

Good Neighbors

APPLAUSE

Barn Bash event raises \$28,000 for Rise Together

WOW – We Care Charity raised more than \$28,000 at its third annual Barn Bash fundraiser held Oct. 19 in Freedom. The fundraiser was held in support of Rise Together, a nonprofit organization founded by recovering addicts that assists youth struggling with substance abuse, mental illness, suicide and bullying.

The event drew more than 150 guests from throughout the state and it nearly tripled the proceeds from the 2017 fundraiser.

Local 4-H members earn regional honors

Jim Stille, a member of the Bent Arrow 4-H Club, won the Outagamie County 4-H Crowley Leadership Award.

As a county winner, Stille received a commemorative engraved medallion and the chance to vie for state-level awards, including a chance to compete for two \$500 scholarships for continuing dairy education. The state competition will consist of interviews conducted during the Wisconsin State Fair in August 2019.

Stille was selected for his outstanding accomplishments in his 4-H record book.

The James W. Crowley Dairy Management and Extension Fund sponsors this 4-H dairy award program. James W. Crowley was a long-time UW-Extension dairy specialist and strong supporter of dairy youth project work.

Makayla Mashlan of Hortonville and member of Fast Trackers 4-H Club, has been selected as the 2018 4-H Key Award winner.

The Key Award, one of the highest honors a 4-H member can receive, honors a select group of 4-H participants annually. Youth receiving this award have demonstrated consistent growth in their 4-H involvement, developed and applied their leadership skills and actively participated in the functions of their 4-H club and community.

Larsen family honored with governor's adoptive award

The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families honored five families in the state with the 2018 Governor's Outstanding Adoptive Award. The awards were presented during a celebration at the Capitol as part of Wisconsin's month-long recognition of National Adoption Month.

Locally, Lisa and Jesse Gander of Larsen were recognized for their trauma-informed parenting, as well as their passion for helping children in need of special care. The Ganders have two biological children and one adopted son.

Nominations were received from adoption workers, children's advocates, and citizens from all corners of Wisconsin, with recipients chosen based on their stories of exceptional dedication and commitment in ensuring their adopted children receive the love and care of a "forever" family.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE



Menasha's Sue Vandenberg volunteers with the United Way Fox Cities. GRAHAM WASHATKA/FOR USA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN

United Way volunteer looks to give kids support

Linda Dums
Special to Appleton Post-Crescent
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

Sue Vandenberg of Menasha is excited to play a role in a child's future.

"Children and youth is one area where we can make significant impacts when making the right investments up front," said Vandenberg, 55.

She has served more than 14 years with the United Way Fox Cities in the developing children and youth impact area.

"We work with the agencies that support the development of our children and youth," she said. "Our overall goal is to make sure our children and youth are developing throughout the years birth to high school to make sure they are going out into the community to be healthy, productive members."

Vandenberg was new to the area and heard United Way was a good way to get involved in the community. She works full-time at Guardian Insurance.

"I think United Way is a great agency and it's really well run," she said.

She helps ensure donations to United Way are properly distributed to agencies.

"We actually do a very intense review

Meet the volunteers

Each Friday on the Good Neighbors page we introduce you to a volunteer in the Fox Valley. If you want to nominate a volunteer, send details to pcfeatures@postcrescent.com.

of all the agencies we work with," she said. "We like to think of it as a partnership with our agencies. A lot of these agencies have been with United Way for a long time. It's kind of a pulse check to make sure things are still tracking."

Vandenberg has seen many positive programs come around, like the Reach Out and Read program, which partners with health clinics in the Fox Cities.

"We are getting books into the hands of children at their well visits," she said. "The book is a great way for the doctor to look at the development of the child. It's a really cool program and grown exponentially during the couple years it's been in place. I think we are going to see some really good results from it."

She recently received the Wes Urch Award for her years of service and contribution.

"It's an honor," she said, noting she doesn't volunteer for the recognition.

"You volunteer to do good for others. It meant a lot because it came from the people that I work with in my group."

She considers herself very blessed in life.

"I have a son and we had a great support network, family, friends and not everyone has that," she said. "How do we make sure, especially children because they have no control over their circumstances, they have a really solid foundation and a good chance of being successful in life? If we can help them when they are young, it might help them avoid a whole lot of problems down the road."

Rhonda Hannemann, community development program officer for United Way Fox Cities, said Vandenberg's leadership and facilitation skills are much needed.

"She has a strong commitment to improving the lives of youth and families in our community," she said. "I can always depend on Sue to provide sound advice, guidance and counsel. I very much value her support and hope that she continues to share her time and talents with the United Way for many years."

Linda Dums can be reached at pcfeatures@postcrescent.com.

To submit items to Good Neighbors Call 920-996-7222, or email pcfeatures@postcrescent.com