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*Our Mission ~
To break the cycle of child
abuse through a diverse
network of community
partners and
innovative services.*

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United for Families Connector

July-September 2008

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Local golfers tee off to help children in foster care

United for Families drove the fundraising ball straight down the middle May 30, when it hosted the Second Annual Teeing Off Fore Kids Charity Golf Tournament.

The event netted more than \$10,000 and increased profits by 60 percent over the previous year — funds that will help provide independent living skills to teenagers who are aging out of the foster care system.

More than 80 golfers participated in the event, which was held at Panther Woods Country Club, in Fort Pierce. "It was really a lot of fun, and really well organized," said golfer Denise Rivan.

The event wrapped up with a guest speaker from the Road to Success program, which teaches the ABCs of adulthood to foster teens. Latasha, a minor whose last name is confidential, said the program has

changed her life by giving her the skills to live independently and attend college.

The event was sponsored by Global Safety, LLC, Sam's Club, Hometown News, Y.E.S. Your Electronic Solutions, Hurricane Wings, Behavior Basics, NisAir, Smith Barney, and www.out2martincounty.com.



More than 80 golfers played during the May 30 tournament

Golf Winners

- Okeechobee Sheriff's Dept.
1st Place Gross
- Treasure Coast Sprinklers
2nd Place Gross
- East Coast Paving
3rd Place Gross
- Smith Barney
1st Place Net
- Hometown News
2nd Place Net
- Riverside Bank
3rd Place Net
- Steve Erlanger
Putting Contest Winner
- Carol Scott
Longest Drive
- Adam White
Longest Drive
- Cheryl Regan
Closest to the Pin
- Tom Sadler
Closest to the Pin

Check out our tournament's photos at www.out2martincounty.com

Protect yourself from identify theft

Nearly 9 million people were victims of identity theft in 2006, costing a total of \$56.6 billion. You can reduce your vulnerability by following these important steps:

Maintain Your Privacy. Don't give out personal information before asking why the information is needed, use a shredder to dispose of information and cancel accounts if you think your mail has been compromised.

Monitor Financial Communications. Don't provide personal information by phone, letter or e-mail to anyone claiming to be from your financial institution. Call the bank's main number to ensure that you're speaking with an authorized representative and report the incident. Scrutinize every account statement you receive and make sure you can identify all the transactions. Some thieves will put small charges on your card to see if you catch on before they make larger purchases.

Use Updated Computer Technology. If you're using a computer at home, keep your operating system up to date, set up a firewall and keep your virus protection and spyware detection programs current. When conducting online transactions, look for "https" at the beginning of a website's address—the "s" indicates that the information was transmitted in encrypted fashion from a secure site.

Safeguard Your Credit Information. Use one credit card that has a low limit for online purchases, keep copies of your credit cards in a safe place in your house and carry only the cards you need. Take advantage of the free credit report at www.annualcreditreport.com, and review the accounts in your name—if you don't recognize them, contact the credit bureau immediately.

How to Respond. Even the most cautious consumers can be victims of identity theft.

Here are five steps that can help:

- 1) Call your bank immediately and close the compromised account.
- 2) File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at (877) 438-4338
- 3) Contact the Social Security Administration, which maintains a fraud hotline at 1-800-269-0271.
- 4) Contact the fraud division of one of the three main credit bureaus — Equifax, Experian or TransUnion — to consider having a fraud alert put on your file. The free 90-day security alert informs creditors that they must contact you before opening a new account or making changes to your existing account.
- 5) You can file a police report and submit a copy to your bank as proof of the crime.

Scott Sade is a Financial Advisor with Citi Smith Barney located in Stuart and may be reached at (800) 325-0038 or (772) 223-3243.

Teeing Off Fore Kids



United for Families staff volunteer at the May 30 event. From left, Cerena Wallace, Dianne Burton and Deborah Reyner



Kim Tolson sells an arms-length of tickets for drawings to golfer Dr. Michael Hansen.



From left, Rich Hall, Melvin Santos, Ray Arrants and Nick Byers prepare for a day of golf.



Denise Rivan, a United for Families employee, lines up her shot.

Volunteer leads Le Bal Masque committee

United for Families is gearing up for its Third Annual John Pier-son's Toyota of Stuart Le Bal Masque — and a prominent community volunteer is leading the way as this year's Le Bal Masque Committee Chairwoman.

Kelly Johnson, granddaughter of RV Johnson — founder of the insurance agencies that bear his name, has been an active United for Families volunteer and donor for more than two years.

She coordinated a donations closet for foster families and has participated in literacy drives and book fairs that benefited foster



Johnson volunteers at United for Families' recent blue ribbon-tying ceremony to raise awareness of child abuse.

children. Johnson, the marketing and ac-counts manager at RV Johnson, is on the board of Gertrude Wal- den Child Care Center and is a member of the Junior League of Martin County. Most recently, she was co-chair for the league's Pineapple

Ball and was on the committee for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Martin County for this year's Gathering of the God- desses event.

If that isn't enough, Johnson also coaches a traveling girls' volleyball team and is head coach of Junior Varsity volley- ball at Martin County High School. She plans to continue her educa- tion and pursue an MBA soon. Johnson currently is busy securing auction items for the masque, which is scheduled for Oct. 18 at Willoughby Golf Club. For more in- formation, or to join the committee, call Leslie Haviland-Smith at 398- 2920.

Volunteer Spotlight

By Linda Smith, volunteer coordinator — Carol Ryan came to us though Martin Volunteers and we are sure glad she chose to volunteer for United for Families. Carol has been a wonderful addition to our volun- teer staff, from coordi- nating the information booth for our 5K run, to organizing filing cabinets and assisting with various administrative tasks. Carol has logged over 200 hours since she joined our volunteer family in Sep- tember 2007.



Carol and husband Jack hail from Massachusetts, where she was a teacher's aide for students with dis- abilities. She is compassion- ate, patient and cheerful...a wonderful person to have around the office.

Teeing Off Fore Kids Sponsor Party



Volunteers and spon- sors from the 2008 Teeing Off Fore Kids Charity Golf Tourna- ment were invited to a wine tasting May 28. Left, Linda Smith and Kelly Krumme prepare a cheese tray; center, United for Families board members Steve Simon and Sandra Foote share a laugh with Chief Executive Officer Christine Demetriades; and bottom, Pierre Uteschill, of Pop Culture, pours a red wine, right, Ken Baker and Michaela Matton enjoy the wine.



Road to Success program— a look at where your

By Leigh Ann Gilcher

Road to Success helps older foster children make the transition into adulthood by teaching independent living skills.

Adolescence is a time of growth, learning and devel- oping independence. Most teens, with the support of their family, make a suc- cessful transition into adult- hood. Foster youth, how- ever, don't have the same reliable support system.

Road to Success focuses on guidance, instruction and support. It provides this sup- port to foster care youth in many ways: Youth are of- fered various services such as trainings in the areas of self-esteem building, healthy relationships and hygiene, money management, inter- viewing skills, parenting skills and employment. Edu- cational field trips and con- ferences also are offered.

Services for former foster youth, ages 18-23, also are provided to those who meet basic eligibility requirements. Services include mentoring, housing assistance, counsel- ing, parenting classes, tem- porary financial assistance and educational scholar- ships.

Finally, youth have the opportunity to be connected with a Life Coach. A Life Coach is an adult mentor who takes on the role of teacher and role model. The Life Coach provides emo- tional support and encour- agement and is there to help youth achieve their potential, effectively solve problems and grow to be successful adults.

Retreat fosters team building among staff



Chief Executive Officer Chris- tine Demetriades presents Pauline McIntosh with an achievement award.

United for Families staff en- joyed a day at the park April 28 for a mandatory team- building retreat and picnic.

The April event was the latest in a series of quarterly retreats designed to foster better work- ing relationships and greater productiv- ity. Employees also are recognized for their accomplishments during the re- treats, which are hosted at local parks throughout the four-county area. Food, games and activities are provided. The April 28 retreat was held at Jaycee Park in Fort Pierce.

Thank you golf sponsors!

Volunteer Corner—Orientation & Opportunities

By Linda Smith — On my desk is a definition of a volunteer. It reads, "To volunteer is to choose to act in recog- nition of a need, with an attitude of social responsibility and without con- cern for monetary profit, going beyond one's basic obligation.

United for Families recognizes the value of our volunteers who have clocked a cumulative 3,177 volunteer hours. Our volunteer roster for the past year is 145 and still growing. We are proud that our volunteers have chosen us and support our mission to break the cycle of child abuse through a diverse network of community part- ners and innovative services.

United for Families offers day, night and weekend volunteering op- portunities for adults, students, civic organizations and church groups who

want to join our growing team. Volun- teers must attend an orientation ses- sion prior to volunteering. For more information, contact Volunteer Coor- dinator Linda Smith at (772) 398- 2920 Ext 207.

Orientation Sessions
 July 14, 6-8 p.m.
 July 24, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
 Aug 11, 6-8pm
 Aug. 21, 10 a.m.—12 p.m.

Volunteer Opportunities
 Downtown Vero Beach
 Bike Night
 July 25
 Stuff the Bus
 Aug. 1-2
 School Supplies Sorting
 July 26, Aug. 2 & Aug. 9

Okeechobee worker wins high praise

Frank Hickox, a dependency case manager for Children's



Frank Hickox

Home Society, was awarded the United for Families Case Manager of the Quarter Award June 12 during an in-service training.

Hickox was nominated by his peers for his professional demeanor, his willingness to help new case managers and his rapport with the families he serves.

"Frank has a good sense of humor and always has a kind word when you see him in the office," said Susan Murphy, a program director for Children's Home Society. United for Families contracts with Children's Home Society to provide case management services to the children and families in the local child-welfare system.

Hickox is now one of four case managers who will be eligible to win the Case Manager of the Year Award, which will be presented at John Pierson's Toyota of Stuart Le Bal Masque Oct. 18.

Girls have a terrific night out at event

The Treasure Coast turned Hollywood April 24 when a group of Martin County business owners rolled out the red carpet for Girls' Night Out – Hollywood Style and raised more than \$2,000 for children in local foster care.

More than 220 people, mostly women, attended the first-year event. Proceeds from ticket sales benefited United for Families. The event included complimentary wine, snacks and an evening of shopping.

Tasha Chen, owner of Cost Cutters and a co-coordinator of the event, said she and Christina McIntosh, independent advanced director of Pampered Chef, wanted to organize a benefit to help local children. They learned about United for Families at a Martin County Chamber of Commerce event and decided to throw their support behind the organization. The event wrapped up United for Families' Stop the Tears campaign to prevent child abuse.

The event was sponsored by Ken Baker, New York Life, National City Bank, Christina McIntosh, Pampered Chef, Cost Cutters, Pop Culture, Gator PC, Nature's Pocket, Event Makers International, Susan Maxwell of Premier Realty, Pappa Z's, Jill Stone, of Jazzercise, Publix, Shelter Structures and Interior Design Transformations.

Hair Cuttery helps foster children receive haircuts

Take a child for a haircut at your local Hair Cuttery Aug. 1-15 and Hair Cuttery will donate a haircut to United for Families, through the Share A Haircut Program. You can teach your child how a simple deed can help other children in the community. Hair Cuttery has donated more than 380,000 haircuts since 1999. For more information visit www.haircuttery.com.



More than 120 women lined up for Girls' Night Out, an event that benefited United for Families' children's programs.



Tickets to the event sold out early, so accommodations were made to sell more at the door.



Models in the event's fashion show were, from left, Linda Smith, Sally Savage, Leslie Haviland-Smith, Katherine Fryer and Tara Jemty.



Help local charities through SunTrust Bank's My Cause

SunTrust introduces My Cause. SunTrust will donate \$100 to the charity of your choice, or you can choose to receive a \$50 SunTrust Visa gift card, when you open a new personal or business checking account.

www.suntrust.com

Caregiver activities kick off summer

Foster parents took a short break from diapers and carpooling June 13, replacing them for a short time with gowns and glamour.

United for Families and Family Preservation Services hosted the 2008 Foster Parent Appreciation Dinner June 13 at Spring Hill Suites, in Port St. Lucie. More than 100 guests attended the event, which featured national speaker and author Corrie Player and a buffet dinner. Player, who spoke about the difficulties and joys of raising teenagers, autographed a copy of her book "**Loving Firmness**" for each foster family. Player, who is from Utah, was in town earlier in the week to lead an in-service training for case managers about creating better working relationships with foster parents.

Later in the month, 100 foster parents and children attended the Fourth Annual Foster Family Pool Party. Families splashed in the zero-entry (or gently sloping) pool at Gifford Aquatic Center, ran through splash fountains and picnicked on hotdogs, hamburgers and chips. The event was sponsored by United for Families and Hibiscus Children's Center. Riverside National Bank also helped sponsor the event by donating a grill and hotdogs.

Activities wound down June 28, when United for families presented the last of its series of caregiver appreciation activities at Indian Riverside Park in Martin County.

The event was coordinated to recognize the important contributions of relative caregivers — grandparents, aunts, uncles and other relatives who care for children who have been removed from their homes.



Children play in splash fountains during the 2007 Foster Family Pool Party at Gifford Aquatic Center in Indian River County.

Kudos Corner

United for Families will highlight special contributions and acts of kindness in this new section of the Connector. Kudos to you!

— **Dr. Arvind K. Vakani, DMS, MS**, for donating orthodontia work to two foster children. Orthodontia is not a Medicaid-covered expense and often eludes the foster-care system. Kudos also go to Pauline McIntosh, a United for Families employee who sought the contribution.

— **Dr. Kimberly Dettori, DDS**, for performing oral surgery on a foster child free-of-charge, and to Jill Poole, a United for Families employee who coordinated the contribution.

— **Scott Sade**, of Citi Smith Barney, the Sade Group, and his wife, Jennifer, for taking a group of Road to Success students — including several from a nearby group home — to the May 23 Marlins baseball game in Miami. Sade, who is a member of the United for Families Board of Directors purchased the tickets, picked the students up and accompanied them on the outing.

Hurricane's eye on UFF

Wings fans took home the taste of Hurricane Grill and Wings during the month of April during a month-long product promotion that netted \$1,700 for children in foster care and won awards for two St. Lucie County restaurants.

The promotion was part of a national sales contest among all 35 Hurricane stores. Proceeds from wing sauce sales at the St. Lucie West and Tradition stores were donated to United for Families.

Dave Nardi, operations manager for the stores, said he decided to help United for Families because he was impressed with the organization and what it stands for. His stores were the only two in the contest to donate proceeds to a local charity — something he said may have contributed to his success.

Proceeds are part of a fundraising campaign for the Road to Success program, which teaches independent living skills to teenagers aging out of the foster-care system.



ST. Lucie West and Tradition

United for Families Wish List

Diapers	School Supplies
Baby Wipes	Parade Float
New Cribs	Refrigerator
Twin Beds	New Car Seats

Truck or Van to pick up donations
Medicaid Dental Providers
Full Size Toiletries—soap, shampoo, deodorant, shaving gel, facial soap
Apartment kits: new pots and pans, bed sheets, towels, cleaning supplies, utensils, cooking utensils

For more information, contact Lea Tate, (772) 398-2920, Ext. 297