

# connections

Vol. I Issue 2

Summer 2002

## Morningstar Mini-Storage—Helping Secure the Future

When a woman makes the decision to leave a violent home, it may not have been the culmination of a long-term plan. It may have been at 2 am following an evening of her physical and emotional abuse that left her making what may be the most important decision of her life.

Often, the woman leaves with only the clothes on her back. She hadn't the time to arrange for a moving van. She hadn't the time to arrange for a place to stay. She ran for her life and may have ended up in the care of United Family Services' Shelter for Battered Women.

At The Shelter, she'll learn about choices and that she does not deserve any of the abuse and violence she experienced. She'll know she does not have to return to the situation that took so much of her life. She'll learn to feel good about herself and that she can

make it without depending on the abuser. These are great steps to the beginning of a healthy life, but may provide her with a dilemma.

What will she do with belongings she can't bring to The Shelter?

This is where Morningstar Mini-Storage helps out. The Matthews-based company offers clients of The Shelter 90 or more days of free storage space.

Morningstar has been working with United Family Services' Shelter for Battered Women for more than four years. Kris Fetter, marketing director for Morningstar states, "There is a need—a woman may need three to six months to begin getting her life back together—we serve people who need storage and deserve it."

Many women who flee from these unacceptable situations will be starting over with nothing at all. They may have to re-establish their

entire lives from employment to clothing to shoes to transportation. United Family Services' Shelter collects furniture, clothing and household items for these women in an effort to help them as they take the first



steps into their new life. Morningstar recently began offering The Shelter storage space to keep donated furniture that will go to the women who need it, allowing The Shelter to have less limitations on what can be accepted. Fetter says, "We have 50 properties in the Carolinas. We encourage all managers to actively participate

in their community. Our biggest asset (as a company) is what we have—storage space. There is a need and non-profits do not have the budgets to afford the space they need for storage. Morningstar, as part of its mission, donates five percent of all its storage space to charities and non-profits."

To take full advantage of the generosity of Morningstar Mini-Storage, we could use your help. If you have furniture that is not being used, pass it along to someone who could really use it—someone who had to walk away from all they knew to save their life. If you have a van or pickup truck, maybe you could spend an afternoon helping someone move a few pieces of furniture. There are many ways a little time or effort can make a great impact on someone's life. Let us know how you can help, call The Shelter at 704 332-2513.

## Temple Israel's Men's Club Keeps Others Cool in the Hot Months

Summer in North Carolina is hot. Just think what July would have been like without an air conditioner in your home.

For many people however, an air conditioner isn't taken for granted. Many families in our area have no air conditioning, which may be uncomfortable, but can also be life-threatening, especially for the sick, elderly and young.

Thanks to the monetary contribution of an anonymous donor and the hard work of the Men's Club at Temple Israel, several older people in the Southside and Brookhill neighborhoods, along with other Charlotte families, will be safer and more comfortable as we trudge through the hottest days of the year.

Michael Abadi, vice president of the Men's Club says, "In Temple Israel, we have an organization, the Temple Israel Men's Club. It's a way for men in the synagogue to get involved in different activities. Some of which are geared for the Jewish community, some of which are not. We always want people to realize we help people outside the Jewish community as well. This particular activity was a great opportunity for people in the Men's Club to help the community of Charlotte."

The donor, whose business recently celebrated 40 years in the Charlotte area, donated 40 air-conditioning units to be disseminated to households who were in need. The Men's Club then con-

tacted several agencies and arranged to work with five agencies who had clients who could be helped. United Family Services was one of the agencies.

During the month of June, the Men's Club spent several Sunday mornings installing air condition-



Michael Abadi, vice president of Temple Israel's Men's Club

ing units in 21 homes around Charlotte, many in the South Tryon area in which United Family Services works. The project not only made many families a bit more comfortable, it was also a learning experience. Abadi says, "We took some of our children along as well, who will be grown men in the next few years. The idea was basically to show them how others live and that they are lucky to have been born into a privileged home and that is not necessarily how everybody lives. I feel it was a telling experience for them."

Thanks to the generosity of the

## Duke Energy Supplies Power... Volunteer Power

Giving is often more than writing a check. Duke Energy volunteers asked United Family Services (UFS) where we needed help. Not knowing what the response would be, we told them we needed help creating 15 life-size plywood cutouts of female silhouettes that also would need sanding and painting. They said sure, and within three weeks they showed up at UFS' back door with a truckload of finished silhouettes.



Duke Energy's Larry Valenti worked on and delivered the Silent Witness silhouettes. He is pictured with Johanna Murray, a UFS employee, who also helped with early construction of the figures.

The silhouettes are being used for a local Silent Witness exhibit that will be shown throughout the area (see story page 4) to raise awareness of domestic violence. The first three figures were done in the Featherstone Construction shop by volunteers Johanna Murray and Jackie Bagley. Financing for the Silent Witness project was provided by Philip Morris.



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**Mission**  
To connect individuals, families and the community with resources that promote stability, security and self-sufficiency.

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Concord, NC 28025

Mecklenburg County  
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200 N. Sharon Amity Road.  
Charlotte, NC 28211

Union County  
105-A E. Jefferson Street  
Monroe, NC 28112

704 226-1352  
Huntersville, NC 28078  
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## From the President



Over the last months since the tragic events of September 11, we have heard a lot about heroes. We used to say that heroes were hard to find but we have come to accept the little miracles performed by heroes in our everyday lives.

All we have to do is open our eyes and see things from a different perspective to realize the numerous heroes that touch our lives and our community.

The reason these heroes are so hard to find is that they don't want to be discovered. They quietly go about performing little miracles that make a big difference in the lives of the people they touch. They are the little miracles that go mostly unnoticed by the general public.

At United Family Services we have a substantial cadre of volunteers who perform a variety of direct service and other duties among the services we provide to the community. We highlighted them in the last issue of connections. We also have a group of heroes who contribute their relationships and connections to the agency in ways that are mostly invisible to the community. These are those heroes that are hard to find because their work is not as visible as the work of the direct service volunteers.

Let me give just a few examples of the contributions of these volunteers. There are the volunteers from Duke Energy who cut out and painted 12 life-size plywood figures for the Silent Witness project exhibit that will be traveling around our region to raise awareness about domestic violence in our community. Then, there is the men's group who obtained and installed air conditioners in a low-wealth neighborhood. It is the storage company who donates space for The Shelter for Battered Women program and its clients.

These contributions are incredibly valuable to United Family Services and the people we serve. Each group contributes the talents and resources that they possess to better the community. They offer their resources to us so that we in turn can best utilize them for the people we serve.

*Michael F. Spink*

United Family Services would like to salute those unsung heroes in our community who use their talents and resources creatively and unselfishly to improve our region.

## Silent Witness... Don't Keep Quiet



The Silent Witness National Initiative is a program aimed to increase awareness of domestic violence and end homicides that result from domestic violence by the year 2010. The program currently operates in every state and in 20 countries around the world.

The original Silent Witness was formed in Minnesota in 1990. A group of 27 life-size, red silhouettes were constructed as an exhibit to demonstrate the loss of 26 women in the state in 1990 due to domestic violence, with one added to encompass those victims whose deaths are left unsolved or were incorrectly ruled accidental.

In 2001, United Family Services' Men For Change committee requested the use of the N.C. state exhibit as a kickoff to its fund-raising and awareness campaign. As a committee of UFS' Shelter for Battered Women, Men For Change applied for funding and commissioned a local exhibit to represent Charlotte women who died as a result of domestic violence. Philip Morris provided funding for the project and Duke Energy employee volunteers handled much of the construction (see story on pg. 1). There are 11 silhouettes representing Mecklenburg County victims in this year's display—they may be featured as a whole, or in smaller groups of five or six. The Witnesses (silhouettes) are accompanied by an easel and sign, which explain the Silent Witness Movement and the statutes.

If you would like to arrange for the exhibit at your business or organization, please call United Family Services' Shelter for Battered Women at 704 332-2513...don't let their voices go unheard.

## United Family Services' Counseling & Education

Nearly everyone will experience a major challenge to their emotional wellness or family stability in their life. Who will support you when your parent or significant other dies, or when you are adjusting to a relocation to a different part of the country, or feeling depressed or out of control, or having trouble communicating with your children, or having trouble feeling accepted and getting along with others? Most people never seek help even though effective treatments exist. Many people cannot afford treatment and those who can are often subjected to unfair stigma for not being able to solve their own problems.

United Family Services' Counseling & Education programs mission is to enhance emotional wellness and family stability. We do this by serving approximately 5,000 people a year. More than 91 percent of our clients report making progress in resolving their problems that will positively improve their lives and relationships. Our services are provided on a sliding fee based on family income and size. Most of our fees are subsidized with the fee becoming increasingly dependent upon the level of funding we receive each year.

For us to continue to nurture children and families in Cabarrus, Mecklenburg and Union counties and work to create healthy communities, we need two things. One is financial support to supplement our sliding fees for those who cannot afford to pay the full cost. Secondly, we need every individual in the community to recognize that seeking counseling is not a weakness or character flaw, but a sign of strength and good judgment.

## UFS...Up Close and Personal

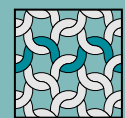
United Family Services holds monthly "Family Connections" events that take a creative approach in educating people about United Family Services. The events are held at the United Family Services office at 200 N. Sharon Amity Rd., Charlotte unless otherwise noted. The program can also be brought to your business or organization. If you would like to attend or arrange an upcoming event, contact Vanessa Shelton Slolin at 704 367-2705.

### Upcoming "Family Connections"

August 21, 7:30-8:30 am  
August 29, 12-1 pm (Union Co.)  
Sept. 25, 7:30-8:30 am  
Oct. 9, 12-1 pm  
Oct. 24, 12-1 pm (Union Co.)  
Oct. TBA, (Cabarrus Co.)

Connections

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 Liz Wahls by Dr. David A. Weinrib  
 Emma's Birthday by Mr. Charles P. Wells  
 Dream Catchers team from Holy Trinity Catholic Middle School and student council

Pete Anderson by Mr. Ivan Cooper  
**Organizations**  
 Amity Presbyterian Church  
 The Art Institute of Charlotte  
 Avondale Presbyterian Church Circle  
 Elenor & James Barnhardt Foundation  
 Carmel Presbyterian Church  
 Central Steele Creek Presbyterian Church  
 Central United Methodist Church  
 Charlotte Junior Women's Club  
 Charlotte Psychotherapy & Consultation Group  
 The Church of the Holy Comforter  
 Colony Furniture Shops, Inc.  
 The Cooley Family Foundation  
 First Baptist Church  
 Friendship Missionary Baptist Church  
 Grace Life International, Inc.  
 Independence Hill Baptist Church  
 The Junior League of Charlotte  
 Community Impact Council Kingswood Homes, Inc.  
 Ladies Auxiliary Post 9736 VFW  
 Lincoln Health Care Foundation  
 McIntosh Law Firm, P.C.  
 Drs. Mello and Van Lanen, D.D.S., P.A.  
 Myers Park Baptist Church  
 Old South Realty  
 Providence Day School  
 Providence Planters Garden Club  
 Providence Ridge Women's Club  
 Providence United Methodist Church  
 Sharon Presbyterian Church  
 Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick LLP  
 St. Martin's Episcopal Church  
 St. Matthew Catholic Church  
 St. Matthew Catholic Church, Women's Day participants  
 St. Patrick Episcopal Mission  
 State Employee's Credit Union, Charity Begins At Home Committee  
 UNC Charlotte  
 UNC Charlotte Interfraternity Council  
 Floyd C. Baldwin by Anonymous  
 Mary Frances (Toby) Beaver by Mr. Jeff Beaver  
 George L. Keyes by Mr. Adam C. Gibbs  
 Barbara Hresko by Mr. and Mrs. Greg A. Gombar  
 Frank S. Hay by Mr. Jerry T. Hancock and Mrs. Emmie A. Hancock  
 Charles B. Rich by Mr. Thomas P. Hollowell  
 Thomas P. Hollowell by Mr. Thomas P. Hollowell  
 Mary Frank Gilleland by Mr. Albert J. Jacobs  
 Andrew F. Lawrence by Mr. and Mrs. Paul C. Lawrence  
 Judith Shumann by Mr. and Mrs. Juan Lopez-Ibanez  
 Lithia Troutman by Mr. Frank McCarter  
 Lynn Marie Henry by Mr. Frank McCarter  
 Benjamin A. Nicholson by Ms. Nancy Nicholson  
 Jane Parmelee by Mr. and Mrs. William D. Parmelee  
 Louise Jarrett by Ms. Sharon J. Thacker  
 Sydney L. Welton by Mr. Sandy Welton

*It is not enough for one to speak of what is right or needs to be addressed. One must use their hands and take hold of the issues, working and making change occur.*  
 — Anonymous

## Domestic Violence Healthcare Project Wants Your Support

The United Family Services/Carolinas Medical Center Domestic Violence Healthcare Project is currently seeking volunteers to provide safety planning and referrals for survivors of domestic violence on an on-call basis at the hospital. Volunteer requirements include completion of an interview, a criminal records check, 10 hours of classroom training and additional on-the-job training. Volunteers must commit to be available on an on-call basis one to two days or evenings each month. Bilingual (English/Spanish) volunteers are especially needed.



To receive additional information, please contact Karen Parker, Domestic Violence Healthcare Project coordinator, at 704 355-3390.

## Union County Office Relocates after 25 Years

After approximately 25 years, United Family Services Union County office has moved from the United Way Building in Monroe. The relocation enhances United Family Services' ability to keep pace with the tremendous growth and need for services in Union County. Agency management was pleased to acquire the larger space without increasing costs. Pam Caskey, United Family Services' south region director says, "We are very excited about being better able to serve members of the community in an accessible, confidential setting that will allow us to continue to provide needed services to our growing, changing community."

United Family Services' entire Union County operations, including Consumer Credit Counseling & Housing, Counseling & Education, Employee Assistance and Rape Crisis/Child Abuse Prevention staff is now located at 105-A E. Jefferson Street, Monroe, NC 28112. The phone number is 704 226-1352 and the fax number remains 704 282-9362.



## United Family Services' New Office Hours Effective July 1, 2002

Cabarrus County Office	Monday through Thursday	8:30 am – 8:00 pm
Friday	8:30 am to 1:00 pm	
(exceptions when CCC cutoff falls on Friday – CCC staff & receptionist will remain until 5:00pm.)		
Charlotte/Main Office	Monday through Wednesday	8:00 am to 7:30 pm
Thursday	8:00 am to 5:00 pm	
Friday	8:00 am to 1:00 pm	
Second Saturday (PIP Class)	8:30 am to 12:30 pm	
Huntersville Office	Monday	10:00 am to 8:00 pm
Tuesday	8:00 am to 8:00 pm	
Wednesday & Thursday	8:00 am to 5:00 pm	
Friday	8:00 am to 12:00 pm	

## Men For Change

UNITED AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Men For Change, a project designed to build awareness of domestic violence and encourage men in the community to speak out against violence toward women, recently wrapped up its annual fund-raising campaign.

The 2002 campaign raised more than \$53,000 from 378 individuals and 14 organizations. The campaign, in its fifth year, surpassed its goal of \$50,000. The final event of the campaign was a fund-raising breakfast held on June 6 at the Adam's Mark Hotel. On Father's Day, June 16, a full-page ad appeared in *The Charlotte Observer* recognizing the individuals and sponsors who supported the 2002 efforts.

The funds raised through Men For Change will go to support United Family Services' Shelter for Battered Women.



Duke Energy volunteers at the Men For Change Breakfast, listed alphabetically: Bob Ams, Michael Corn, Craig N. Gross, Jason Martin, Mark Murphy, Linda Poley, Larry Valenti.

## United Family Services' EAP

Very few of us escape personal problems during our lifetime. Many companies and organizations realize the impact these personal and family problems can have on the workplace. Employee assistance programs (EAPs) are designed to prevent these problems from affecting the workplace and to help keep associates happy and working to their fullest personal and professional potential.

United Family Services' EAP offers each family member of the covered employee as many as six counseling sessions free of charge per year. If more than six sessions are required for a problem, the cost of additional sessions will be determined by the employee's ability to pay.

Talk to your human resources supervisor — an EAP may be just the benefit your company can offer that is certainly a win-win situation.

## WISH LIST

United Family Services is a large agency offering many services, to many people, in many ways. In doing so many various activities, our needs can sometimes only be met by generous supporters who give their time, services or material goods to help us keep our projects alive.

The following is a list of things that United Family Services currently needs in some of the various service areas. Take a look, you may be able to help!

### Community Building & Neighborhood Development

Computers/Software for after-school programs  
 (Windows-based/Office products)  
 School supplies

### Counseling & Education Services

Modeling clay  
 Small (3-5 inches) dolls and bears  
 Coloring books/crayons/stickers/drawing pads

### Crisis Services

Diapers—size 1 and up  
 New sweat suits and T-shirts  
 Cotton elastic waist shorts (all sizes)  
 New or used twin-size bed sheets/blankets  
 Paper towels and toilet paper  
 Paper cups and plates  
 Baskets of household items (pots/pans, towels, dishes, detergent, silverware, etc.)

### General Program

Office supplies (paper, pens, printer ink cartridges, fax cartridges)  
 Paper shredder  
 Portable easel w/ carrying case  
 Display Board

### Volunteers

Court Advocates (must be available during daytime hours)  
 Videographer to produce/film/edit agency video  
 PR-Marketing Experts  
 Spanish-English Translators  
 Mentors/Tutors for middle school students  
 Computer (Windows-based/Office products)  
 Software Trainers  
 Office and Data Entry Assistants

Many volunteer opportunities exist throughout United Family Services' many programs. Visit [www.unitedfamilyservices.org](http://www.unitedfamilyservices.org) to find out more