

what matters

December 2006

Upcoming Events

**Dec. 8 United Way
Community Night**

The Park at West End

Open at 5:00 pm

Free Merry-go-Round
and Ferris Wheel rides

**Dec. 14 United Way
Wrap-up**

*Knights of Columbus Hall
Columbus Acres*

11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Volunteer and Company
Recognition Awards

Mission

To improve lives by connect-
ing people and resources in
our six-county area

Vision

To be a community problem
solver for our six-county area

Can you help?

‘Our communities have a long tradition of giving, of caring and of neighbor helping neighbor. It’s a tradition that has helped improve the lives of so many people.’

As the annual United Way campaign is nearing its completion, we need your help. Many people in our communities face daily challenges: finding quality child care that they can afford or providing services for aging parents. Some may be going through a rough patch, while others are struggling to break out of a cycle of dependency. The sad reality is this: there are men, women and children living among us who need our help.

“We are reaching out to businesses that care for our region, but are not supporting the community through United Way. Any company, large or small can run a campaign,” said Sam Sicard, 2006 United Way Campaign Chairman.

2006 Campaign Successes

- ♦ 55 new donors-businesses or community contacts - participating in the United Way campaign.
- ♦ Individuals giving at the Cornerstone Leadership Level - those giving \$2,500 to \$9,999 annually - raised over \$100,000 in new donations.
- ♦ Campaign events taking place during the month of November at companies



Donations to United Way of Fort Smith Area will be allocated in 2007 to partner agencies who provide lasting change in the focus areas of: Ensuring Children Succeed, Building Strong Communities, Providing Basic Needs and Building Adult Independence.

as they wrap-up their campaigns include cookbooks for sale, Eat Out for United Way, bake sales, cinnamon rolls for sale, chili cool-offs, basket raffles, 50/50 drawings, drawings for prizes and days off. More than 40 presentations were conducted in companies in our six-county area.

“We still need your gift. We live in a generous community that understands the needs of those who are less fortunate,” said Sicard. “Please help us help others and make your gift by calling United Way at 479-782-1311 or visiting www.united-wayfortsmith.org. Together, we can help people build better and more successful lives.”

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Power of the Purse benefits children

Approximately \$5,000 was raised during United Way's Power of the Purse luncheon on October 12. The event was hosted by United Way's Women's Leadership Circle. Membership has grown to almost 100 women leaders who give \$1,000 as individuals or \$1,500 as a couple.

This event celebrated women and their philanthropy in the community. Proceeds benefitted United Way's early literacy initiative, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

In partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, the WLC is targeting at-risk children and providing them with a book a month from birth to age five. Ten percent of giving to WLC is allocated to a community impact fund. This year WLC used more than \$8,000 for the early literacy initiative.

"It is known that more than 50% of children entering kindergarten in Fort Smith perform two to three years behind their developmental norm. It is also known that families living in poverty have less than 10 children's books in the home. United Way's early literacy initiative is working to break the barriers to help children succeed," noted Ann Dawson, WLC Co-Chair.

"Our community needs to focus on success for our children. Putting books in the hands of our children is a way of promoting their success," said Angela Tilley, Executive Director, United Way of Fort Smith Area.

The luncheon at the Fort Smith Convention Center featured more than 70 handbags and purses up for bid during a silent auction. A collection of antique purses, donated by a WLC member, saw competitive bidding by the attendees.

During the noon hour, Linda Siebold, Editor of *E Fort Smith* magazine, moderated a brief program. Sharing bits of wit, wisdom and advice were Judy Englehart, Executive Vice-President of Rebsamen Insurance; Cathy Williams, Community Partnerships and Career



State Representative Shirley Walters stands by the leopard and leather purse she donated to Power of the Purse. Both Ginger Beebe and Susan Hutchinson, whose husbands were candidates for Governor, along with Janet Huckabee, Arkansas' First Lady, donated personal bags for the auction.

Education Supervisor for Fort Smith Public Schools and Angela Tilley, Executive Director of United Way of Fort Smith Area.

Holiday Giving Guide



Holiday Giving Guide inserted in newsletter

The United Way guide to holiday giving and volunteer opportunities is included in this newsletter. For additional copies contact the United Way office, 320 South 18th Street, or access the website, www.unitedwayfortsmith.org

This *Holiday Giving Guide* is the perfect way to find opportunities for families or individuals to give back during the holidays in Western Arkansas. The guide features the needs of 35 area organizations. It's another way of how United Way works to connect people and resources in our communities.

YLG'ers celebrate Falloween

Approximately 100 members of United Way's Young Leadership Group, spouses and children enjoyed an evening of fun October 26 at their annual Falloween event.

Held at West End Park, there were free Ferris Wheel and Merry-Go-Round rides, pumpkin painting, crafts, go fishing, hat making and grab bags for all the children. Bedford Camera and Video took photos in front of a pirate ship backdrop designed and painted by YLG members.

Music was provided by former YLG member, Randy Ford. A special thank you to Arvest Bank for providing their grill and grillers with plenty of hot dogs and hamburgers.



Children attending Falloween gathered for a photo and for ribbons for their costumes.



Even the little Falloweeners took time and patience to paint their pumpkin just so.



Free Ferris Wheel and Merry-go Round rides were enjoyed by adults and children.

Giving to United Way has never been easier

A federal law was enacted in August allowing IRA owners to share the wealth of their retirement savings by giving directly to charity - without first counting it as income and paying income tax.

In 2006 and 2007, holders of traditional and Roth IRAs who are at least 70 1/2 years old can make direct charitable transfers up to \$100,000 per year.

Please contact your financial advisor for more details



Rolling around for United Way

Did you see the newest signs displayed around town? The "Giving that Works, Caring that Counts" banners were on the sides of Fort Smith Transit buses this fall.



Takeo Suzuki speaks to the Young Leadership Circle about Japan.

Konnichi wa* and more

Takeo Suzuki, Assistant Provost for International Program Development at the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith, was the final speaker in the 2006 Educational Roundtable Series for United Way's Young Leadership Group.

More than 20 YLG'ers learned a little more about

Japan, its culture, language and geography. Takeo noted that the United States and Japan are neighbors with nothing but water between them. He is working to recruit exchange students and partnerships between Japan and Fort Smith; ultimately to make a difference in Fort Smith.

* Hello in Japanese



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UNITED WAY'S COMMUNITY NIGHT AT



**THE PARK
AT WEST END
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8
OPEN AT 5:00 PM
FREE
MERRY-GO-ROUND
AND
FERRIS WHEEL
RIDES**

United Way Funded Agencies

Last year, United Way's 32 agencies helped more than 260,000 men, women, and children find the help they needed. United Way serves people in six counties including Crawford, Franklin, Logan and Sebastian counties in Arkansas and LeFlore and Sequoyah counties in Oklahoma.

Ensuring Children Succeed

- Boys & Girls Club of Paris
- Boys & Girls Club of Sequoyah County
- Boys & Girls Club of South Logan County
- Fort Smith Boys & Girls Clubs
- Girl Scout Council of Mount Magazine Area
- Girls Incorporated
- Girls Shelter of Fort Smith
- Lincoln Childcare Center
- Ozark Area Youth Organization
- Sebastian County Boys & Girls Club
- The Boys Shelter
- Van Buren Boys and Girls Club
- Westark Area Council, Boy Scouts
- Suburban League
- Stepping Stone School

Building Strong Communities

- Center for Arkansas Legal Services
- Project Compassion

Providing Basic Needs

- Clothes Closet
- Community Dental Clinic
- Community Services Clearinghouse
- River Valley Regional Foodbank
- Salvation Army

Building Adult Independence

- Abilities Unlimited
- ARC for the River Valley
- Community Mentoring Program
- Crisis Center for Women
- Fountain of Youth Adult Day Care
- Gateway House
- Harbor House
- Literacy Council of Western Arkansas
- Next Step Day Room
- Sebastian Retired Citizens Assoc. (SRCA)