

## United Way of Merrimack County

GIVE, ADVOCATE, VOLUNTEER.

# LIVE UNITED



ENEWS FROM UNITED WAY OF MERRIMACK COUNTY



### Campaign Update from Liz Hager

United Way campaign #79! We've come a long way from the \$35,753 the Concord Community Chest raised in 1926 but we still have a ways to go to meet our 2009 goal of \$2,150,000. In these tough economic times this community continues to step forward. Campaign highlights:-

- Concord Hospital set a goal of \$150,000, a 4% increase over last year, and has exceeded it.
- Lincoln Financial reached their goal of 85% participation and had a fun-filled campaign while they did it.
- Merrimack County Savings Bank again exceeded their goals and, with their corporate contribution, has raised over \$50,000.
- Sanel Auto Parts has not quite completed their overall campaign but the store on South Main Street in Concord set new giving records.
- Campaign Chair Jim Bassett set the right tone at Orr & Reno with 100% of his colleagues giving this year.
- Education division Chairs Eileen Gfroefer and Cindall Morrison have been working hard on campaigns in area schools and most of the districts have had good results. The Concord School District

### Give.

In these tough economic times, the many great nonprofits in Merrimack County need your help more than ever...budgets and positions are being cut, but the work is greater! Homelessness is on the increase...poverty levels are on the increase...parents and their children are without health insurance. Please consider a donation. No matter how large or how small...every penny makes a difference!

### Give.

### Advocate.

Forward this eNewsletter

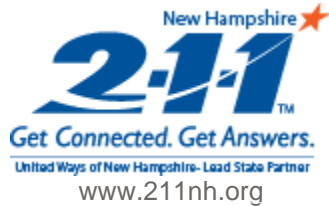
You can LIVE UNITED by helping us spread the word. Imagine how many people we could reach if everyone forwards this to five people.

+ TELL YOUR FRIENDS

tops the charts with over \$32,500 raised.

- The City of Concord campaign is almost complete under the able leadership of Jackie Whatmough and the Merrimack County campaign will be finished by Christmas.

Thanks to all of you who have given and those who are planning on giving soon! (If you haven't given and want to give securely on our web site, [www.unitedwymc.org](http://www.unitedwymc.org), please do.)



### **CATCH Neighborhood Housing's NeighborWorks America Rating Upgraded**

On November 6, 2009, CATCH Neighborhood Housing's NeighborWorks America organizational rating was upgraded from "strong" to "exemplary" following its three-year organizational review that took place in July 2009. To ensure that NeighborWorks America is accountable to Congress, OMB, funders and taxpayers for the allocation of those grant funds, NeighborWorks America developed the organizational assessment systems which rates NeighborWorks America in one of four categories - exemplary, strong, satisfactory and vulnerable.

If you contribute \$5 per pay period and your contribution is forwarded to the Concord Family YMCA it will provide an at-risk teen with a Y membership.

### **AARP Tax-Aide's Free Tax Preparation Service Has a New Home**

Budget cutbacks forced AARP to close its Information Center at 118 North Main Street in Concord last June. That was bad news for the AARP's Tax-Aide program and for the 1600 taxpayers who, last year, came to the Information Center to have their federal income tax returns prepared, free of charge, by Tax-Aide volunteers.

The good news is Tax-Aide has found a new home! Thanks to United Way of Merrimack County, Tax-Aide's new "downtown" home will be in the United Way office at 46 South Main Street, adjacent to the Capitol Center for the Arts. When the new site opens on February 1, Tax-Aide's IRS-certified Counselors will offer free tax preparation to low and moderate income taxpayers of all ages.

### **Volunteer.**

Did you know you can find wonderful volunteer opportunities through our website? There are currently over 90 volunteer opportunities in Merrimack County that are posted through our online system. Volunteers are registering on the site daily.

If you are looking to volunteer please visit [www.unitedwymc.org](http://www.unitedwymc.org) and click on volunteer or if you are an agency that would like help posting your opportunity please contact Val Guy at 224.2595 or [valg@unitedwymc.org](mailto:valg@unitedwymc.org).

### **Check Out Volunteer Opportunities**

### **Enjoy Reading?**

The Friends Emergency Housing Program for families is looking for volunteers to read to the children for story time and volunteers to be reading buddies to individual children.

For more information, please contact Arolyn Chappell, Program Coordinator at 228.1462.

### **A Little Socializing?**

Horseshoe Pond Place Senior Resource Center is looking for a volunteer to assist with the lunch program on Mondays and/or Tuesdays, approximately 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. We are looking for a caring and upbeat individual who enjoys a social atmosphere and is comfortable interacting with independent seniors. Training will be provided.

Please contact Polly Mills Fife, Director of Senior Services at 228.6956.

### **Centennial Senior Center Happenings**

Tax-Aide also will open two additional Concord area sites on February 1. Free tax preparation will be available at the 503 South Street (Bow) branch office of Merrimack County Savings Bank and at NH Federal Credit Union, 70 Airport Road.

Tax-Aide's free tax preparation services are available by appointment only. Starting in mid-January, taxpayers may dial 211 and tell the operator they wish to schedule an appointment at one of Concord's three Tax-Aide locations. In fact, the 211 telephone number will help taxpayers arrange an appointment at any one of the 70+ locations where Tax-Aide sites are located in the State of New Hampshire.

#### Sal's Pizza Lover?

Check out great raffle opportunity at the end of the newsletter

### 'Hospice Lights of Life' Opening Ceremony is Friday, December 4

The opening ceremony for Concord Regional Visiting Nurse Association's "Hospice Lights of Life" takes place Friday, December 4 at 7 pm at the Merrimack County Savings Bank, 89 N. Main Street, Concord. Following the ceremony, hundreds of electric candles will be lit throughout December in the windows of downtown Concord, Contoocook, Henniker, Hillsboro, Penacook and Pittsfield.

Participants in that ceremony are reminded that each candle represents an honored memory of a loved one in the community. Speaking briefly at the ceremony will be Janet Ball, whose husband received services from the Hospice Program of Concord Regional VNA.

Hospice is a philosophy of care that focuses on the quality of life remaining, not just the length of time. This unique approach offers physical, emotional and spiritual comfort to terminally ill individuals and their families.

The community volunteers for Hospice Lights of Life 2009 included Joyce Smykil, Rosalind Dickey, Sue Cassidy, Mary Barker, Heather Larivee, Rebecca Biss, Doris Harrington, George Harrington, Sharon Savoy, Therese Larson, Anne Hauck, Doug Hauck, Mary Raine, Sue Plante, Jan Denson, Jane Bunker, Lisa Challender, Richard Phelps, Jean Coburn, Marian Lavoie, Hilary Dooley, Yvonne Wiegelman, Joyce Bledsoe, Stephen Muzzey, Missy Samenfeld, Karen Carlson, Bill Santacrucce, and members of the Junior Service League of Concord.

Concord Regional VNA thanks Hospice Lights of Life "Shining Star" corporate sponsors Laconia Savings Bank, Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield and HCS Home Care

*Safe-Tea:* Centennial Center invites all area seniors to attend a free "Safe-Tea" at Crutchfield Apartments on Tuesday, December 8th at 10:00 am. Mary Stuart of Ocean Bank will be joined by Concord Police Department Officer Joe Wright in delivering this crucial information designed to prevent senior fraud. Please bring your friends, neighbors, and questions, and join us for tea, coffee, and breakfast refreshments. For additional information, contact Kim Murdoch at Centennial Center at 228.6630.

#### *Weekly Senior*

*Program:* Centennial Center continues to offer a free weekly program for seniors each Tuesday from 12:30-5:30 pm at West Street Ward House. For a line-up of activities scheduled, please visit the website at

[www.centennialcenter.org](http://www.centennialcenter.org) or call 288.6630. Each program session concludes with a free "Stretching & Strengthening" chair exercise program from 4:30 to 5:30 pm, led by our generous volunteer instructor Colette Farland-Vogt. "Stretching & Strengthening" will be on holiday hiatus after 12/8, restarting in early January. We want our senior regulars to stay active, so the Concord YMCA will be offering similar programming in the same time slot, at West Street Ward House on 12/15, 12/22 and 12/29.

Please note the City of Concord's Senior Program also has offerings at West Street Ward House on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm (effective 12/1 winter hours of 10:00 am to 1:00 pm are in effect). For additional information, contact the City of Concord Recreation Department at 225.8690.

### **Volunteer Opportunity at The Little Nature Museum**

Do you enjoy helping people and bringing smiles to visitors? The

Specialists Inc.

If you have questions about Concord Regional VNA's Hospice Program, the Hospice House, or the Lights of Life opening ceremony, please call 224.4093.

### **Connections Literacy Program**

"I am saving the book for my grandchild."  
 "I read *Grandfather's Journey* to my family. They love that story."  
 "I read to my family. They said it is difficult to learn English."  
 "My daughter saw the books and said, 'Those are really good books that I use in class.'"

These are voices of Merrimack County adult literacy students in *Connections*, a reading and discussion program of the New Hampshire Humanities Council. Second Start has a long and rich tradition of offering *Connections* with their students who are both native born and immigrants. Lutheran Social Services has a more recent tradition of offering *Connections* with refugees in their ESOL classes. A great gift of the program is that students can keep the books they discuss and take them home to share with their children, grandchildren, husbands, wives, or grandparents. For refugees the books are a welcome gift that say, "Here is a book for you and your family. Here is something of great value in our culture." For native born, the books represent a welcoming into the world of the printed word. The books help participants to live united with their communities.

*Connections* discussions are available to all adult literacy programs as well as intergenerational programs with parents, grandparents, and children. The Humanities Council is grateful to all those who support this literacy work in the county. For information about bringing *Connections* discussion to you, please email Terry Farish, [tfarish@nhhc.org](mailto:tfarish@nhhc.org).

Please check out our campaign video at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lszl8uVI\\_FI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lszl8uVI_FI)

### **Parent Involvement Takes Off in NH**

On October 1, 2009, NH Commissioner of Education

Little Nature Museum, Inc., a small nonprofit nature center located at Gould Hill Orchards, Contoocook, is looking for volunteers for the 2010, its 55th season. The Museum will be open on weekends and holidays, beginning June 26th through October 31st. It is open for groups on weekdays by appointment.

Volunteers must be at least 16 years old. They assist visitors with hands-on activities, sell items from the nature shop, and do some minimal record keeping. Training and insurance are provided. Volunteers are especially needed during September and October. No experience is required, but teaching experience knowledge of the outdoors and nature is a plus.

The Museum's website, [www.littlenaturemuseum.org](http://www.littlenaturemuseum.org) has more information about the Museum. For more information about this opportunity or other volunteer opportunities, please email [info@littlenaturemuseum.org](mailto:info@littlenaturemuseum.org) or call Sandra Martin, Museum Director at 746.6121.

### **Volunteer Opportunities with the Red Cross**

Event Planner & Coordinator-Volunteering in this capacity requires previous experience in event planning & coordination, initiative, creativity and flexibility. The Granite Chapter of the American Red Cross has several events coming up in the next couple of months like the Annual Heroes Breakfast at the Grappone Center in Concord, and the Taste of the Valley in North Conway. This volunteer opportunity is a great way to develop event planning & coordination skills, meet new people, and have concrete evidence of successes.

Office & Reception Assistants-Volunteers must be comfortable in

Virginia Barry was joined by other state education officials, parents, and community organizations at the State House in Concord to promote family engagement in education. Dr. Barry read the text of Governor Lynch's Proclamation setting aside as Parent Involvement in Education Month in NH.

Earlier that morning, parents, educators, and family-school-community partnership projects from around NH were honored at the first Parent Involvement Month Recognition ceremony at the statehouse. Commissioner Barry was on hand to give out certificates to honorees. A video of the Recognition Awards can be seen at <http://tinyurl.com/NH-PIMonth-RecognitionAwards09>.

The press conference also featured John Lyons, Chair of the NH Board of Education, Fred Bramante, Board of Education Member, Mike Mooney, President of NH PTA, Rhonda Wesolowski, President of NEA-NH, and other education leaders, as well as parents and organizations who had received honors. The speakers were unanimous in their conviction that parent involvement is the essential ingredient to student success. A video of the press conference can be seen at <http://tinyurl.com/NHPIMonthPressConference2009>.

The event was sponsored by the Parent Information Center of NH (PIC) and the NH Department of Education, which sent every public school in the state a Parent Involvement Packet in order to promote greater family-school partnership. The text of the proclamation and additional information about his initiative can be found at [www.nhparentsmakethedifference.org](http://www.nhparentsmakethedifference.org) or by calling 800.947.7005.

operating the telephone system, competent in Microsoft Word & Excel, friendly, outgoing, and reliable. This is a great opportunity to meet new people, become part of a team, and become an integral part of the Red Cross.

Tech Savvy? We need tech savvy volunteers to join the team. Several opportunities are available like social media facilitation & creation, recruitment administration, and Raiser's Edge (familiarity with donor database required) administration.

Community Relations-Are you outgoing, friendly and comfortable engaging with the public? Become a Community Relations Volunteer and serve in a number of capacities. You would be able to attend community events and represent the Red Cross, participate in partnership building, distribute current information to local businesses and many other opportunities.

Join the Red Cross volunteer team! Call the Chapter's Volunteer Coordinator, Rachel Burack at 800.464.6692.



**Win One Cheese Pizza Per Week For A Year**

**Purchase Your Raffle Ticket Today**

**Just \$5 per Ticket**

## Drawing December 30th 3 Winners Will Be Drawn

All proceeds from this raffle will be donated to United Way of Merrimack County

To Purchase Your Ticket Visit:  
Sal's Pizza, 80 Storrs Street, Concord, NH  
or contact Val Guy at 224.2595 or [valg@unitedwymc.org](mailto:valg@unitedwymc.org)

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