United Way Partner Agencies and Programs

211 - First Call  
 Alexandria Family School  
 Alexandria Literacy Project  
 Alexandria Senior Center  
 Boy Scouts  
 Brandon, Evansville, Ashby ECFE  
 Catholic Charities Club 1  
 Confidence Learning Center  
 Douglas County Jail  
 Elder Network  
 Girl Scouts  
 Lakes & Prairies Community Childcare Resource & Referral  
 Lakes Area Recreation  
 Legal Services of NW Minnesota  
 Lutheran Social Service  
 Minnewaska Area ECFE/School Readiness

Miracle Horse Riders  
 North Country Food Bank  
 Pope County Family Collaborative  
 Salvation Army  
 School District #206-  
 Someplace Safe  
 TePPAC (*Teen Pregnancy Prevention Action Council*)  
 Teen Court  
 UCAN (*United Communities Advocating Non-Violence*)  
 The Village Family Service Center  
 Windmill Project  
 WINGS *Child Abuse, PLUS Kids, and Transitional Housing*  
 Young People's Place  
 Youth as Resources

### Community Impact Programs:

- Free Tax Clinics
- Coat Distribution
- Stuff the Bus (School Supplies)
- Back Pack Attack (Pilot program providing food for children over the weekend)
- Dolly Parton Imagination Library

**Underneath everything we are,  
 Underneath everything we do.  
 We are all people.  
 Connected, interdependent, united.  
 And when we reach out a hand to one,  
 We influence the condition of all.  
 That's what it means to  
 LIVE UNITED.**

### United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties

PO Box 1148  
 115 3rd Ave W, Ste 4  
 Alexandria MN 56308  
 Phone/Fax: 320-763-4840

**Website:** [www.uwdp.org](http://www.uwdp.org)  
**Email:** [unitedw@rea-alp.com](mailto:unitedw@rea-alp.com)

**GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.**

**LIVE UNITED™** 