

Merrill Area United Way, Inc.
P.O. Box 813
Merrill, WI 54452
715-536-2016
Delores.Olsen@merrillareunitedway.org



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Merrill Area United Way
Dee Olsen, Executive Director

March is here, and as this Foto News issue is released it is Saint Patrick's Day. We have set our clock's forward already and are officially marching into spring in three days. As our nation and our small community has worked through the pandemic and its impacts are lessening, all of us now turn our concerns to the Russian attack in Ukraine. The ripple impact is already being felt throughout our country at the gas pumps, but that will affect all aspects of our economy because all products and people must be transported. At United Way, I remain hopeful that our community organizations that provide vital services to people in need will not be hindered too much, but donations and financial support are subject to the impacts of our oil and gas supplies. Please be strong and supportive with United Way.

Spring is a time when United Way focuses on several reporting aspects of our organization. We start to prepare our reports for United Way Worldwide Membership Certification and another named Data Base II. These are incredibly detailed reports and a requirement for us to be a United Way. This is our accountability back to United Way Worldwide showing we take our fiduciary responsibility seriously in how we operate. We meet the standard, plus comply with United Way Worldwide directives, to drive impact in our three major areas of: Health, Education, Basic Needs/Income.

The Merrill United Way Board will hold its annual Board Planning and Goal Setting Session I April to assess progress, look at changing trends, and set a plan to continue to grow and develop as an organization. They ensure we try to meet the ongoing, changing needs of the community. So, we enter late spring and early summer, our Board of Director members visit the funded agencies to increase their understanding of the agency programs and ongoing needs. This relationship is beneficial to both the Board and our agency representatives. In some ways, Spring is a time of reflection, but also the time we mow a clear-cut path to our future development. This being our 75th Anniversary year, we are excited to have additional activities and community awareness effort underway. We hope the community will join us in celebrating this milestone.

Finally, remember March is National Fatherhood Initiative Month. While we believe both parents are equally important in a child's life, we also recognize that statistics show more fathers are not as present or active in their child's life. A father does not have to be a superhero. Just be a super dad – and most of all be present and supportive. Let us all work together to support our children. United Way makes a difference in with the financial support needed to sustain programs through the Family Resource Center, Parkside Preschool Center, Healthy Minds for Lincoln County, Boy Scouts & Girls Scouts, Big Brother-Big Sisters and several more.

Your support of the Merrill Area United Way makes a difference in our local community. Want to donate? Donations stay local and are always appreciated. Send your check to Merrill Area United Way, P O Box 813, Merrill, WI 54452. For more information about Merrill Area United Way visit our website at merrillareunitedway.org or email Delores.Olsen@merrillareunitedway.org .