



Matagorda County United Way *REACHING OUT*

March 2007

Volume 11, Number 1

2006-07 Campaign

Matagorda County United Way raised over \$450,000 in pledges thanks to the companies, their employees, and the citizens of Matagorda County and Wharton County. With your generosity we will be able to fund 28 programs with 19 non-profit social service organizations.

Certificates of appreciation were handed out to 35 companies, small businesses, school districts, and governmental agencies for their 2006-07 pledges to MCUW at the MC United Way Volunteer and Appreciation Luncheon held on January 31st.

Platinum donors of more than \$10,000 included: **Celanese, Lyondell, H.E.B., STP Nuclear Operating Company, Williams Company, and Zachry Construction @ Old Ocean.**

Gold Donors of \$1,000—\$9,999 included: **AT&T, Barrett Minerals, Bay City Gas Company, Carmage & Martha Ann Walls Foundation, Chevron/Phillips, Conoco/Phillips, H.E.B. El Campo, H.E.B. Wharton, Inteplast Group Ltd., Matagorda General Hospital, The Trull Foundation, Valero Energy Corporation, Wal-Mart Bay City, Wal-Mart El Campo, Wal-Mart Wharton, and Zachry Construction @ Wadsworth.**

Silver Donors of \$500—\$1,000 included: **Duke Energy, IBC Bank, Lacks Bay City, Louise Elementary, Matagorda County, Palacios Central Elementary, and Wells Fargo.**

Bronze Donors of less than \$500.00 included: **AEP, Bay City ISD, Bowers Inc., McDonald's Restaurant, Tenie Holmes Elementary, and Matagorda Elementary.**

Special Awards were also presented to **Barrett Minerals** and **Bay City Gas** for having 100% Employee and Company Participation, and the Local Media Award went to **Bay City Tribune**. See related stories for our Good Neighbor award, Volunteer of the Year Award, as well as the MCUW incoming and outgoing Board Members for 2007. Other recipients included Campaign Committee Members, Company Campaign Coordinators, and, of course, **Shelly Heuser** and **Simon DeSoto** the 2006-07 Campaign Chair and Co-chair.

Thank you

We would like to thank all the companies and organizations who helped to be event sponsors for this year's Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. Without your help we would not be able to thank all of our campaign committees, companies, volunteers, agencies, and fundraising teams for all the support they give throughout the year.

Our Thanks go out to the following Event sponsors:
**Celanese, Lyondell Chemical, STPNOC, Trull Foundation,
Wells Fargo Bank, & Zachry Construction**

*"What
Matters"*

*"Together we
Matter"*

Williams Companies Gets Good Neighbor Award

MCUW's annual meeting brought good news not only to local funded agencies, campaign committees, and volunteers, but also to one of Matagorda Counties own industry leaders. Williams Companies received the *Good Neighbor Award* from Matagorda County United Way at the Annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon in January. "We are so grateful for the wonderful things Williams Co. and employees have done for the people of this community," said Executive Director, Tressa Leadford. They re-roofed a house for a senior, replaced sheetrock in the home from the water leak, and fixed the roof on her porch. Also at Thanksgiving and Christmas, they put together food baskets for 35 families and purchased Christmas gifts for 20 children. "Having someone to call on when our clients need something beyond the norm is a blessing." "Our hats are off to Williams Co. Management for backing their employees and to the employees who volunteered their time and resources to help those less fortunate."

Beth Ellen Whitley 2006 Volunteer of the Year

Beth Ellen Whitley, of Bay City, excitedly accepted her new title of Matagorda County United Way 2006 Volunteer of the Year during the January Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. Beth, a volunteer for the Boy Scouts of America, volunteered to take over the Brahman district Day Camp function of Program Director after only one year of experience with Day Camp in any capacity. The Program Director is responsible for coordinating the content that makes up virtually all of the camp, and the planning was already 3 or 4 months late at being started when she took over. Beth also helped work through the new State of Texas requirements which led to the creation of new and untested staff certification documentation, and she ensured the staff was prepared. Beth serves Bay City Pack 4545 as Treasurer, Advancement Coordinator, and Committee Member. During the school year she volunteers weekly at the McAllister Middle School and Bay City Junior High School. Volunteers such as Beth Whitley are the life blood of non-profit organizations. Other nominees for this prestigious award included: Nan Eldridge –American Red Cross, Suzie Smith—Bay City Day Care, Grace Gideon—Robert Duran Caring & Sharing Food Pantry.

MCUW Board Bids Farewell To A Few And Welcomes Newcomers

Capt. Robert Garcia, Sheriff James Mitchell, and Simon DeSoto were honored with a plaque at the MCUW annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. They served 7 years each on the MCUW Board. Capt. Garcia had served as Chairman for 3 ½ years. Simon and Sheriff Mitchell served on the Marketing/Campaign Committee every year. **Kari Crawford** with Celanese was welcomed to the Board at the Annual Meeting. Also at the meeting, Mike Reddell with the Bay City Tribune was voted in as a new board member once again. Mike had been off the board for a year and was honored to rejoin MCUW's team.

"Real Lives.
Real
Impact."

"Volunteers are
not paid - not
because they are
worthless, but
because they are
priceless." -
unknown

2007 Matagorda County United Way Officers and Board of Directors

Mark Thornton - Chairman
Lloyd Atherton - 1st Vice President
Sheila Ormand - 2nd Vice President
Stephanie Lovelady - Secretary
Dr. Juan A. Jasso - Financial Officer

Kathleen Cornett	-	STPNOC
Mike Reddell	-	The Daily Tribune
Bobby Rodriguez	-	Bay City Police Dept.
J. Charles Allison	-	Self-Employed
Mitch Thames	-	Bay City Chamber of Commerce
Kelly Ross	-	STPNOC
Karri Crawford	-	Celanese
John O'Brien	-	Van Vleck ISD
Joan Perez	-	H.E.B.
Vatsa Kumar	-	Jitney Taxi

***United Way
Makes Good
Sense:
It's local
It's focused on
solutions
It's efficient...
It's what
matters!***

Local EFSP Board receives \$27,520 to assist with Emergency Food & Shelter For Area Residents

In January the Matagorda County Emergency Food & Shelter Program (EFSP) was awarded **\$27,520.00** from the Federal Emergency Management Associations (FEMA) Emergency Food & Shelter Program to assist area residents with utilities, shelter, and food. Five Local Receptiant Organizations (LRO) were selected by the MC EFSP board to receive these funds and provide the assistance needed by citizens of Matagorda County. LROs for 2007 include: Economics Action Committee, Friends of Elder Citizens in Palacios, St Vincent DePaul, Harvest House, and Robert Duran Caring & Sharing Food Pantry.

The first of February, as Executive Director and local EFSP board member, I sent a letter requesting **an additional \$40,000** from the State Set-aside committee for Matagorda County citizens. Following are some excerpts from that funding request.

- Matagorda County is a County with population just under 38,000.
- We are a rural coastal community covering more than 1,114 square miles with no public transportation.
- Matagorda County has unemployment rate of 8.2%.
- Median income for Matagorda County is \$31,884, which is almost \$8,083 less per household than the state average.
- One of every four children in Matagorda County is uninsured.
- The County has been declared a medical and dental shortage area.

- 18.1% of County residents live below the federal poverty level.
- 70% of public school students qualify for free or reduced lunch programs.
- Almost 3,250 individuals qualify for food stamps monthly, which is 8.5% of the County population.
- 18% of County residents are considered functionally illiterate.
- More than 150 families are currently qualified for the TANF programs.
- Local food pantries are seeing at least 1100 families monthly. With area food banks unable to fill orders, the local pantries are forced to go without food, shut the doors, or buy at retail prices.
- The 2006-2007 United Way fundraising campaign is \$50,000 short of their \$500,000 goal, which was increased this year by \$50,000 from last year. The local agencies struggle every year to assist the community with what little funding they get from United Way and other grants.

Although the EFSP funds are not designed for disaster purposes, the above factors greatly affect not only a family's ability to recover and meet monthly expenditures, but also the local social service organizations ability to assist in those emergency times.

Upcoming Events

American Red Cross – Rio Colorado Chapter

Heroes Campaign continues till **May 31st**

April 20th – BBQ Fundraiser @ STP

April 27th – Dancing w/ the Stars – Hosted by Bay City Chamber of Commerce @ the Civic Center at 7:00. Tickets are \$10.00 a person

May 12th – Sargent's Heroes for the American Red Cross Fishing Tournament. Sponsored by Mat. Co. Sheriffs Dept. and the Town of Sargent.

May 19th – MASH Bash @ the Civic Center

The following are classes w/ Community Ed will be taught by Red Cross

April 14th – Babysitter Training

March 20th, April 10th, & May 15th – Infant/Child CPR Training (5:00 PM – 10:00 PM)

March 27th, May 1st, & May 22nd – First Aid Training (6:00 PM – 10:00 PM)

April 3rd & May 8th – Adult CPR Training (6:00 PM – 10:00 PM)

Please contact Red Cross office @ 245-3056 for any questions.

Association for Retarded Citizens

March 15th – Birthday Celebration Party for birthdays of the month.

Next celebration is **April 19th**.

Celebration parties are every 3rd Thursday of the month.

Boy Scouts

March 31st - Brahman District Pinewood Derby in El Campo

March 30th – April 1st Brahman District Spring Camporee @ Bay City Riverside Park

April 24th - Pack 1219 Van Vleck – Membership Rally

June 11th – 14th - Brahman District Cub Scout Day Camp – Crescent Wharton Co Fairgrounds

June 23rd - Leadership Training – Northside Center El Campo

“United Way's not just a fundraiser - Collaboratives & Coalitions are the key”

CASA

In April CASA will be promoting Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month. CASA staff and volunteers will have a booth at Market Days to promote child abuse. They will also have a raffle that day with lots of goodies. Tickets can be purchased through any CASA Board Member, CASA volunteer, or at the CASA offices.

Crisis Center

In April Crisis Center will be promoting Nat'l Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Friends of Elder Citizens

March 22nd – Fieldtrip to the Herb Cottage in Hallettsville
For more info please contact the center @ (361) 972-2715

Girls in Scouting

Easter Baskets for Sale - ends **March 25th**

Community Resource Coordination Groups for Families (CRCGF) Meeting

March 21st, April 18th, and May 16th at 11:30 am at the Golden Corral Restaurant.

The CRCGF made up of public agencies and private organizations that work together to assist individuals who have multiple agency needs. The group meets monthly to learn more about the social services available in the community. Each month a different organization does a presentation about their organization and what is available to clients. Time to collaborate with others or get assistance for a client is provided at the end of each session.

Please contact MCUW at 245-5852 for more info or questions.

M.E.H.O.P

April 13th – Chicken Fried Steak Plates. Tickets are \$7.00 and can be purchased at the MEHOP office. Plates will be served at St. Mark's Episcopal Church @ 2200 Ave E

May 11th – Dinner Dance & Silent Auction @ the Civic Center.

Looking for Corporate Sponsors – \$500 a table for 10

Please contact Brenda or Phyllis @ 245-2008 for any questions.

Teen Court

March 31st - BBQ fundraiser @ Hardeman Park in the Teen Center building. Tickets are \$6.50 each or 2/\$12.00 and can be purchased at the center.

March 30th - Eggs-travaganza held at Hardeman Park on March 30th @ 7:00 P.M. by Teen Court and Parks & Rec. Cost of entry is \$3:00. There will be an outdoor movie.

Be sure to bring lounge chairs or blankets.

April 12th – 13th - Youth Advocacy & Trial Competition. Open to any youth that may be interested.

Please call Kelly Rodriguez @ 245-1401 for more information.

MCUW
Vision Statement

**“Created to
Serve,
Committed to
Care”**

Office Happenings



Literacy Book-Give-a-way - As collaboration with First Book-Matagorda, we recently received more than 2500 books for our Kids Korner Literacy Program. **Any child** can come into the United Way office at 2417 Avenue G and receive a free book for their very own. They are eligible for one book a month as long as supplies last. We are looking for a volunteer to go at least one day a month to area day cares, housing authority, schools, and read to the kids and distribute books. If you are interested please give Tressa a call at 979-245-5852.

First Quarter Allocation payments have been distributed to the 19 non-profit Community Care agencies approved for funding in 2007. In addition to these 19 non-profits, designations have been accepted for 16 other non-profit organizations through the MCUW annual campaign.

Fundraising — With the 2006-07 Campaign complete. Activities and preparations are underway for the coming fall campaign. Video production, Brochure preparation, Combined Federal Campaign Approval, etc.

Memorial Gifts – A Memorial gift was received in the name of Matt Armatta from Betty Armatta. THANK YOU! All memorial gifts are placed in a permanent endowment to assist in the continuation of Matagorda County United Way's efforts to help the citizens of Matagorda County.



HELPLINE - Our in-house Information & Referral service averages 9000 calls annually. Are your parents having difficulty paying for prescription drugs? Would you like to volunteer your time for a worthy cause? For the most up to date local social service information give us a call or email at mcuw@sbcglobal.net

Success...to leave the world a bit better...to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. That is to have succeeded. - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Thank you all for your support and encouragement. Without your help needed services for area citizens would not be possible.

You can also help United Way by forwarding the above newsletter to your acquaintances.

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We're on the Web!
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