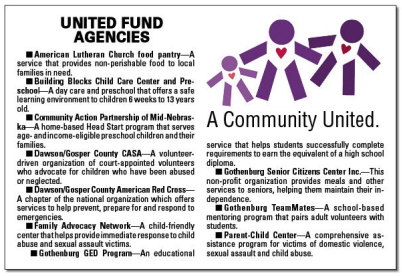


UNITED FUND AGENCIES

■ **American Lutheran Church food pantry**—A service that provides non-perishable food to local families in need.

■ **Building Blocks Child Care Center and Preschool**—A day care and preschool that offers a safe learning environment to children 6 weeks to 13 years old.

■ **Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska**—A home-based Head Start program that serves age- and income-eligible preschool children and their families.

■ **Dawson/Gosper County CASA**—A volunteer-driven organization of court-appointed volunteers who advocate for children who have been abused or neglected.

■ **Dawson/Gosper County American Red Cross**—A chapter of the national organization which offers services to help prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies.

■ **Family Advocacy Network**—A child-friendly center that helps provide immediate response to child abuse and sexual assault victims.

■ **Gothenburg GED Program**—An educational service that helps students successfully complete requirements to earn the equivalent of a high school diploma.

■ **Gothenburg Senior Citizens Center Inc.**—This non-profit organization provides meals and other services to seniors, helping them maintain their independence.

■ **Gothenburg TeamMates**—A school-based mentoring program that pairs adult volunteers with students.

■ **Parent-Child Center**—A comprehensive assistance program for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse.

A Community United.

Gothenburg pledge campaign will support 10 agencies

Board members were a little leery a year ago when Gothenburg's chapter of the United Way dropped its national affiliation and changed its name to Gothenburg United Fund Inc.

They were uncertain how the new direction might be received by the community.

As it turned out, though, residents embraced the more local approach to financially supporting community agencies by pushing United Fund past its $20,500 goal last year.

"We're all just so grateful," said United Fund president Karla Blase. "The people in this community have always been very generous and we want to thank everyone who has helped make United Fund successful."

There were plenty of folks who donated. The United Fund board hopes they'll be just as giving this fall, as the list of agencies expands from seven to 10.

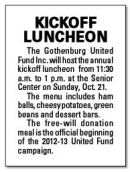
One agency returns after a one-year hiatus and two more are new this year.

The American Red Cross had received funding from the Gothenburg United Way for several years.

Last year, the agency was dropped because all services from Red Cross had been moved to Kearney.

“We realize, though, that the Red Cross still serves the people of Gothenburg when needed,” Blase said, “like in the case of a home fire or other emergency.”

The two new agencies are TeamMates and the food pantry at the American Lutheran Church.



KICKOFF LUNCHEON

The Gothenburg United Fund Inc. will host the annual kickoff luncheon from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Senior Center on Sunday, Oct. 21.

The menu includes ham balls, cheesypotatoes, green beans and dessert bars.

The free-will donation meal is the official beginning of the 2012-13 United Fund campaign.

TeamMates is a one-on-one school-based mentoring program that pairs adult volunteers with children to help provide support while building a sense of hope, purpose and vision.

The program was founded in Lincoln in 1991 by Tom and Nancy Osborne and has spread statewide to more than 4,000 matches.

Gothenburg’s TeamMates program started in 2002 and now has 40 mentor/mentee pairs.

The food pantry at the American Lutheran Church began as a youth-led program in 2006 to provide canned or packaged food to local families who struggle financially to provide meals.

Food items are donated by the church congregation and other community groups and are provided free to those in need.

“These are two very worthwhile agencies in our community,” Blase said. “It only makes sense for us to support them.”

United Fund's annual campaign will begin next week when donor brochures are mailed to each Gothenburg household.

A freewill donation meal on Sunday, Oct. 21, at the Gothenburg Senior Center serves as the official campaign kickoff.

Blase said the 2012-13 goal is $21,000 and the entire amount raised will stay in Gothenburg.

Money will come not only from individual resident pledges but also through businesses and fund raisers.

Baldwin Filters, she said, has always been the front-runner in contributions.

"And it's not Baldwin Filters the corporation," she said. "It's the employees who collectively support the cause."

Other fund-raisers throughout the year, including a soup and pie supper during winter sports and the dog-and-jog during Harvest Festival, add to the United Fund total.

To make a donation to the Gothenburg United Fund, simply fill out the brochure received in the mail and send it back with a payment.

If an address gets missed by the mailing, donations can be sent to Gothenburg United Fund Inc., Box 494, Gothenburg, NE, 69138.

For additional information or to volunteer with the United Fund, contact Blase at 537-2693.