

RETIREE'S NEWSLETTER

MAY 2nd, 2008 SPEAKER Paul Didier, United Way

by Glenn Scheel

Paul Didier, President and CEO of Santa Barbara's United Way, led us into reminiscence with his May 7 remarks at the Delco Retiree luncheon. He spoke of the old days (referring to the late 70's and early 80's) "when Delco Electronics and Raytheon and their employees provided the majority of our annual funding" (through annual solicitation drives conducted by company executives). He reminded the group of the many changes in the employment situation and the population of Santa Barbara over the years, with currently very few employers having the numbers of people on payroll of a 1970's Delco or Raytheon. His data indicates that Santa Barbara was the only city in California with a small loss in total population in the latest Census update. It has also indicated that the two fastest growing demographic groups in the area are "families of four or more with income of less than \$50,000.00" and "Couples with a Net Worth of \$5 Million dollars or more".

As a result of the demographic changes in Santa Barbara, the United Way has had to make major changes in its operating philosophy, including the recognition of "Power of Partnership Initiatives" (www.partnershipsb.org) and

establishing large cadres of volunteers to assist in striving to solve the new social and educational problems created by the changes in culture of the region. Most of these problems are traceable to language, communication, and educational difficulties and have caused United Way to shift attention and resources to meeting the needs in those areas.

Many of the low income families of four or more consist of both husband and wife gainfully employed, frequently with more than one job each. As a consequence of the resulting 10 to 12 hour workdays, their children suffer a handicap from lack of supervision and "home based education" occurring in a more normal family life situation ; as well as falling behind in acquiring normal pre-education skills in number and word recognition, reading, and English language skills. For many of these families this has created a new phenomenon when the children begin the formal education process---the children actually spend more time with a teacher in the schoolroom environment than they do with their parents.

Without the basic pre-education skills, however, the children begin the formal education process with an imposing deficit, and find it extremely difficult to "catch up".
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NEXT MEETING:

WED, JUNE 4TH

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Chiropractic

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United Way data indicates that in some cases this "deficit" results in the students being as much as two years behind their peers in the elementary grades. The Santa Barbara School system has had to react to the reality that they were enrolling a significant number of minority students with no background in Kindergarten and very little exposure in the English language. To indicate the size of the problem, Paul also noted that 60% of the elementary school children in the Santa Barbara area qualify for the Free or Reduced Cost lunch program under the Federal guidelines.

Recognizing the educational problems created by the lack of beginning social and academic skills, United Way launched Pre-Kindergarten Summer Institutes prior to the 2000-2001 school year, using elementary school campuses, credentialed teachers and trained staff, and all the necessary resources for a successful 7 week curriculum. During these 7 weeks the children are taught how to function in a structured setting and to separate from parents, as well as basic vocabulary and concepts, colors, number recognition, language skills, and the ability to use classroom tools such as scissors, pencils, and crayons. The program stresses an active, "public/private partnership between the schools they serve, their principals, Healthy Start Resource Centers, and First 5's School Readiness Initiative". In 2007 a total of 160 pre-Kindergarteners completed the Summer Institute. In the past 2 years, this program has achieved national recognition as the most successful in the nation for improving academic achievement of that age group. An evaluation completed by UCSB in 2007 reported the following results---37% improvement in Social/Emotional skills, 47% improvement in Language skills, 33% improvement in Approach to Learning skills, and 28% improvement in Motor skills.

Research studies conducted by the Rand Corporation and the National Institute for Early Education Research reveal that "Children who participate in quality early childhood education enjoy many essential benefits that continue in their lives as they develop and age. . . .they succeed more in school, take better care of their health, enjoy greater financial and job stability; have fewer arrests for criminal and violent activities; have a lower dropout rate; are more likely to attend college; and show a lower rate of substance abuse".

Another problem pinpointed by United Way research is that for several years Title IV Federal grant

money made available to local communities for Family Caregiving Assistance (mainly for Seniors) had to be returned at the end of each year because no one was able to design and administer a program for the use of that money that would meet the definitions required by the Congressional legislation. After thoroughly researching the problem and working with Congressional sources, United Way feels that the programs now designed will meet the definitions in 2008. A Power of Partnership Master Action Plan is in the process of implementation, with participation by community groups such as the Vision Council of 30 community leaders, Steering Committees of 12-18 community experts, and Expert Forums of groups working with seniors, families, and children. The ultimate goal of this program is to establish a long term Action Plan for the period of 2009 to 2019.

"Fun in the Sun" is an unusual program for "at risk" 6-12 year old children, sponsored by United Way in partnership with more than 25 public and private organizations, including Girls Inc. of Greater Santa Barbara, Girls Inc. of Carpinteria, City of Santa Barbara, Department of Parks & Recreation, Assistance League of Santa Barbara, and the Goleta Union School District. The program, begun in 1997 by United Way, will met for 7 summer weeks at 5 local sites---Franklin School and La Cumbre School in Santa Barbara, La Patera School and Kellogg School in Goleta, and Canalino School in Carpinteria. Fun in the Sun served 300 children in 2007, with 30 community organizations participating. In conjunction with Fun in the Sun, about 500 volunteers from about 50 workplaces and senior groups arrange to spend a few lunch hours during that period in an activity referred to as the "Lunch Bunch", where they chat and play games with the children, share career stories and generally provide an example of positive adult behavior.

To meet the need for the increasing requirements for teen age and adult volunteers, United Way has established a Searchable Web Site where both agencies and organizations who need volunteers and the volunteers who are looking for acceptable service placement can meet and communicate. The link is volunteersbc.org. Their brochure identifies it as an "exciting new website that has the ability to match volunteers with local non-profit, school, faith based, service, and government organizations from throughout Santa Barbara County". END

GM RETIREES' PICNIC

On Thursday, May 15, the annual Delco Picnic took place at Tuckers Grove. Ninety three showed up for very wonderful weather. Bruce's Prime Cut from Lompoc did their usual great job with the food. There was plenty of food, beer, card playing, and talking. It started at 10:00 am and broke at 4:00 pm. Many thanks to Larry Stigney for organizing the event again.

Calendar

June 4th, 2008 Luncheon

Speaker: Dr. Ryan Swink, Swink Chiropractic
Subject: "Living Healthy to 100"

July 2nd, 2008 Luncheon

Speaker: Diane Doiron
Subject:
"The Top Ten Myths about Long Term Care"

July 22 & 23, 2009

40th Apollo Reunion in Milwaukee
Country Springs Inn in Waukesha, Wisconsin

Call or email Tom Kriofsky at 262-853-1881 or krio@execpc.com

Ray's Corner

The following is the current pricing information:

- 1) See's Candy 1 lb. certificates for \$12.25.
This provides a savings of \$2.75 per pound from the store price.
- 2) Santa Barbara AXXESS Books for \$25.00
(Effective now thru 9-30-08)
- 3) Discovery Dining South reduced to \$15.00
(Santa Barbara and Ventura Area)
(Effective thru 12-31-08)

Please arrange for pickup at 5250 Coruna Court.

You may purchase the SEE's Certificates by mailing a check with a self addressed stamped envelope.

Ray Tafelski, Phone: 967-0740
5250 Coruna Court
Goleta, CA 93111

Delco History Books

"FROM THE OCEAN DEPTHS TO OUTER SPACE - NOTHING LEFT TO CHANCE!"

Orders will be taken in early June. Shipping to locations other than Santa Barbara will be available. Watch for the forthcoming order blank.

Dick Temple, Chairman

Friends Helping Friends, (FHF)

Available to help ourselves

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