



DoveTales

the newsletter of Dove, Inc.

March
2024

Barbara Blakey
Editor

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Dove, Inc.
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MACON COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE

Community Breakfast

Thursday, March 28 2024 • 8:00 a.m.

This event will feature:

- 2024 Point-in-Time Results, presentation by Millikin University's R.J. Podeschi and students
- Announcement of the 2024 Macon County Continuum of Care Advocate of the Year
- Remarks from Christopher DeJaynes, Homeward Bound Program Director and Darsonya Switzer, CoC Chair and CEO of Dove, Inc.
- How to become involved with the MC Homeless Advisory Council

Millikin University

1230 W. Main, Decatur
University Commons, Banquet Room

Please park in the 'U' shape parking lot in front of the University Commons building. Join us in the 3rd floor banquet area.

This Community Breakfast is free and open to the public. Reservations are required; please reply to lgardnersmith@doveinc.org or 217.362.7700, by noon on March 20, 2024



Dove's Mission

Dove is an organization that engages religious institutions, volunteers, and advocates seeking to coordinate efforts to address unmet needs and social injustices. These needs are met through coordinated programs focusing on domestic violence, homelessness, education, volunteer and community empowerment, and individual emergency need fulfillment.

Dove works for justice, equality, and understanding among all people.

Executive Staff

Darsonya Switzer, Chief Executive Officer
Tina Owens, Chief Operations Officer
Barbara Blakey, Chief Communications Officer
Vicki Wrigley, Finance Director

Program Leadership

BABES Program
Sandy Laesch, Interim Coordinator

Children's Clothing Room
Kathy Walters, Coordinator

Dove Financial Assistance
Molly Tenuto, Program Director

Dove Food Pantry
Ashlyn Burrus, Coordinator

Domestic Violence Program
Joyce Kirkland, Program Director
Ashlyn Burrus, DeWitt County Coordinator
Becky Comstock, Moultrie County Coordinator
Susie Kensil, Shelby County Coordinator

Homeward Bound
Christopher DeJaynes, Program Director

Neighborhood Services Program
LeAnn Ellis, Coordinator

RSVP • Retired & Senior Volunteer Program
Angie Williams, Program Director
Kathy Walters, Macon County Coordinator
Silvia Comfort, DeWitt County Coordinator



March is Women's History Month and during this month I want to acknowledge a woman who assisted Ray Batman in molding Dove, Inc. Not only was she a founder and volunteer, but her passion, dedication, and drive were so vital to building the stellar foundation that the organization stands on today. She may have been tiny in stature, but her presence was vast. She was eventually hired as the Program Director in 1974 and remained an active and avid supporter of Dove after retirement and up until her passing in 2014. Her "never take no for an answer" attitude assisted with building collaborations that are still matched today.

She was extremely instrumental in the organization of a multitude of community-related programs throughout the city of Decatur. This includes the Nationally Renowned Mother-to-Mother program. A programming concept that has been widely adopted across the country.

Sue's presence still shines through those of us who have come along beside her. Her commitment to resolving the needs of the community continues to burn bright and continues to be passed along to those who have come after her. She is Dove's history and will forever be remembered as "Mother Dove". So, during this Women's History Month, I want to express my gratitude to Marilyn Rose "Susie" Simcox.

Darsonya Switzer, CEO

We miss you Susie



above, Sue with a preschooler



right, Sue with Mrs. Cobb her MtM friend for life



above, Sue and others gathered for the Dean Simcox Conference Room Dedication

Community Financial Resource Night

Tuesday, March 19 • 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Empowerment Opportunity Center
360 East Marietta, Decatur

To assist those with power related needs, WNCF & LIHEAP
will be participating.

Other agencies may join to assist with other needs, please
see doveinc.org for additional details!

hosted by:



To apply for assistance, please bring with you:

Warm Neighbors Cool Friends

- Photo ID
- Proof of Income
- Current Ameren Bill

EOC

LIHEAP:

- Current power bill
- Social Security Cards for the entire household, all members including infants - if under 1 years old, they can use the hospital records with footprint and parent information on it
- Proof of Income for the past 30 days (SSA/SSI, Pension, Unemployment, Disability, Self-Employment, Township, Child Support, etc.)
- Current Rent Receipt/Lease or proof of home ownership (Rent Receipt/Lease must show clients name, address, and amount paid monthly. Home ownership must show name and address)
- Link and/or Medical cards (for all individuals not earning income over 18 years old)

PANTRY:

- Proof of Income
- Proof of Address
- Photo ID

Early Childhood Resource Information
will be available.

NEWS

from the Domestic Violence Program

Dove's Domestic Violence Education and Volunteer Training

Registration for this training begins with a phone interview.
Please call between March 13 and April 24 at noon • 217.428.6616

SITE: Dove, Inc. / Anna B. Millikin Home, 302 S. Union, Decatur

TIME: 8:00 a.m. to noon

TRAINING DATES: May 6-9, 13-16, 20-22

This training is for individuals who meet the criteria to volunteer at any of Dove's Domestic Violence Programs or who are seeking educational advancement for their employment.

Fee for this ICADV Certified Training is \$200

How can you lend a hand?

- *Answering our hotlines*
- *Covering the Shelter*
- *Reporting /data collection*
- *Assisting with orders of protection*
- *Assisting with/facilitating support groups and more*

NEWS

from the Domestic Violence Program

Moultrie County Dove Coalition Against Domestic Violence Committee (CADV) will meet Tuesday, March, at 5:00 p.m. If you are interested in joining, please contact us at 217.728.9303 for more information.

Group services are still being held on Thursday evenings at 5:00 p.m. Dinner is provided. Childcare can be provided upon request. If you are currently experiencing abuse, have not healed from past abuse, feel isolated and confused, group services could be very beneficial. It is provided in a confidential non-judgmental atmosphere and helps empower, educate, and provide the tools needed to gain your power back.

We would really like to send a very heartfelt thank you to the individual in the community who provided meals for group throughout the month of February. Your thoughtfulness, kindness and compassion are greatly appreciated.

Becky Comstock
Moultrie County Coordinator

As I write this, it is a warm, beautiful late February day...very spring-like. Mr. Weatherman says that tomorrow the temperature will drop 50 degrees. Mother Nature continues to tease us with warm glimpses of spring followed by a reality check, and she ushers in another mini taste of winter. As I think about this, it reminds me a bit of living in the cycle of domestic violence. Relationships start out like spring, warm and pleasant. Eventually the foreboding forecast looms on the horizon and an incident of abuse plunges us into our own personal winter. Over and over, the cycle perpetuates until we do something to break the cycle.

If this scenario is familiar to you, or someone you know, please contact us at 217.774.4888 (24-hour hotline) or 217.774-3121. Our services are free and confidential. We would love to help you break the cycle of abuse and move on to a safer and more secure life.

Susie Kensil
Shelby County Coordinator

WISH LIST FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM

Desperate Need

- Baby wipes
- Full size bath towels (new only)
- Bedsheet sets- twin size (new only)
- Pillows (new only)
- Comforters (new only)

High Need

- Latex-free vinyl gloves (size large and xl)
- Clorox wipes
- Nightshirts- womens, all sizes (new only)
- Sweatsuits- unisex, all sizes (new only)
- Gas gift cards
- Walmart gift cards
- Kroger cards for gas and food
- Aldi gift cards for shelter food
- Aleve or naproxen
- Benadryl (or generic)
- Non-drowsy allergy meds (zyrtec/claritin/etc)
- Cold and flu medicine
- Tylenol (or generic acetaminaphen) for infants and/or children
- Orajel
- Cold and flu medicine for ifants and children
- Vaseline
- Cotton swabs
- Cotton balls
- African american hair care products (shampoo/conditioner/etc)
- Hair grease
- Hairbrushes – natural bristles
- Hairbrushes- nylon bristles
- Hair gel and hair spray
- Board games
- Card games

Your gift will ensure that services
can continue.
Please give generously.

Dove, Inc.
302 S. Union Street
Decatur, IL 62522

or donate online at doveinc.org

Attention RSVP Volunteers!

Please Save the Date:

RSVP Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner
Thursday, August 22
5:00 to 6:30 p.m.
St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Details to come!

We will begin taking reservations in July.

Children's Clothing Room

Central Christian Church
650 West William Street, Decatur

Mondays & Wednesdays
1:00 to 3:30 p.m.

Free clothing, yes really free, for infants through teens

Thanks to the members of RSVP
who serve at the clothing room!

If you have a child who has outgrown their clothes, please consider donating them to our Children's Clothing Room!

The room is open for donations and shopping on Mondays and Wednesdays afternoons.

If you know of children in need of clothes, please know families can utilize it once a month for free with no referrals necessary. Case managers and liaisons are also able to utilize the room for kids at their schools or agencies! We serve ages 0 - 18 at the clothing room.



B A B E S

***Are you wanting
to volunteer in the
BABES Program
for the 2024 Spring
Semester?***

***If so, contact us for more
on the program to see if it
would be a good fit for you!***

***Contact Barb Blakey
bblakey@doveinc.org or
Sandy Laesch
slaesch@doveinc.org***

217.428.6616

Spring is just around the corner, and I am looking forward to it. It is a time of beginnings and renewal, there is a freshness in the air, the trees are starting to bud, tulips, crocuses, and daffodils start sprouting up. Spring is a time that I start planning the next school year program goals for the BABES program and reflecting on what has been accomplished this school year. It is also a time of thankfulness for me. Thankful for being able to work for and be a part of Dove, Inc. Thankful for dedicated BABES volunteers that give of their time to the children in our community. Thankful for community support and donors that allow this program to continue. Thankful to all the teachers and school administrators that welcomed the BABES program into their schools and classrooms.

Volunteers, LeAnn, and puppets are busy this month presenting at Johns Hill, Meridian and starting at Sangamon Valley Primary. In February BABES programming finished at Parsons. April and May are shaping up to be a busy finish to our school year.

If you are interested in the opportunity to make a difference in a child's life. Contact Sandy or Barb for more information about becoming a BABES volunteer.

***'Never underestimate your ability to make someone else's life better
– even if you never know it.'
– Greg Louganis***

**Sandy Laesch
BABES Interim Program Coordinator**

RSVP

Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars! Growing Strong Sexual Assault's annual Take Back the Night event will be April 18, beginning in Central Park. The theme is Building Connected Communities. Growing Strong is an RSVP station and is always in need of volunteers and supporters.

Save the Dates: Surprise event open to all RSVP volunteers on Friday, May 24, in the afternoon and evening. More details in next month's newsletter!

RSVP Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner! Hold open Thursday August 22, from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul's. Details to come! We will begin taking RSVPs in July.



You can support Dove by participating with the Kroger Community Rewards Program!

To use the Kroger Community Rewards Program, simply visit <http://www.kroger.com>

Once logged into your Kroger account you can search for DOVE INC either by name or DK772 and then click enroll.

Dove Food Pantry



**Tuesdays
& Thursdays**
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
803 W. Leander, Clinton

- This is a free service to anyone in DeWitt County.
- You can utilize the pantry once a month.
- When you arrive, you will need to show your ID.
- We also have diapers if you have a little one in your household - child must be living in the household.

Dove Financial Assistance

*Donation are needed
to keep this
emergency financial assistance
program thriving,
and supporting
families in need!*

*Please use mailing address:
302 S. Union, Decatur, IL 62522
or on Dove's website
doveinc.org*

*Please put DFA on
check memo line
or in the comment box.*

I am excited to share that DFA has come together with the Energy Assistance Foundation and the Empowerment Opportunity Center to plan a Community Financial Resource Night. This will be held on Tuesday, March 19 from 4:00-7:00 p.m. at The Empowerment Opportunity Center. (flyer on page 3) At this event, applications for LIHEAP and Warm Neighbors Cool Friends will be accepted. Please check out our flyer for the information you need to bring with you to apply. There will also be other agencies in attendance to offer their services that they have available to the public. This should be a great outreach night for the community that will offer a different timeframe for those that might work during the day. Please share this information with those that you know whom could benefit!

I'm excited to share that we will begin having walk in hours at our Dove office located at 302 S. Union Street. beginning on March 6! Please check our website for more details. Also, DFA's Winter hours will be coming to a close on March 22 and our Spring hours will begin April 1. Please see right, for our dates and locations, and as always, check our website or social media for any updates to the schedule that might occur.

DFA Spring Hours April 1 to May 24

Macon County

Decatur Public Library:

**Mondays • 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday & Wednesday • 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.**

Dove Office at 302 S. Union St:

**Tuesdays • (except 1st of the month) 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Wednesdays • 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
Thursdays • 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.**

Moultrie County

**1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month
9:00 to 11:00 a.m.**

Shelby County

**1st & 3rd Thursday of the month
9:30 to 11:30 a.m.**

Piatt County

**2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month
9:00 to 11:00 a.m.**

DeWitt County

**2nd and 4th Thursday of the month
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

Dove Financial Assistance

Helping with emergency financial assistance

DFA Winter Hours • January 2, 2024 – March 22, 2024

Please note:

- DFA will be closed on all Holidays recognized by Dove, Inc.
- If there is inclement weather, please check social media to ensure that DFA will still be open that day.

Macon County Sites:

Decatur Public Library, 120 N. Franklin, Decatur
 Mondays, Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
 Mondays, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
 All other times will be by appointment only.
DFA@doveinc.org or 217.619.9108

Contact Info for sites below: DFA@doveinc.org or 217.433.7435

Shelby County Site:

Salvation Army Building, 133 E. Main St., Shelbyville
 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Moultrie County Site:

First United Methodist Church, 216 W. Jefferson St., Sullivan
 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Piatt County Site:

First Presbyterian Church, 214 S. Charter, Monticello
 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

DeWitt County Site:

Dove, 803 W. Leander, Clinton
 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.



2023/24 Warm Neighbors Cool Friends Income Requirements &
 Energy Bill Payment Assistance Guidelines

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION TO APPLY:

- Driver's license or other Photo ID
- Copy of current Ameren Illinois energy bill
- Proof of income



PROGRAM RULES:

- Applicant(s) must reside at address on bill and have active service in their name
- Applicant can only receive assistance ONCE per heating season (March 1 – May 31) and ONCE in the cooling season (June 1 – August 30)
- Account balance must be lower than \$1,500
- WNCF pledges up to \$500 during heating season matching customer payments within the last 45 days
- Cooling season maximums are \$200 and are intended for seniors, disabled, or those with medical conditions exacerbated by heat (with a doctor's letter)
- 30 Day (GROSS) Income Range by Family Size

Family Size	WNCF Income Range
1	\$2,431 - \$4,513
2	\$3,288 - \$5,158
3	\$4,144 - \$5,804
4	\$5,001 - \$6,446
5	\$5,858 - \$6,963
6	\$6,714 - \$7,479
7	\$7,571 - \$7,996
8	\$7,776 - \$8,513

PROGRAM DISTRIBUTOR FOR MACON, DEWITT, AND PIATT COUNTIES:

- Dove, Inc. will assist with applications. Contact 217.619.9108 for questions. Documents can be emailed to DFA@doveinc.org
- Please visit www.doveinc.org for a list of our walk-in hours and locations or see left.



Welcome March! Among other things you will bring spring and flowers and sunshine and even more neighborhoods gathering together for the benefit of Decatur and that is always good to see!

The Nelson-Lions Neighborhood will be receiving new streetlights soon to help with the traffic flow and speeding issues in their area, and there is a resident looking into having STOP signs added in specific areas also. These will help their neighborhood to become safer overall.

We are hopeful to see West End Neighborhood Association also known as WENA, re-launch their neighborhood meetings again soon as we continue to work with the president of this neighborhood as well as residents.

BABES got going earlier this year and it has, as always been a joy to be in the classrooms with the kiddos and sharing important lessons from the puppets.

Beyond the puppets there is always something to learn and share as I continue to visit various meetings throughout the community such as CONO, CHICO (Centro for Hispanic and Immigrant Community Opportunities), DPS board of education, city council, and more; as well as take part in Resource Fairs and other events within Decatur.

LeAnn Ellis, Coordinator

**Coalition
Of
Neighborhood
Organizations
Meeting**

March 19

(3rd Tuesday of each month)

5:30 p.m.

**Decatur Public Library
130 N. Franklin
Decatur**



RSVP

Are you 55 or better and want to help support Dove?

**Are you interested in volunteering in the community
- or are you already volunteering?**

If you answered yes to both questions, there's a simple way to support one of our programs and that's by enrolling in the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). By filling out a simple enrollment form, we can help you match your interests and skills with one of the non-profits or agencies that we work with to place volunteers.

If you want to help feed people facing food insecurity, we work with numerous food pantries, Good Samaritan Inn, Meals on Wheels, and Peace Meals. If you want to help make sure homebound seniors receive visits to help reduce their social isolation or provide transportation for them to doctors' appointments, we can help link you with agencies that provide those services who are in need of volunteers. If you have an interest in doing your volunteering outdoors, we have places that need volunteers for things like gardening, conservation, and general upkeep. Hospitals, libraries, museums, clothing rooms, tax preparation, advocacy, disaster work and preparation, general office work. These are just some of the available options. There is truly something for everyone. We currently have 52 places where our volunteers are needed between Macon and DeWitt counties.

Schedules are often flexible, and you can volunteer as often or as little as you want. There are even things you can do from the comfort of your own home, such as knitting, crocheting, sewing, making, and addressing cards, writing letters, etc.

All you must do is track the hours you spend volunteering and turn them in to us. Doing this enables us to report to our funders all the amazing things that our senior volunteers do for our communities,

something that is so often overlooked. It also earns you an invitation to our appreciation events and a copy of our bi-monthly newsletter, provides you with secondary insurance in case of accidents while volunteering, and you are almost guaranteed to make new friends.

If you are a church that is a Dove supporter, we would love to come speak to you about opportunities that are available to any of your 55 and better groups! If your church or agency wants to help support Dove and you have a food pantry that serves people in Macon or DeWitt Counties, getting any of your volunteers who are already volunteering to enroll in RSVP is another great way to help support our

program, and if you're in need of more volunteers, we could add you to our list of places that will accept volunteers.

There are so many great ways to get involved. If you or someone you know would be a good fit for RSVP, please reach out to Angie or Kathy in the Decatur office at 217.428.6616 or send us an email at awilliams@doveinc.org or kwalters@doveinc.org. If you are in DeWitt, please reach out to Silvia Comfort at 217.935.2241 or email her at scomfort@doveinc.org. We'd love to have you as part of our RSVP family!

RSVP Volunteer Opportunities

CHELP, a local Macon County organization who helps to provide services and assistance to keep older people in their own homes rather than in assisted living or skilled nursing facilities, is requesting a volunteer or two to help make friendly phone calls to seniors to check on them. Computer knowledge is helpful but not required. If you're interested, please reach out to Angie Williams at Dove, Inc. at 217.428.6616 or by email at awilliams@doveinc.org, or directly reach out to Julie at CHELP at

*Come and make a difference at the next
Resident Council Meeting!*



The Resident Council meeting is an opportunity for residents to freely discuss topics to improve the quality of life within their development.

Please join us:

- Let your voice be heard
- We want to discuss your concerns and suggestions within your community
- Come share your ideas of improvements for your community, surroundings and housing needs
- Ensure your views are acknowledged and addressed
- Let's talk safety

March 14, 2024

Location to be determined

call 217.362.7700

for additional information

all in:

Macon County Inter-Agency Council

Please join us at the **all in** gathering!

4th Tuesday of the month ■ NOON to 1:00 p.m.
Upcoming Dates: March 26 & April 23

Central Christian Church, 650 W. William, Decatur
Corner of Monroe and William Street, near downtown Decatur.
Please park in main lot, come in main entrance and proceed to lower level fellowship hall

**For more information,
please call:**

Molly Tenuto or Angie Williams
Dove, Inc.
217.428.6616

or email
mtenuto@doveinc.org
awilliams@doveinc.org

Join us for networking and sharing information:

- program coordinators
- direct service providers
- information sharers

4th Tuesday of each month, NOON

- We will keep the gathering to an hour.
- Feel free to bring your lunch.
- No membership fees.