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# Community Connection

Green Mountain United Way

Serving the communities of Caledonia, Essex, Orange, Orleans and Washington Counties of Vermont

Mission: To improve lives by mobilizing the caring powers of communities.

December 2007

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## Housing - Part 2

*(This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> of 3 installments on Affordable Housing in Central VT submitted by Nicole DiDomenico of Norwich University and member of GMUW Board of Directors.)*

In our first installment regarding housing costs vs. wage growth in Vermont, we identified that affordable housing is really a vital issue that is affecting most of, if not all Vermonters. We also identified agencies and resources such as Vermont 2-1-1 and the Central Vermont Community Action Council, as well as websites such as [www.WeNeedHousing.com](http://www.WeNeedHousing.com) and [www.HousingData.org](http://www.HousingData.org) for those wishing to explore the educational and assistance-based opportunities that are available.

In this issue, we want to offer up some more resources that might be helpful to those who are either looking for an affordable home to purchase, an affordable apartment to rent or a cooperative housing option. If you happen to fall under any of these categories, you may want to contact the Central Vermont Community Land Trust, as they offer, among other services:

- Homebuyer Education
- Down Payment Assistance
- Rental Apartments
- Credit/Budgeting Counseling
- Mobile Home Units
- Transitional Housing
- Elderly Housing

The CVCLT also offers many online resources including access to The Central Vermont Housing Resource Guide, of which you can also receive a copy by contacting the Central VT Regional Planning Commission at 802-229-0389.

This Guide is an excellent resource that offers information and resources around subsidized housing, homeownership, assistance for renters and Vermont Housing Finance Association's (VHFA) list of participating lenders for those looking to purchase their first home.

If you are interested in learning more about co-housing opportunities in the area, check out [www.montpeliercohousing.org](http://www.montpeliercohousing.org) for more information.

In our next and final installment in this 3-part series on Affordable Housing in Central Vermont, we will be exploring ways in which you can become an advocate for affordable housing and a catalyst for change in your community.

Contact GMUW in Berlin, VT at 802-229-9532

## **We're On Our Way...**

to a successful fundraising campaign, that is. As of Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>, we had reached \$354,567, or 57% of our \$625,000 goal. This is above last year's receipts at this time, so it looks like donors are taking advantage of making contributions before the end of the calendar year in order to receive a tax deduction.

We are also seeing fewer donations, but for higher amounts indicating that people recognize the needs that exist in our local communities and really want to help. Whether big or small, all donations are important to us in our efforts to positively touch the lives of as many in our region as possible.

If you haven't yet made your contribution, it isn't too late. Take your checkbook out now and write us a check. You really will be making a difference.

## **What Does the Month of February Mean to You?**

The "A Kaleidoscope of Talent" talent show held this past February in Barre was a huge success. It is not without the support of many volunteers, community and staff members that made it such a worthwhile and fantastic event. So, how about taking that special someone to the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual show on Saturday, Feb. 23, 2008? Sure, Valentine's Day will have passed, but once the chocolates are gone and flowers have been given, there's much, much more in store to give. The gift of laughter, awe and excitement can fill the hearts of many! "A piece of enlightening entertainment that everyone can enjoy", said one community member while watching the show at Spaulding Auditorium that cool, crisp night. The singing and dancing did not go unnoticed.

"A Kaleidoscope of Talent" comes to Barre for the second year to benefit Green Mountain United Way and it's member agencies. Audition applications are now available. See the insert in this newsletter.

We are still looking for program sponsors for this event and to sell ad space in the talent show program. What an exciting opportunity for businesses to be seen and show their support.

Questions? Contact Nancy Zorn, Executive Director of GMUW, at 802-229-9532, or Timothy Barre, Talent Show Chair, at 802-485-5223. You can also link up at our website: [www.orgsites.com/vt/greenmountaintalent/](http://www.orgsites.com/vt/greenmountaintalent/), or visit the Special Events section on the GMUW website: [www.gmunitiedway.org/](http://www.gmunitiedway.org/).

See you at the show on February 23, 2008 at Spaulding High School Auditorium!  
*(Submitted by Timothy Barre, "A Kaleidoscope of Talent" Talent Show Committee Chair)*

## **GMUW and Good Health Practices**

The Central Vermont Coalition for Health was formed in the spring of 2006 to support collaboration between organizations in the effort to address the many health issues identified in the community assessment. Since then, the Coalition has held a community forum, participated in a health fair, and laid the groundwork for further action. GMUW is part of the core team that is helping to further the coalition's mission.

Ninety nurses, doctors, dentists, health care providers, and concerned citizens participated in a health forum in November 2006. The group determined four critical areas in the health arena and five workgroups were formed. These workgroups are addressing Chronic Disease (Wellness/Prevention; and Treatment), Mental Health, Oral Health and Substance Abuse.

The workgroups have spent the past year identifying partners and specific areas of concern. In early 2008, they will convene to create a collaborative action plan to systematically address the identified health issues.

In the Northeast Kingdom, GMUW is a member of the Fit and Healthy Coalition in Caledonia County, which works to encourage better healthy practices through more physical activity and nutrition training. It has been a key player in the formation and mapping of several walking routes in St. Johnsbury and Lyndonville.

## Community Impact and You

By now you've heard the words "Community Impact" on several occasions, in a variety of contexts. It's a strong phrase that creates a sense of purpose and drive --- of *doing something*. Community impact is precisely that --- taking action to improve our community.

You make an impact on your community every day. The time you take to volunteer or be part of a community organization makes an impact. Your decision to attend a community meeting, to help a neighbor with snow removal, or to support your local United Way makes a positive impact on your community.

The Green Mountain United Way currently makes an impact by supporting local organizations provide much needed services. We will continue to support essential programs within the community, but we also have shifted our focus to specific community needs.

Through a series of forums and surveys the community identified several needs. The following needs were the community's top three: Economy (housing and transportation), Health, and Children and Youth. The Green Mountain United Way has made these their top priorities.

In response, we've created and joined specific coalitions. Just a few examples: The Housing Partnership has worked to identify and publicize the housing need. The Central Vermont Coalition for Health has formed several work groups to tackle specific issues at hand. Building Bright Futures in working towards increasing the number of children ready for kindergarten. The Central Vermont Youth Initiated Grant Council will be giving out \$16,000 to youth-designed programs to reduce substance abuse and violence in teens. As a community, we're working towards making a positive impact on the issues that are important to everyone.

We couldn't do this without your help. Thank you for identifying your community needs. Thank you for working towards making a positive impact!

## The Planned Giving Corner

### Prepare For Tax Season

Just a few pointers that can be helpful before the end of the year and to minimize your tax burden for 2007:

- If possible, fully fund your IRA.. (You actually have until April 15, 2008 to do this.)
- Sell investments that have declined in value in order to offset capital gains.
- Donate shares of stock held longer than 12 months to your favorite non-profit, like Green Mountain United Way. The entire market value can be used as a tax deduction.

Many other options are available. GMUW does not provide financial or legal advice. Please consult with your tax adviser or attorney for those options that are best for your financial situation.

### \$16,000 For Youth! By Youth!

The Central Vermont Youth Initiated Grant program is part of the governor's set-aside portion of the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities fund. This year youth will have access to \$16,000 to fund programs that are designed to prevent youth substance abuse and violence.

This is not your traditional grant program! The programs must be designed by youth, the application must be completed by youth, and the grants are reviewed by youth. The entire process is fueled by the motivation of area youth.

There are several Youth Councils throughout the Green Mountain United Way's region. If you are interested in applying for a grant or would like more information about the Youth Council in your area, please contact the GMUW offices at 802-229-9532.



Green Mountain  
**United Way**  
963 Paine Turnpike N #2  
Montpelier, VT 05602-9163

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### Season's Greetings

Green Mountain United Way would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you the very best for the holiday season.

Our organization would not be what it is without the assistance we receive, be it financially, from in-kind donations, from our many volunteers or word-of-mouth recommendations. We sincerely thank you for your generous support in the past year and extend heartfelt wishes for a happy, healthy and safe new year.

### Dates To Remember

- Dec. 24, 2007 - Jan. 2, 2008:** GMUW offices will be closed for Christmas break.
- Jan. 28, 2008:** GMUW Board & Committees Winter Retreat at GMUW Conference Rooms.
- Feb. 10, 2008:** GMUW's "A Kaleidoscope of Talent" Talent Show **Auditions** at Spaulding High School, Barre, VT - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Feb. 21, 2008:** Member Agency Winter Training meeting at GMUW - 8:30 a.m. to Noon.  
Topic: To be announced.
- Feb. 22, 2008:** "A Kaleidoscope of Talent" Talent Show **Rehearsal** at Spaulding High School, Barre, VT - 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.
- Feb. 23, 2008:** "A Kaleidoscope of Talent" **Talent Show** at Spaulding High School Auditorium, Barre, VT - 7 p.m. Benefit: Green Mountain United Way. Cash prizes in four award categories.
- June 28, 2008:** UPS Golf Tournament to benefit Green Mountain United Way. Montague Golf Course in Randolph, VT

### **GMUW Contact Information**

Nancy Zorn, Executive Director  
Madeleine Roy, Community Development/Marketing  
Kate Binns, Program Director  
Wanda Baril, Executive Assistant  
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www.gmunitedway.org

Visit us on the web at: [www.gmunitedway.org](http://www.gmunitedway.org)



# A KALEIDOSCOPE OF TALENT

A benefit for the **Green Mountain United Way**



## 2008 Performer Application

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Act: \_\_\_\_\_

Selection to be performed (no more than 5 min): \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Act: Instrumental \_\_\_\_\_, Vocal \_\_\_\_\_, Dance \_\_\_\_\_, Comedy \_\_\_\_\_

Age Group: Grade 2-8 \_\_\_\_\_, Grade 9-12 \_\_\_\_\_, age 19-49 \_\_\_\_\_, age 50+ \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a separate sheet of paper to include a description (not more than 25 words) of your act and list contact information on each performer.

I have enclosed my nonrefundable application fee of \$10 for acts of 1-2 performers or \$15 for acts of more then 3 performers.

Please make your check payable to “Green Mountain United Way” and mail or drop off to:

Green Mountain United Way  
C/O Timothy Barre  
963 Paine Turnpike N#2  
Montpelier VT 05602-9163

Any further questions may be directed to the GMUW at 802-229-9532  
or visit [www.gmunityway.org](http://www.gmunityway.org)

By signing I agree to:

- Read and agree to abide by the Rules and Regulations of the show
- I give my permission for a media release.
- Agree to submitting my application and fee by Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008
- Be available for tryouts on February 10<sup>th</sup> and if selected, be at the dress rehearsal on February 22<sup>nd</sup> and for the performance on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2008 at the Spaulding High School Auditorium.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Please print Your Name



what matters.™

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature



# A KALEIDOSCOPE OF TALENT

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Talent Show -

Coming Soon  
February 23, 2008  
at Spaulding High School Auditorium  
CASH PRIZES

To benefit:



Green Mountain  
United Way

## A U D I T I O N S

Individual & Group Acts Welcome

Sunday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008 - 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Spaulding High School Auditorium

Call 802-229-9532 now for a Performer Application

### Award Categories

Grade 2-8

Grade 9-12

Age 19-49

Age 50+

### Performance Types

*Instrumental*

*Vocal*

*Dance*

*Comedy*

### Talent Show Proudly Sponsored by:

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Océ

Vermont State Employees Credit Union

Union Institute & University

For details call 802-229-9532, or  
Visit: <http://www.orgsites.com/vt/greenmountaintalent/>

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