

Hampshire Community Action Commission's First Call for Help

News You Can Use

Volunteer Newsletter

June 2000

"The first great gift we can bestow on others is a good example."—Morrell

VOLUNTEER LUNCHEON

Thank you to everyone who made our volunteer appreciation luncheon a success. Special thanks go to Susan, who helped with so much of the planning, the preparation, and the clean up. Her battle cry was: "Remember the pickles and olives!" Thank you to Bobbe, too, for her help with clean up. Many thanks to the staff who provided a delicious array of desserts. Shanti was a gem, helping with set up and with the banners. I also want to express my gratitude to Fern for her wonderful comments. It was especially nice to have representation from Hampshire Community Action Commission. The chairperson of the HCAC Board of Directors, Joyce Onafowokan, and both Al Sax, the Executive Director and Tim Diehl, the Associate Director of HCAC were in attendance to honor our volunteers. I truly wish we could do more to show the magnitude of the appreciation we have in our hearts for all that you do as volunteers. You are a

very exceptional group. I also want to thank you for the card and gift certificate. I was very touched by your show of appreciation and support. --
Karen

A FORGOTTEN GIFT

Someone left their candle at the volunteer luncheon. If it's yours, you can find it on Karen's desk.

RECYCLING

We have two recycling boxes under the printer in the Information & Referral room. One is for white paper (cardboard box) and one is for colored paper (red box). Feel free to use the colored paper for your written notes.

DIVERSITY MATTERS

We are looking for bilingual/bicultural volunteers for Information & Referral.

Please let Karen know if you have ideas of where and how to recruit.

Also, Karen would like to improve the training we do for “Diversity and I&R”. If you have ideas of exercises or information that would be helpful, please let Karen know. Thank you!

KITCHEN KORNER

JoAnn has cleaned and defrosted the little refrigerator. Thank you, JoAnn! Please do your best to help keep it clean. Label any food you put in there with your name and the date. Please promptly remove food that you no longer want.

Tina, from downstairs in the library, would like to remind everyone who uses the library break room to clean up after themselves. Especially remember to clean up the microwave after you use it. Thank you!

PROCEDURE HANDBOOK

We are in the process of putting together a procedure handbook for HCAC First Call for Help. If you think of or come across procedures relating to such things as facility use, office rules, etc. of which you are aware, please jot them down and put them in Karen’s box. Thank you.

MASS211 UPDATE

David Voegele, director of the Mass211 effort, sends good news. Mass211 has been approved by the DTE! A major

hurdle has been cleared. Onward and upward!

BIG RED BOOK

There is a tentative timeline set for the publication and sale of our directory—“All the Help You Can Get”. We’re going to need a lot of extra help. We expect the book to be available very soon. In the meantime, some of the tasks that remain are: preparing the marketing mailing lists and getting the labels ready. We will be doing a massive mailing on the week of June 6th-13th. We will need lots of help for that. If you can be available, please let Karen know. We will also be doing some extensive follow up phone calls to the mailing. These will be scripted calls to ask people if they have received the mailing and to inquire if they would be interested in purchasing the directory. If you are interested in helping to make calls, please let Karen know. Thanks.

TEMPERATURE WISE

Please be aware that the temperature in our office space is not always ideal, especially in the spring and fall. Lately, it has been downright chilly and we’ve brought the little space heater in to warm us. You may want to consider bringing a sweater or wearing layers to adapt to the changes in temperature that, lately, seem a little hard to predict. Thanks!

NEW STAFF

We are in the process of hiring a new staff person for Information & Referral. This person will work 14 hours per week and will supplement Lillian's and JoAnn's hours. S/he will be supervising I & R volunteers as part of the job. We are not yet sure of the schedule since much depends on the needs of the new person.

The hiring process for the Case Coordinator for the Family Network has not yet been completed.

Time Cards

A plea! Please fill out your time card each time you come in to work. If you have information missing, please try to update it before June 1st. We really appreciate your help in keeping track of the tremendous donation of time that volunteers give. Thank you!

INFORMATION & REFERRAL

Consumer Questions

Bev came across some interesting information that you might want to look over. Look in the files in the file cabinet in the I & R room, under "Consumer Information: Consumer Complaints". You will find a compilation of frequently asked questions on consumer

issues. You may want to peruse it when you have a few spare moments. Thank you, Bev.

Adult Basic Education vs. ESL

There has been some confusion about the two services located here at the Jones Library. One program is the Amherst Adult Learning Center which is run by The Literacy Project and the other is the Jones Library's English as a Second Language Program.

The Amherst Adult Learning Center offers community-based adult learning with a variety of opportunities to support individuals in achieving their educational goals.

Services include assessment, customized instruction and counseling for adults. Students can enroll at any time, and there is no charge for any of the services provided. Each adult learner sets his or her own goals and works at a pace that fits his/her learning needs. A minimum commitment of six hours of instruction per week is required, and programs run year round.

Participants should be at least sixteen years old and not enrolled in a public school system. There are no age limits, and many adult learners are seniors or adults who have been in the work force for many years.

Courses include—

- Adult Basic Literacy
Provides adults with a foundation in Basic Reading, Writing and Math skills.
- Adult Literacy

Assists adults with basic literacy skills in further development of their critical thinking skills through Reading, Writing and Math.

- Adult Secondary Education Assists adults in preparing for the General Educational Development (GED) exam.
- Self-Paced Computer Literacy Using Windows-based computers, adults learn the basics of computer operation and how to navigate the internet, and are introduced to software programs commonly used in home and office settings.

They also do an advanced ESL writing program but there is limited space.

Program sites include: Jones Library in Amherst, Franklin School for Belchertown/Palmer and the Reunion Center in Easthampton.

The Jones Library English as a Second Language Program provides free ESL (English as a Second Language) instruction and citizenship preparation for adult immigrants in the Amherst area. They match tutors with adult students to work on GED, citizenship and basic literacy. Students must be adult immigrants or refugees.

The staff at the Amherst Adult Learning Center just want us all to realize that there are many people in this country, who are not immigrants or refugees who lack basic skills like reading or writing. In these cases, the Amherst Adult Learning Center is a more appropriate referral than the Jones Library ESL Program.

June is the month for:

- *Summer camp information* (especially for procrastinators)
- *Summer play groups*
F.Y.I. The Amherst Family Center has a series of summer meeting spots for families with small children to gather: Tuesdays, 9-12, Groff Park, South Amherst; Wednesdays, 2-5, War Memorial Park, Amherst; and Thursdays, 9-12, Mill River, No. Amherst.

DID YOU KNOW?

Our sister program, HCAC Child Care Focus, no longer charges fees for referrals to child care providers.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

We will need help for the following times. If you can do a little extra it will be greatly appreciated. Thanks.

Thursday, June 1 st	9:15am-12noon
Monday, June 5 th	2:00 pm-4:45 pm
Tuesday, June 6 th	9:15am-12noon
Thursday, June 8 th	9:15 am-12noon
Tuesday, June 20 th	2:00 pm-4:45 pm
Wednesday, June 21 st	2:00 pm-4:45pm
Tuesday, June 27 th	9:15am-12noon

REMINDER

The staff are depending on you to pick up the calls and assess them according to our TLC model of I & R. This model requires you, as volunteers, to be available to pick up the calls when they first come in. This means that you cannot spend extensive time on a call even if the phones are quiet, since a new call can come in at anytime. If you cannot easily find the information, either refer the call to your supervisor or do a call back. If you are tied up on a call, the staff will then need to pick up the phones. Obviously, you should spend the time you need to make an appropriate and accurate referral. But once you have the information you need to do the referral, please finish the call as quickly as you can. Staff really appreciate your help in this matter. Thank you!

IN SUMMER

When the light, late in the afternoon,
pauses among
The highest branches of the highest
trees,
They stir a little as if in pleasure. Light
And a passing breeze
Become one and the same, a caress.
Then the lower branches,
Leaves or needles in shadow, take up the
lilt
Of that response, their green with its hint
of blue forming
What, if it were sound, could be called
A chord with the almost yellow of those
The sunlight carries with.
--Denise Levertov

SUMMER HAIKU

Summer grass—
All that's left
Of warriors' dreams.

As for the hibiscus
By the roadside
My horse ate it.

A bee
Staggered out
Of the peony.

--Basho

Mosquito at my ear—
Does it think
I'm deaf?

Even with insects
Some can sing,
Some can't

Napped half the day—
No one
Punished me.

--Issa