



what matters.™

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.

May 2008

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2007 - 2008 Campaign A Huge Success

"As Chairman of this year's Green Mountain United Way Campaign, I'm thrilled to announce we surpassed our goal and raised **\$670,000!** Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our donors and the fantastic work of the GMUW volunteers and staff, we have set an all time high for the campaign and exceeded our goal by \$45,000. This is particularly rewarding because it comes at a time when the needs of the programs and communities we serve are at an all time high as well." This was stated by Steve Post, Campaign Chair and CEO of the Vermont State Employees Credit Union of Montpelier, when final figures were tallied on March 31st.

Even with our country being on the brink of a recession, it *was* a great campaign. Obviously, there are many out there who realize that the programs we help fund must continue, especially in slow economic times. They have come forward with generally higher levels of support than in years past for which GMUW is extremely grateful.

"It is truly encouraging to see the generosity and commitment that people of our region show for their neighbors. Their efforts in this campaign will make a big difference in the work we continually strive to accomplish," said Nancy Zorn, GMUW Executive Director.

The role of the United Way is to make a positive community impact by collaborating with several community partners to find solutions to problems that restrict people from acquiring any sort of quality in their lives. Some (but not all) of the issues that GMUW and its partners have been working on locally are housing, transportation, health care and opportunities for children and youth.

Of course, the costs of making any advancements in any of these critical areas is great making us all even more appreciative of the results of the campaign and those who make it possible.

Sincere thanks go out to all who understand the need to collectively work toward these goals, either by contributing to the campaign, volunteering, or serving the community as one of our partners. Together, we can get results that no one can accomplish alone.

Shop at Shaw's?

Shaw's Supermarkets has instituted a Rewards Receipts Program through which non-profit organizations can collect store receipts and submit them for a one percent reimbursement. If you shop at Shaw's, please consider saving your receipts for GMUW. Simply drop them by our office in Berlin or in the mail at 963 Paine Turnpike N #2, Montpelier, VT 05602.

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

Youth in Transition

Recently research has shown that the issues that 18-25 year olds face today are very different than their age cohorts thirty years ago. Youth within this age range are much less likely to have committed to a career or relationship at this point. Many are ambivalent about what they want to accomplish in life. Most will change jobs frequently and live with their parents for a greater period of time. This group is commonly being called youth in transition or emerging adults.

What does this group need to assist them in the transition to adulthood and how can it be provided? This question is being asked at the statewide level and will be addressed by the Central Vermont Community Partnership (CVCP), a program of Green Mountain United Way. Currently, CVCP is trying to identify the diverse needs of this group. This is being done in partnership with Partners for Prevention and other organizations that are focusing in on the population. One of the issues identified is that this population is less likely to have health insurance than younger and older populations.

The CVCP will continue to explore the needs within this population over the next year and attempt to identify some potential solutions. Watch future issues of this newsletter for developments on this topic.

The Health Status of Vermonters

The Vermont Dept. of Health recently published a 45-page booklet entitled *The Health Status of Vermonters*, which is chock-full of statistics and trends through 2005 relating to diseases, health insurance and medical care, health behaviors, preventive sources and more. This set of data shows the progress that Vermont is making toward meeting its *Healthy Vermonters 2010* goals.

In 2007, Vermont was ranked the healthiest state in the country by *America's Health Rankings*, but we still have a ways to go in really making a difference in helping our people prevent some of the conditions they are faced with.

Get your copy of this important informational piece at www.HealthVermont.gov.

Hunger in Vermont

It is hard to believe that in the U.S., a wealthy country, thousands of people go hungry every day. Ironically, the biggest cause of hunger is poverty because of low wages, unemployment and lack of public transportation. Consequently, families faced with poverty resort to acquiring and preparing less expensive foods that are low in nutrients but high in fat and calories. Further consequences include stunted growth, cognitive dysfunction, developmental and intellectual delays and general poor health in children. Obesity and chronic illnesses, like heart disease and diabetes, are also prevalent in adults who fall into the food insecure category.

Of the six New England states, Vermont ranks fifth in percentage of food insecure households with hunger (3.6%). These are the households in which adults, because of lack of money, have significantly reduced the quality and quantity of food to the point where they and their children are likely to be frequently hungry.

Approximately, 23,000 households (including 21,000 children) in Vermont suffer from hunger. Vermont's 2010 goal of percentage of adults to become food secure, as predicted and measured by the VT Dept. of Health, is 94%, up 3% from 2004.

One of the most effective ways to combat hunger in children is to support and advocate School Meals Programs. Many of our local schools now provide nutritious and sustaining breakfasts and lunches, thus, greatly improving a child's attention, retentive powers and behavior, not to mention general health.

The Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger (www.vtnohunger.org) strongly advocates for the reduction of food insecure households. Their website's homepage states, "The VT Campaign to End Childhood Hunger is a statewide nonprofit organization that combats hunger through advocacy, education and technical assistance – providing communities with the tools to create and sustain local nutrition programs that feed hungry children." Visit their website for more valuable information about how we can all help to reduce the numbers of hungry families in Vermont.

More to come in our next issue...

GMUW Joins in Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive

Green Mountain United Way is pleased to again participate in the annual National Letter Carriers Food Drive for local food shelves. This year, the one-day collection of non-perishable food items will take place on Sat., **May 10**. Carriers from several local post offices, while on their regular delivery route, will be taking the time to pick up food left at mailboxes at individual homes and bring it back to the post office. From there it will be trucked to the local food shelves.

Some of the local post offices that will be taking part in this important event are Barre, Barton, Canaan, Derby Line, Montpelier, Newport, and Northfield, Randolph and Waterbury. Some of the food shelves that will be receiving the food are NEK Community Action, Hedding United Methodist Church, St. Monica's Food Shelf, Montpelier Food Pantry, Northfield Food Shelf, Randolph Area Food Shelf and the Waterbury Food Shelf.

The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) has been conducting this drive for 16 years. Last year, 70.7 million pounds of food were donated across the nation. Because of the nation's poor economy and the fact that federal supplies of excess farm goods have dropped, food shelves everywhere are feeling the pinch. Stock on their shelves is at an all-time low. A true hunger crisis exists nationwide.

Please be generous and donate a few non-perishable items on May 10th. If your town's post office is not listed above, call them to see if they are participating.

Zutano joins GMUW's Goods & Services Program!

The Green Mountain United Way is pleased to announce a new partnership with Zutano--- the creators of whimsical and unique infant and toddler clothing in central Vermont. Zutano has donated several large boxes of clothing to be distributed in central Vermont, with the promise for a continued partnership.

GMUW will be distributing the clothing to several local organizations including Good

The Planned Giving Corner

Three Steps To Shaping Your Future:

Are you sure you'll have enough funds for the rest of your life?

Would you like to assure your loved ones of financial security?

Are there ways to reduce or eliminate taxes on your estate?

Do you want to include your favorite charity, like Green Mountain United Way, in your gifting plans?

The three basic steps of estate planning are *acquisition* of assets, *wise management* of those assets, and *distribution* of property at death. Several different estate-planning vehicles are available, such as bequests in your will, life insurance, trusts and annuities, which we will explore in the coming issues. People's lives change constantly, so regular reviews of your plans are necessary to reflect the changes that are happening in your life.

Green Mountain United Way does not provide legal advice, but recommends that you consult with your attorney, tax accountant or estate planner to answer the four questions above and to find your best estate-planning avenue.

Beginnings, Washington County Youth Service Bureau's Teen Parent Program, the Family Center of Washington County, and many other non-profits. The clothing will be targeted for low-income families and the receiving organizations will be responsible for equitably distributing the items. Zutano "...strives to support a nurturing world for babies to come into." The Green Mountain United Way is pleased to be able to support this effort and excited to partner with such a socially conscious company.



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Note: Green Mountain United Way is sending as many copies of this newsletter via e-mail as possible. However, we can only do so if we have your e-mail address. Please e-mail your address to gmunitedway@madriver.com if you want to receive your copy by e-mail. And, please bear with us during this transition. Some of you may receive more than one copy by e-mail because of the way our list serve is set up.

Dates To Remember

- May 2008:** Health Awareness Month
- May 2008:** Older Americans' Month
- May 2008:** Fitness Month. "Have you taken a walk today?"
- May 10, 2008:** Postal Food Drive for local food shelves. See page 3 of this newsletter for more information. Call your post office to ask if they are participating.
- May 14, 2008:** Quarterly agency meeting. Watch for more information.
- May 26, 2008:** Memorial Day. GMUW offices will be closed.
- June 28, 2008:** UPS Golf Classic for benefit of Green Mountain United Way at Montague Golf Course, Randolph, VT. For more information, go to www.gmunitedway.org and click on the "UPS Golf Classic" menu item under "Special Events", or call the GMUW office at 802-229-9532.

GMUW & IBM Assist Food Shelves

Green Mountain United Way has once again received funds from IBM with which to assist some of our local food shelves.

This year, the \$1,000 award has been divided equally among the Community Emergency Relief Volunteers in Northfield, the Mad River Valley Interfaith Council in Waitsfield, the Town of Groton Food Shelf and the Lunenburg Food Shelf. In some of these communities, matching funds have been raised to complement the amounts awarded. Anyone wishing to contribute toward this matching challenge is encouraged to contact any of these four organizations.

As in every part of the country, the food pantries in our region are finding it very difficult to keep food on their shelves as more and more families are availing themselves of their services. Rising costs for nearly every necessity is causing them to choose which to pay for - housing, heating fuel, medical bills or food - with many times food being left out when their money has run out.

GMUW is very grateful to IBM for their help and is happy to have been able to make these gifts.