

Working Together

The Newsletter of Monroe County United Ministries

December 2011

Your Financial Contribution Can Reduce MCUM's Challenges

Financial support from the community helps Monroe County United Ministries accomplish a long list of goals: prevent homelessness, prepare children for success in school, help parents stay employed, feed hungry families, and encourage self-sufficiency. Our current food and fund drive, which will run through the end of the year, gives you, your club, your congregation, and your family an opportunity to support essential community services. An envelope is enclosed in this newsletter to make giving your financial support more convenient.

Each year brings MCUM a mix of successes and challenges for our programs, although the current economic climate is increasing our challenges year by year. Here's a snapshot of 2011 so far:

Successes:

- Thirty-eight school-age children benefited from our summer camp.
- A near-record amount, 16,414 pounds, was collected during the recent "Each One, Feed One" Community Food Drive.
- Preschool-age children enrolled in the Childcare Program have benefited from free dental and vision screenings, lead testing, and flu shots.

Challenges:

- Funding challenges have again forced the closure of the Puffin Childcare Classroom. Our waiting list includes 77 children while a classroom sits empty.
- Of the 903 households receiving basic needs assistance so far this year, 32% had never requested MCUM's assistance before.
- New sources of support are required to meet operating needs and cover building repair expenses.

Your support can help us increase our successes and minimize our challenges. With your help, we can move children from a waiting list into a classroom. We can continue to assist our community's most vulnerable citizens. We can help struggling families regain their footing. If you have already made a gift to support MCUM's program, we thank you. If you haven't yet provided your support, please consider using the enclosed envelope. Your generosity makes a difference.

Your Support Makes a Difference

"If it weren't for your food pantry, I wouldn't eat from time to time."

"The MCUM Summer Camp is a safe, convenient, and engaging environment, which comes at a cost we can afford."

"I would like to thank Monroe County United Ministries for helping me get my apartment to start a new life."

"MCUM stands head and shoulders above the others."

"[The MCUM Childcare Program] lived up to and exceeded every one of my expectations."

"Thanks so much for helping my family through a difficult time."

Food Pantry Needs

The pantry welcomes donations of all nonperishable foods, but we currently have a special need for the following items:

- canned chili and other canned meats
- hamburger helper
- pie crust mix (for holiday pumpkin pies!)
- jelly and syrup
- canned and dried fruit

Cleaning Closet Needs

Demand for these items, which can't be purchased with food stamps, is very high. Help restock our shelves with:

- heavy socks for adults
- underwear for adult men and women
- hair conditioner
- floor and spray cleaners
- laundry soap
- razors
- bleach

Special Request for Microwave: A new or like-new microwave is needed for the Childcare Kitchen. A one cubic foot, 1,100 watt carousel microwave oven preferred.

Childcare Needs

The children enrolled in the Childcare Program use many supplies, including:

- preschool-appropriate balls for soccer, basketball, football, etc.
- sidewalk chalk
- pine cones
- gourds (any shape, size, texture)
- wind chimes
- construction paper
- Crayola markers
- liquid glue and glue sticks

Volunteer Opportunities

For more information about these or other positions, visit www.mcum.org, call 339-3429 or contact help@mcum.org.

Featured Volunteer Position

Food Drive Assistants: Drivers are needed to collect food donations at collection sites around the community and deliver them to MCUM during the Winter Food Drive. Are you willing to be on-call for the occasional pickup during and December? The schedule is very flexible but pick ups usually need to happen 8-4, Monday-Friday.

Pantry Assistants: Volunteers are always needed to sort food donations and bag groceries in the Emergency Food Pantry. Set your own schedule during office hours, once you are trained. Light lifting required.

Classroom Assistants: Do you want to work with preschool-age children? Do you love to read? Love to do crafts? Do you enjoy being outside? We will find a task that suits you best.

Opp House Painters: Opportunity House seeks a group or family to paint the inside of the store, preferably between Christmas and New Year's Day. Interested in helping out? Contact Janet Donham, 336-2443.

Calling all musicians! Our preschool children love music. Would you be willing to spend a few hours sharing your instrument with young children? Contact Tina at 339-3429 x19 or education@mcum.org.

Congregation Spotlight: University Baptist Church

by Jen Cook, UBC congregant

It's important to University Baptist Church (UBC) to do our part to help people in need locally. We chose to support MCUM because we know what great work it does in our community. MCUM was part of our annual budget for many years. In 2007 we decided to support MCUM in a more hands-on way by having monthly food drives for MCUM. Giving food is a very tangible way to help and is a service project everyone in the church, from young to old, can be a part of. I coordinate the monthly MCUM drives, Pastor Annette Briggs and the church deacons reinforce and support this service project, and our congregants faithfully bring food and other needed items each month. Congregants are reminded about the drive, and informed about MCUM's current food and cleaning closet needs (and other MCUM info), through the church bulletin, email list, and website (ubcbloomington.org). Included in this information are our monthly and annual collection goals, and our yearly donation to date. Another way we promote our monthly MCUM collection is by displaying the donated items in the sanctuary (in the front of the church so people can view it during the service) on our MCUM Sunday each month. The kids enjoy unpacking the sacks and getting to decide how to display the food.

In recent years, UBC's Vacation Bible School (VBS) has chosen MCUM as their mission project and has had a contest between the boys and the girls to see which team could collect the most items for MCUM. One year the VBS kids collected 159 pairs of socks, and another year they collected 207 pounds of food!

We have learned that having a goal makes the MCUM collection more fun and challenges us to be as generous as possible. We started keeping monthly and annual collection records in 2008. Having seen we were able to collect over a 1000 pounds in 2008, in 2009 we decided to set a monthly goal, and our monthly collections greatly increased. Toward the end of 2009 one member challenged us to reach 2000 pounds by the end of the year. Despite this being a challenging goal for a small congregation, we were excited to reach and exceed that goal and have since aimed to reach at least 2000 pounds a year. We exceeded 2000 pounds again in 2010 and are glad we are on track for meeting this goal again by the end of this year.

On a less regular basis, congregants have also sorted food in MCUM's pantry and have helped with MCUM's August food drive. We hope to increase our volunteer involvement in the future. We look forward to learning more about MCUM when Rebecca Stanze visits our church in January (thanks Rebecca!).

Thank you!

We would like to thank...

- St. Charles Catholic School for collecting 1,915 pounds of food for the Winter Food Drive.
- Phil Davis and Ron Schoknecht for their hard work maintaining our building and grounds.
- Colton Hubbard, SPEA Service Corps Fellow, for sharing his skills and humor with MCUM this year.
- First United Church for collecting 1,312 pounds of food so far this year
- The Spinner and Weavers Guild for donating winter wear.
- Ellen Goodman for helping to fill Santa's goodie bags.
- St. Mark's United Methodist Church for donating used children's books to be enjoyed by our Childcare families.
- all the IU service learning students who have helped in our pantry, classrooms, or childcare kitchen this semester.

Make an Impact with your Estate Plan

In March 1994, the Wetterau Corporation closed down its Bloomington location and over 370 jobs were lost. As its last token of support for the community, employees raised over \$4,000 to donate to MCUM.

This example highlights how something positive can come from the most difficult of circumstances. Creating or updating your estate plan might not be your favorite activity, but it is a chance to consider your lasting legacy, creating positive change in the community.

Sample Language for Your Will or Trust

Making a bequest to MCUM is a simple way to show your long-term commitment to helping our neighbors in need.

Sample Bequest Language:
I hereby leave [specific dollar amount/specific property/specific percentage/rest and remainder, etc.] of my estate to Monroe County United Ministries, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation in Bloomington, Indiana, to be used for the benefit of the organization in such manner as the board of directors may elect.

Healthy Homes: Avoid Those Holiday Pounds

by Patrick Coad, SPEA Service Corps Fellow
with help from www.letsmove.gov

With the holidays upon us, I am reminded of my mother's down home cooking. Turkey, country ham, macaroni and cheese, mashed potatoes and gravy, and, my favorite, the holiday cookies and sweets always laying around the house. As I get older, my mother's cooking seems to taste better and better, but packs on more and more pounds. Besides staying active during the holiday season, here are a few helpful dietary tips to help avoid the weight gain that often comes with the holidays.

- Keep sugar intake to a minimum - drink water or juice rather than soda
- Snack on fruits and vegetables between meals - avoid snacking on leftovers
- Use lean and low fat breakfast meats
- Play backyard football or go for a walk after eating rather than sitting around

Thank You, Pantry Donors

We depend on donations from individuals, clubs, congregations, and families throughout the year. Listed here are some of the groups and households who have contributed in the last month:

Pam and Jef Davidson	Opportunity House
Dorothy Hanvey	Spinners and Weavers Guild
Bloomington Central Lions Club	St. Charles Church
Daughters of Isabella	St. Paul United Methodist Church
First Christian Church	St. Thomas Lutheran Church
First Presbyterian Church	Unitarian Universalist Church
First United Church	University Baptist Church
Highlanders Home Extension Club	Woodhaven Christian Church
McDoel Baptist Church	

MCUM Passed Tests for Five-Star Certification

As part of our Five-Star Certification, through Indiana's Department of Environmental Management, both of our buildings were recently tested for lead and radon. Both buildings were negative for radon. No lead was found but we did remove one item from a classroom that returned with inconclusive but suspicious results.

The 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program for Child Care Facilities ensures child care providers have taken steps to reduce and eliminate hazards that can cause permanent, long term developmental problems in young children. The program includes integrated pest management, tobacco free policies, recycling, and no-idling policies.

Thank You, Volunteers

Volunteers make our programs possible. Thank you to all those who shared their time and talent with us in the last month, including those listed here:

Berea Antaki
Kathryn Boots
Samantha Clodfelter
Phil Davis
James Duzan
Kaitlyn Gorman

Brittany Howard
Sarah Huguenard
Larry Jacobs
Jennifer Lloyd
Rebecca Mandell
Chris Meyer

MCUM Money Matched!

Thank you to everyone who helped us reach our goal of \$7,500 in the Matchstick Endowment Matching Initiative through the Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County. Your donations, along with the \$2,500 match, will stay in our endowment, helping to ensure our programs exist for as long as they are needed.

Thanksgiving Lunch

We appreciate everyone who helped to make our recent Thanksgiving Lunch for childcare families a great success. We served lunch for 200 people! Special thanks to Cynthia Powers and DJ Mackie for their hard work in the kitchen!



Holiday Helping Opportunities

There are still opportunities for you to get involved with MCUM this holiday season, including:

- organize a food drive within your club, congregation or family
- donate hams or turkeys for holiday meals
- donate disposable pans for cooking those hams and turkeys
- volunteer in the food pantry or pick up food donations around the community for the Winter Food Drive
- donate to the rent, mortgage, and utility assistance fund
- purchase toys and supplies for our childcare classrooms (there is no timeline for these donations so waiting for post-holiday sales might maximize your donation)

For more information, and lists of needed items, visit www.mcum.org and click on the snowflakes, or call 339-3429.

Cell Phone Recycling

When you upgrade your cell phone, stop to consider how to dispose of your old one responsibly. Some “recycling” programs ship phones to developing countries where they put human lives and natural resources in danger. MCUM is paid per phone (\$0.50 - \$35) by a recycling/refurbishing company with zero landfill and no-export policies. In addition, your phone will raise money to fund our programs.

Phones can be donated at TIS Bookstore, Opportunity House, MCUM’s offices and anywhere MCUM items are collected.

Clip Labels and Box Tops

Looking for an easy way to help? Collect Labels for Education from Campbell’s products and Box Tops for Education from General Mills products. Just clip this:



or this:



from products you already buy and send them our way. These logos may be in unexpected places so keep your eyes open!

Childcare Classroom Calendars

Staff

Childcare Director: Traci Mehay
Educ. Coordinator: Tina Pender
Cook: Cynthia Powers
Assistant Cook: Derrick Mackie

Puffins: room closed

Seahorses: 2 - 3 year olds

Teacher: Marycarole Matlock
Aide: Amanda Pursell-Smith
Aide: Lisa Minor

Penguins: 3 year olds

Teacher: Susan Williams
Aide: Laura Baker

Otters: 4 year olds

Teacher: Jessica Mackie
Aide: LaDawn Joyner

Dolphins: 5-6 year olds

Teacher: Kim Clay
Aide: Brock Singleton

Puffins

The Puffin Room previously served 2 - 2.5 year olds. This room was closed as a cost-saving measure due to continuing funding challenges. At this time, the Seahorse Room, which had been serving children 2.5 - 3, is serving children ages 2 - 3. Although we had hoped to re-open this classroom in 2012, our budget for the upcoming year, recently finalized by our Board of Directors, will not allow for it. This room will continue to sit empty as our waiting list grows.

Seahorses

December 5 - 9 Music & Dance

The Seahorses experience an exciting week as they dance to their favorite music. There will be country, rock, pop, Kidz Bop and much more. We will read *Clap Your Hands*, *Barn Dance* and *Barnyard Dance*. We will make our own kazoos, drums and streamers. At the end of the week we will have a day of dancing and we will also be practicing for our Holiday Program! Keep a watch out for our invitations and bring the whole family!

December 12 - 16 Small Motor

The Seahorses will be doing a lot of activities with their hands this week. We will practice cutting, stringing, and build with blocks. The Seahorses will put together different puzzles and maybe make their own. The Seahorses will read and play with bag books from the parent resource room. Leading into next week's theme and dressing baby dolls, the Seahorses will practice putting on their coats and shoes.

December 19 - 23 Babies

The Seahorses will talk about babies. We will learn what some baby animals are called, such as a baby goat is called a kid. We will read *You Are Special*, *Little One*, *The New Baby*, and *Oonga Boonga*. We will wash our baby dolls in the water tables and dress them.

Please remember to send warm clothes to school for playing outside as well as an extra set of clothes.

The staff and students of the Seahorse Room would like to wish you a very Happy Holiday season!



Announcements For Parents

Mark your calendars:

The annual MCUM Holiday Program will be held on Monday, December 12, 6:30 - 8:00 PM at Tri-North Middle School. All friends and family are invited to enjoy the show and a light meal together.

MCUM will be closed December 26 - January 2. We look forward to starting the new year with you on January 3.

Parent Involvement Opportunities:

December 2 & 9:
Santa Helpers Wrap Gifts:

Dec. 7: Lunch with your Seahorse
Dec. 14: Lunch with your Penguin
Dec. 21: Lunch with your Otter or Dolphin

Follow MCUM on Facebook!
Learn about volunteer opportunities, win the Tuesday MCUM Quiz, recommend us to others, and more.

Penguins

December 5 - 9 Superheroes & Villains

It's time to break out your comic books. This week the Penguins will discuss our favorite superheroes and villains. We will talk about why we like superheroes and how they help their communities. We will talk about different ways we can help our communities too. At the end of the week, we will talk about which superpowers we would like to have and how we would use them.



December 12 - 16 Winter

The Penguins will share their favorite winter weather activities. We will play with fake snow in our sensory table and talk about how ice freezes so that people can skate on ponds and in skating rinks. We will talk about how to stay warm when we're out in cold weather and how to warm up when back inside. We will work on our motor skills by lacing paper ice skates. We will discuss how animals deal with winter weather. Finally, we will make our own paper snowflakes.

December 19 - 23 Holiday Decorating

With the holidays approaching the Penguins will deck the halls. We will make hand-print wreaths and practice wrapping presents. We will decorate our classroom with holiday colored paper chains. At the end of the week, we will share how each of us will spend our holidays and we'll talk a little about travel safety.

Otters



December 5-16 Holidays Around the World

For two weeks the Otters will spend time learning about different holidays and celebrations from many different places around the world! We will talk about Mardi Gras, Cinco de Mayo, Chinese New Year, Hanakkuh, Kwanzaa, Ramadan, and many, many more! Please come in and share some of your favorite holidays or traditions with us!



December 19-23 Christmas!

After spending two weeks learning about many different holidays celebrated around the world, we will spend our week discussing one that is often celebrated by MCUM Otters. We are all familiar with how our own families celebrate holidays. This week we will spend time learning and sharing how other families enjoy their holidays. We would love for families to get involved, so please come in and share some of your favorite holiday traditions with us!!

Dolphins

December 5-9 Christmas

This week the Dolphins will be busy making the room festive for Santa's big visit. We will decorate our tree, hang up lights and place candy canes on our walls. We will write letters to Santa and post them for him to read when he comes to visit.



December 12-16 Holidays & Celebration

During this week the Dolphins will learn about major holidays that people celebrate all over the world. We will discuss how we celebrate, in our home and families, and compare this to how other people celebrate. The children will begin to see how people often celebrate holidays in a similar manner.



December 19-23 Winter

This week the Dolphins will begin to talk about winter and what changes we see in the weather. We will discuss how the weather changes and why. We will learn all about winter time activities for people and animals, including what hibernation is and where snow comes from. The Dolphins will even get to make their own snow.



Monroe County United Ministries

827 West 14th Court
Bloomington, Indiana 47404
Phone (812) 339-3429
Fax (812) 339-2912
mcum@mcum.org
www.mcum.org

Non-Profit Organization
US Postage Paid
Bloomington, IN 47404
Permit #186

Inside this issue:



Food and Fund Drive

Page 1

Current Needs

Page 2

Spotlight on UBC

Page 3

Healthy Homes

Page 4

Holiday Helping

Page 5

Childcare Calendar

Pages 6-7

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or you want to switch to e-mail delivery, please contact our office at 812-339-3429 or development@mcum.org.

Staff:

Executive Director: Meri Reinhold
Development Coordinator: Rebecca Stanze
Emergency Services Coordinator: Cliff Edens
Emerg. Services Caseworker: Justin Smith
Office Manager: Shannon Hampton
Childcare Director: Traci Mehay
Education Coordinator: Tina Pender
SPEA Service Corps Fellows: Colton Hubbard
Patrick Coad

Hours of Operation:

Office and	Monday - Friday
Emergency	8:00am - noon
Services:	1:00pm - 4:00pm
Childcare:	Monday - Friday
	6:30am - 5:30pm

Please recycle this newsletter or share it with a friend.

Opportunity House, located at 907 W. 11th Street, is a volunteer-run resale shop that raises funds to support MCUM's programs by finding new homes for used items. Store hours are 9:00-2:00, Monday-Saturday, with donations accepted 8:30-3:00. Call 336-2443 for more information.

Donations of gently used items are always welcome, including books, clothing, household items, collectibles, toys, pictures, antiques and linen. Opp House cannot accept stained clothing, large appliance, large furniture, or non-functioning items.

Opportunity House Update

by Janet Donham, Opportunity House Board President

Christmas items are out and selling well. Decorated trees of all sizes, and wreaths are just a few of the items available to you. You should also check out our merchandise for Christmas gifts at a reasonable price. May you have a blessed holiday with loved ones.

The store will close at 2pm on December 23 and re-open on January 2, 2012.