

Working Together

The Newsletter of Monroe County United Ministries

March 2011

“Spring Into Action!” on April 3rd

Join us at the Bloomington-Monroe County Convention Center on Sunday, April 3. The doors open and the silent auction begins at 11:30am. Coffee and snacks prepared by culinary students at Ivy Tech Community College will be available while you enjoy music by a Bloomington High School North jazz combo. A hot buffet lunch with a vegetarian option will be served at 12:30. The event will end with a round of MCUM Bingo. The prize? \$100 in Downtown Bloomington certificates.

Live and silent auction items for all budgets will be available for purchase. Cash, check, Mastercard, or Visa will be accepted. Tickets are available from MCUM volunteers, by calling our office at 812-339-3429 or by visiting www.mcum.org. The website also includes a sample of the auction items.

Matching Up with the Feinstein Foundation

Each spring, the Feinstein Foundation of Rhode Island offers agencies fighting hunger a chance to receive a portion of \$1 million. For the 14th year, MCUM will participate in the “Feinstein Challenge” and take advantage of this wonderful matching gift opportunity.

From March 1st to April 30th, all donations to MCUM will increase the portion of Feinstein money we receive! Donations can include cash, check, and food items (valued at \$1.00 per pound). You can also host a food drive or collection to maximize your impact and the portion of funds we receive. Last year, MCUM supporters donated over \$47,000 and nearly 12,000 pounds of food to meet the challenge...a huge accomplishment!

Making a donation is simple. Just visit www.mcum.org, call, visit, or send a donation through the mail. Don't forget to note that your donation is for the Feinstein Challenge. Remember, only contributions received from March 1st to April 30th will be counted, so act soon!

Our Sponsors Know How to “Spring Into Action!”

Bunger & Robertson

ATTORNEYS AT LAW



Hilliard Lyons

First Insurance Group

United Commerce Bank

These sponsorships have paid for the expenses associated with the event, which means that the proceeds from ticket sales and the auction will benefit the Emergency Services and Childcare Programs.

Childcare Needs

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

- baby dolls and baby doll clothes (preemie and infant clothes will often fit)
- construction paper (9x12) any color
- 2.7 qt containers with latching lids (available at Wal-Mart and other stores)
- Barbies and Barbie clothes
- Washable paint
- Glue sticks

Cleaning Closet Needs

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

- socks for adults
- feminine hygiene products
- diapers, especially sizes 1, 4 & 5
- new women's underwear

Food Pantry Needs

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

- juices, especially in 46 oz bottles
- "non-traditional" canned veggies such as greens, carrots, yams
- canned meats such as chili, beef stew, spam, tuna, chicken
- snacks and desserts such as pudding and popcorn

Volunteer Opportunities

For more information about these or other positions, contact Cliff Edens at (812)339-3429 or help@mcum.org unless another name is provided below.

Featured Volunteer Position

Luncheon Assistant: Help out before, after or during the "Spring Into Action!" Luncheon on April 3rd. Jobs range from event photographer to clean up helper. Contact Rebecca at development@mcum.org or 339-3429 to discuss the possibilities!

Maintenance Volunteers: Volunteers are needed to perform basic maintenance tasks to fit any skill level, from changing light bulbs to basic carpentry. Work is usually performed between 8-4, Monday-Friday. Contact Meri at mcum@mcum.org or 339-3429.

Calling all artists! Our preschool children love art. Would you be willing to spend a few hours sharing your talent with young children? A demonstration and/or a hands-on activity would be welcome. Contact Tina at 339-3429 or education@mcum.org.

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.

Newsletter Team: Our team meets one morning during the last week of each month to prepare the newsletter for mailing. If you would like to be notified of the dates, contact Rebecca at 339-3429 or development@mcum.org.

Family Literacy: Celebrate the Seuss!

by Danielle Rankin, SPEA Service Corps Fellow

During March, the country will celebrate “National Reading Month” in honor of the magical and wonderful Dr. Seuss. During his lifetime, Dr. Seuss wrote 46 books and transformed children’s literature to make it fun and accessible. Classics like “The Cat in the Hat” and “Green Eggs and Ham” teach children simple but effective lessons on everything from counting and trying new foods to making new friends. You can celebrate the Seuss legacy by attending a special event at the library!

Saturday, March 5 from 1-4 p.m. A FREE event for all ages!

Visit the Monroe County Public Library for a Read Across America birthday celebration for Dr. Seuss. Arrive any time between 1-4 p.m. to see a Seusstacular live performance by Bloomington High School North students, make Seuss-picious crafts, and play Seuss-rific games!

Hit the Net

www.seussville.com hosts a wealth of reading games, word searches, puzzles, and activities related to all things Dr. Seuss.

Play Dress Up

Host a Dr. Seuss costume party where each child comes as a character from the books—make sure to read aloud a classic rhyming tale!

Homeward Bound: Fighting Homelessness One Step at a Time



Please join MCUM for the upcoming 9th Annual Homeward Bound Walk on Sunday, April 10, 2011 at Noon in Third Street Park. The walk benefits 11 local agencies, including MCUM, which provide services and raise awareness for homelessness issues in the community.

Last year more than 800 walkers raised nearly \$55,000 for local agencies to help meet the needs of people facing homelessness and poverty.

Ready to fight homelessness, support MCUM, and enjoy a beautiful day outside with friends? Now is the time to register a team and start raising money. Don't want to start a team of your own? Join MCUM's! To register or join a team, simply visit:

www.homewardboundindiana.org/bloomington

Thank you!

We would like to thank...

- the Sherwood Oaks Christian Church for donating 300 pounds of cleaning supplies and other items for the Emergency Services Program.
- the anonymous donor who provided our Office Manager with a fancy, new ergonomic keyboard. She is thrilled!
- Opportunity House for pledging their support of the 2011 Summer Camp Program
- the committee volunteers who are helping to organize the “Spring Into Action!” Luncheon: Kathleen Plucker, Rachel James, Shalisha Smith, Jennifer Lloyd, and John Rucker.
- the Bloomington Lions Clubs for their support of the Emergency Food Pantry.
- the members of Church Women United for their ongoing support.
- the volunteers who are helping to administer surveys for clients seeking basic needs assistance.

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!

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.

Good News for Puffins & Summer Campers

After being closed since August due to funding losses, the Puffin Room will re-open on March 7 with ten children ages two to two and a half. See page 6 to learn what the Puffins will be doing in their first week of class! During the closure, MCUM's waiting list grew to a near-record length with more than 70 children waiting for affordable care.

Closing the room provided cost savings related to cleaning, utilities, and staff, which allowed our 2010 year to end close to the amount budgeted. We have made a six month commitment to serving the new Puffins, at which time we will re-assess our financial situation for the remainder of the year.

In addition to committing to serve our youngest children, we are also committed to the oldest children we enroll, our summer campers. Thanks to a pledge of support from our valuable partner, Opportunity House, we will again be able to offer affordable summer care for children ages 6-12 in 2011. This program is essential to helping families maintain their stability during the summer break from school. Parents are so appreciative of this program, often stating that their alternatives are leaving young children at home alone all summer or leaving their jobs in the hopes of returning to employment in the fall.

MCUM and Your Estate Plan: Helping Thankful Parents

The Childcare Program at MCUM offers low-income families quality, affordable preschool and kindergarten education, a valuable resource that doesn't go unnoticed. A donation through your estate plan can ensure that MCUM's programs continue supporting the success of families far into the future.

"[MCUM] continues to be wonderful. If money were no object, we would still choose MCUM. It's comforting to know that our children are safe and cared for. Our children are always excited about going to school and often discuss the things they've learned and experienced in the classroom."

-Parent of two children in the MCUM Childcare program

There are several giving options available to you that may provide tax benefits without impacting your current income, such as gifts of life insurance or including MCUM in your will or bequest. To learn more about making a gift, please call Rebecca Stanze or Meri Reinhold at 812-339-3429.

Dolphins Celebrate St. Valentine

The Dolphins recently enjoyed a Valentine's Day Party, featuring shoeboxes covered in hearts, games, and special treats. Pictured here: Dolphins react with joy as they open their box of treats.



Assessing the Emergency Services Program

As part of our efforts to evaluate our Emergency Services Program, which provides basic needs assistance for people in crisis, we are launching an effort to survey clients about their needs and how well we are able to meet those needs. We appreciate the assistance of several volunteers who administered the surveys during the month of February: Colton Hubbard, Jo Weddle, Norm Overly, Sachet Watson, Carol Peterman, Mary Ellen Brown, Chris Tietz and Marjie Risen. MCUM's Advocate for Community Engagement (ACE), Maya Menon, helped us in recruiting volunteers.

Light the Way for MCUM

This is the sixth year MCUM has participated in the Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County's Matchstick Endowment Matching Initiative. When community members donate \$7,500 for MCUM's endowment fund, an additional \$2,500 will be added by the foundation. This is a great opportunity to maximize the impact of your donation, thanks to a 3:1 match, and to strengthen the endowment that will support our programs for as long as they are needed. Donations should be sent directly to the foundation:



Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County
101 W. Kirkwood, Suite 321
Bloomington, Indiana 47404-6129

Please note "MCUM/Matchstick" on the memo line. Donations can also be made online at www.cfbmc.org. Contact the foundation at (812) 333-9016 or our office at (812) 339-3429 if you have any questions about the Matchstick Program.

Remember MCUM When Writing 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.

Looking for Quality Childcare?

Check out www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder. This website provides a list of licensed childcare options in your area and explains the differences among licensed childcare centers (such as MCUM), licensed childcare homes and registered ministries. This site also shows the results of recent licensing inspections. Visit www.naeyc.org for a list of childcare programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children or more information about accredited programs.

Childcare Classroom Calendars

Staff

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

Puffins: 2 - 2.5 year olds

Teacher: Susan Williams
Aide: Emily Walden

Seahorses: 2.6 - 3 year olds

Teacher: Marycarole Matlock
Aide: Melissa Chambers

Penguins: 3 year olds

Teacher: Mary Ellen Pierce
Aide: Laura Baker

Otters: 4 year olds

Teacher: Jessica Smith
Aide: LaDawn Joyner

Dolphins: 5-6 year olds

Teacher: Kim Clay
Aide: Brock Singleton

Floater: Amanda Pursell

Puffins

March 7-11 - Eric Carle

This week, the Puffins will explore the many works of children's author Eric Carle. Throughout the week, we will follow characters from *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and *The Very Busy Spider*.

March 14-18 - St. Patrick's Day

This week we will celebrate St. Patrick's Day by decorating our room with shamrocks, painting rainbows, and counting coins from our pot of gold.

March 21-25 - Nursery Rhymes

First, we will follow Mary and her little lamb. We will make lambs of our own, using cotton balls to create the lambs' wool. Then the Puffins will blow their horns and play other instruments with little boy blue. We will play with potting soil in the sensory table and see how Mistress Mary's garden grows.

March 28- April 1 - Fairy Tales

This week, the Puffins will share their favorite fairy tales. We will make these tales come to life by dressing up in costumes and acting them out.

Seahorses

February 28-March 4 - Nursery Rhymes

Humpty Dumpty will be put back together again this week, as the Seahorses study nursery rhymes. How many buckets of water can you fetch up the hill? The Seahorses will act out the nursery rhymes on the flannel board and with puppets. The "Itsy Bitsy Spider" will come out along with "Hey Diddle Diddle!"

March 7-11 - Community Helpers

What would you like to be when you grow up? This week the Seahorses will talk about and play act their favorite community helpers. We will ask our parents to tell us what they do and transform our room into a grocery store, a police station, a garage, an animal shelter, a research laboratory and much more!

March 14-18 - Dr. Seuss

This week the Seahorses will try one of their favorite foods - green eggs and ham! We will read *Hop on Pop* and write our own story about the Seahorses. What is your favorite color of fish? We will read *One Fish Two Fish, Red Fish Blue Fish*. Of course, we have to make Oobleck this week as we read the Oobleck book.

March 21-25 - Spring

Can you hear the birds? The Seahorses are so excited about spring! We will plant some flowers to see what happens. What are the signs of spring? We will need to make some umbrellas this week to keep up with the weather!

March 28-31 - Fairy Tales

Little Red Riding Hood will come out to play this week in the Seahorse room along with *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. However, some of this fairy tale week will be in sign language. The Seahorses will even make their own gingerbread houses!

Announcements for Parents

Kindergarten: Know Your Options

Did you know that your child can complete kindergarten in the Dolphin Room? If you would like to learn more about what the Dolphins will be learning in the upcoming year and how MCUM compares with MCCSC's kindergarten, attend our kindergarten information session.

When: Tuesday, March 8, 4:45-5:30 pm
Where: Gym (Administrative Building)
Who: Parents with a child who is currently enrolled at MCUM who will start kindergarten in 2011.

Parents Empowering Parents Committee Meeting

The PEP Club will be meeting Monday, March 28th, at 4:45 pm in the Teacher Resource Room. We will be discussing Saturday play dates, the Scholastic Book Fair and gardening opportunities. A sign-up sheet will be posted at the front counter for anyone who plans to attend this meeting. We are gearing up for a busy spring, so please plan to join us. If you have any questions, please stop by the childcare office and see Tina.

Penguins

February 28-March 4 - Dr. Seuss

This week, the Penguins will immerse themselves in the great works of one of the world's most famous authors, Dr. Seuss. We will enjoy green eggs and ham, hopping on Pop, and the antics of a mischievous cat as we learn about rhyming. We will also learn valuable life lessons as we visit the Sneetches and follow Horton as he protects the citizens of Whoville.

March 7-11 - Eric Carle

Eric Carle is a master at combining beautiful artwork with simple text to create a story that is both appealing and educational. For many children, the story of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* leaves a lasting impression about how a butterfly comes into being.

March 14-18 - Curious George

This week the Penguins will be at their nosiest! We will explore our natural curiosity with *Curious George*. We will do a lot of experiments, exploring, discussing, and reading. George will be right by our sides to help us along. We will finish off the week going over our favorite discoveries!

March 21-25 - Winnie the Pooh

This week we will continue our study of our favorite authors and characters with A.A. Milne's most loved creation, *Winnie-the-Pooh*. On Friday we will enact one of the Pooh stories by helping Eeyore celebrate his birthday.

March 28-April 1 - Storytelling

This week we will learn that some stories can be shared without the benefit of books to read or with pictures to look at. The Penguins will get the chance to hear stories told and then they will be asked to illustrate them. They will also get the chance to dictate stories of their own!

Otters

February 28-March 4 - Dr. Seuss

The Otters will celebrate the life and works of Dr. Seuss this week. We will read some of our favorite Seuss stories, try some Seuss-inspired treats, have a school-wide "crazy" week, and even eat some green eggs and ham!

March 7-11 - Weather

We discuss what the weather looks like outside our classroom each morning, but this week the Otters will learn what causes some of our favorite weather. We will read books about snow, rain, tornadoes, and hurricanes and think of ways to create art that represents various types of weather.

March 14-18 - St. Patrick's Day

With St. Patrick's Day on Thursday, the Otters will learn about the holiday and how it is celebrated. We will spend our week wearing a lot of green, making shamrock necklaces, painting rainbows, counting gold coins, and discussing what wishes we would make if we were to meet a leprechaun.

March 21-25 - Ponds

With spring here, the Otter room will be buzzing as we talk about the things one might see on, in, and around a pond. Our library will be full of books with stories and pictures about pond life to help us when we try to create our very own pond in our sensory tables. Feel free to come in and join!

March 28-April 1 - Nutrition

The Otters will be busy as we spend this week learning about nutrition. We will explore the food guide pyramid, discuss our favorite healthy snacks and drinks, share our favorite things to eat with our families, and learn why food is so important for our bodies. We might even prepare our own nutritious treats!

Dolphins

February 28-March 4 - Dr. Seuss

We will celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday this week with many of the wonderful children's books he authored. This week we will welcome all of his books into our room's library, and our senses will be delighted by the mix of fun and lyrical beauty that only Dr. Seuss can inspire.

March 7-11 - Nursery Rhymes

The Dolphins will learn various traditional nursery rhymes this week. Not only do these nursery rhymes catch children's attention but they also help with memorization and add new words to our vocabulary. We will make these familiar rhymes come to life with music, movement, puppets and art.

March 14-18 - Emotions

This week we will talk about the different emotions a person may feel. We all experience a range of emotions throughout the day and each day we will let you know what types of emotions we feel and why we feel that way.

March 21-25 - Spring

The Dolphins will celebrate the return of warm weather by learning about spring. We will learn about the birds, wind, rain, and of course, the sun. We will talk about how we could not survive without any of these things. At the end of the week we will take our first nature walk to see what our senses tell us about spring.

March 28-April 1 - Growing Things

We are going to kick this week off learning about plants. We will learn about all the things necessary to plant seeds and make them grow. We will do experiments to discover where seeds grow best and predict how long they will take to sprout.

Monroe County United Ministries

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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
Administrative Assistant: Jill Edie

Hours of Operation:

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

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.

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.

Store hours are 9:00-2:00, Monday-Saturday, with donations accepted 8:30-3:00. Call 336-2443 for more information.

Opportunity House Update

by Janet Donham, Opportunity House Board President

Think spring! Our Winter Clearance Sale has started and spring items will be arriving daily. We will accept donations of winter, summer and holiday items all year round.

Please recycle this newsletter or share it with a friend.