

VETERANS

From Page A1

For those who serve in the military, Novak said there is so much they give up.

"There's no races at Viking Speedway, there's no bonfires, no fishing on Maple Lake or no snowmobiling from Melby to Forada," he said. "But today, we say thank you."

Sunday's Veterans Day program was dedicated to all military personnel, past and present, along with their family members, as a way to give thanks and as a reminder to all that, "Freedom is not free" according to Novak.

During the service, Gabe Pipo, a veteran and chairman of the Veterans Memorial Park in Alexandria, announced the essay winners, who in turn read their winning essays. The three winners from area schools were fifth-grade students Serenity Peterson, Addy Lenz and Maya Perry.

Garfield Lions Club is hosting TURKEY BINGO!

Saturday, November 17th

7:00 p.m. at the Garfield Community Center

Build your own classified ad... **ANY TIME, DAY or NIGHT!**

Create & preview your ad online: www.echopress.com/event/classifieds

UNITED WAY

From Page A1

The organization served a comparable number of people in 2017 as in previous years, but she has heard that needs are starting to increase. Fortunately, fundraising for the United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties has risen each year – not by "leaps and bounds," said Jabas, but the money coming in through the United Way's fundraising efforts is increasing.

The United Way supports 25 various agencies and 37 programs. Its annual golf tournament is the biggest fundraiser in terms of dollars raised, but the annual chili feed is the biggest event as far as attendance, which she feels raises awareness and creates a community impact.

Biggest needs

The biggest need for the United Way right now is winter gear, including coats, boots, snow pants, hats, mittens, gloves and scarves. Children's snow pants, boots and mittens are always in great demand this time of year, she said.

"The need for coats is huge," Jabas said, noting that the United Way no longer conducts a one-time "coat drive" but instead does a mass emailing to churches and other community partners throughout the year to offer increased access for individuals and families. Coats in all sizes are welcome, but men's coats

in larger sizes are definitely needed, as well as men's gloves.

Another upcoming need will be for people, businesses and/or organizations to adopt families for the holiday season. The Adopt-A-Family program was started in 2010 and last year, 245 families were adopted with nearly 650 children receiving presents.

Registration for families in need of adoption and those who want to be adopters runs from now through Dec. 12. Anyone can ask to adopt a family and can request the number of children they wish to buy presents for.

United Way staff members will try to match adopters with adoptees as best as they can. Children can only be registered once, meaning they cannot be registered by a parent or grandparent.

Families provide information to the United Way about their child/children, including a general wish list for presents. Once the match is made, the adopters are given information about their adoptees, including gender, age, clothing sizes, general wish list and a family number. Everything is kept confidential and the adopters have no idea who will receive the gifts. The unwrapped gifts are then dropped off at the United Way office and families are notified of the pick-up days and times.

New programs

Started as a pilot program last year, Equipped



Celeste Edenloff / Echo Press file photo

Presents for kids who were adopted through the United Way's Adopt-A-Family Christmas gifts program last year were piled high in the United Way office. About 650 kids received gifts through the program.

to Work helped to place 30 people into the workforce. The United Way has partnered with Douglas and Pope County social services and Rural Minnesota CEP, said Jabas. She explained that social services will make a referral to CEP about someone looking for a job and then CEP counselors can access funds available through the Equipped to Work program to assist the individual in obtaining employment. The United Way is contacted and helps to get the person the necessary resources needed, said Jabas.

"Maybe the person needs gas to get to and

from the interview or maybe the person needs something to wear to an interview," said Jabas. "Or maybe the person got the job but now needs steel-toe boots. We fill that gap and equip them with the necessary items so that they can work."

Currently, the Equipped to Work program is fully grant funded, but Jabas said those funds will eventually run out and the program will rely on the United Way's fundraising efforts dollars.

More information about the program is expected to be shared at the Live United Luncheon on Wednesday, Nov. 14.

Another program that is slated to be talked about at the luncheon is a new "speed volunteer" program. Jabas explained that the United Way's website will provide details about the program and its opportunities for organizations, groups or businesses.

For example, she said businesses are often looking for group volunteer projects. The website will list different kits that can be put together, such as a homework help kit, a birthday kit or maybe a welcome home kit. She said the employees could gather the necessary supplies that would fill out the kit.

Items for a welcome home kit could go to first-time homebuyers and include things like cleaning supplies, or the homework kit might include pencils, paper, a calculator or snacks.

"It's a tangible way to give back," Jabas said, "and a great way for groups to give and for team building in a workplace."

Once a group fulfills the kits, they will also have the opportunity to reflect on the project, said Jabas, through questions such as, "What did it mean to you to help?"

More information about this program will be available on the United Way's website at www.uwdp.org/.

THANK YOU

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to the Ward 2 voters of the City of Alexandria, for electing me as your representative on the council. This election brought me the opportunity to meet new people, listen to their concerns and discuss important community matters. I will be honest and work hard for everyone in Ward 2 and the City of Alexandria. Also, thank you to many others in the community who gave me encouragement throughout the campaign.

ROGER THALMAN

10TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY BAZAAR

Villard United Methodist Church invites you to join us for a day of fun!

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 17TH, 9:30 AM TO NOON

• Handcrafted Gift Items • Christmas Cookies • Bake Sale

\$7.00 Brunch starts at 9:30am

MENU
Egg Bake • Fruit Cup
Muffin • Beverage

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!

ELLINGSON
Plumbing, Heating, A/C & Electrical

12-Year Parts & Labor Warranty

Call us today! 1-800-595-8645

2510 S Broadway St | Alexandria, MN
www.ellingsons.com

chicz fun fresh fab

For all Your Holidays!

ON LOCAL NEWSTANDS

PUBLICATION OF ECHO PRESS

TRUMM DRUG

Holiday OPEN HOUSE

2 DAYS ONLY!
FRIDAY, NOV. 16th
SATURDAY, NOV. 17th

30% OFF STOREWIDE

Regular Priced Merchandise*

*Excludes sale/clearance merchandise, prescriptions & diabetic care items, baggallini, dairy products, gift cards & prior purchases. DISCOUNT MAY NOT BE COMBINED WITH OTHER CERTIFICATES OR COUPONS.

Gifts & Home Decor | Household | Clothing & Accessories | Health & Beauty | Greeting Cards

Enjoy Refreshments & Register for Door Prizes!

FREE Gift to First 50 Shoppers Each Day!

TRUMM DRUG
Alexandria | Parkers Prairie | Elbow Lake | Glenwood

Refill prescriptions, find health information, view our monthly sale events & special offers at www.trummdrug.com