

# asac action

May 2010

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## United Way Day of Caring

This year ASAC was fortunate to have local businesses take on three projects as part of United Way of East Central Iowa Day of Caring. On Wednesday, May 12th, a team of volunteers from **Yell Adworks** tackled painting ASAC's main campus dining room and a group from **Alliant Energy** painted Heart of Iowa's first floor hall way, lounge, and three offices. Due to the cold and rainy weather, the third project was postponed until the following week. On May 19th a group from **Climate Engineers** removed the old hedge behind ASAC's Adult Residential program, cut sod, planted 100 honeysuckle bushes, rebuilt two horseshoe pits, spread sand over the back volleyball court, and mulched the new hedge.

To the right is a picture of the **Yell Adworks** team in front of one of the newly painted dining room walls.



Below is a picture of the **Climate Engineers** group. The bushes planted by **Climate Engineers** during United Way's Day of Caring were donated by **Modern Woodman Insurance**.



We would like to thank all of the local businesses that participated in the United Way Day of Caring and the employees who volunteered their time and talents to help area non-profits. Special thanks go out to **Yell Adworks**, **Alliant Energy** and **Climate Engineers** for improving our buildings and grounds.

## Modern Woodman Insurance

Besides the honeysuckle bushes, Modern Woodman Insurance also provided bushes and trees for the Heart of Iowa campus. Thanks to Paul Kiecksee of Modern Woodman Insurance for making this generous donation possible.

## **Be Prepared This Graduation Season**

*By Erin Gavin, Certified Prevention Specialist*

It's that time of year again. The seniors have taken their final tests. Lockers are cleaned out after four years of use. The tears are streaming down proud parents' cheeks as their son and daughter walk into Pomp and Circumstance blaring from the high school band. This is what both children and parents have been waiting for the past 12 years...graduation day!

Graduation Days are filled with excitement. Attending the actual ceremony is thrilling, but for more, the excitement comes from having an entire party dedicated to their accomplishments. While parents are filled with excitement of the milestone their children just reached, some dread the decision that was made weeks, if not months ago: should you have alcohol at your graduation party? Was it the right decision? Will others judge me for having it? Will some judge me for NOT having it? It may be a tough decision for some, but for others, the decision is quite easy.

Teenagers' drinking in high school is nothing new in our society. As the number of students drinking in high school rises, it seems the number of graduation parties with alcohol does as well. While some parents tend to look the other way on a day like this, social host ordinances are making a large number of communities hold parents responsible for anything that happens in their homes-whether they are present or not. Following is a list of simple suggestions that may help keep your party safe and fun at the same time.

- > First, provide some activities. If people at your party have something to do, thoughts of the lack of alcohol there may be taken over by who's going to win the horseshoe tournament!
- > Ask other adults to help you monitor the party. As the host, you may be consumed with greeting everyone and making sure everything is taken care of. Having a few extra helpful hands to watch who is coming and going and if anything suspicious is going on will offer a bit of relief.
- > Communicate to everyone that your party will be alcohol free. Several parents in the community may follow your lead and do the same. There is always strength in numbers.
- > Finally, in the end if you still choose to have alcohol for the adults at your party, make sure it is monitored by someone the entire time. An unattended cooler near all the other beverages could be an invitation for minors to reach in and take one for themselves without anyone noticing.

**Remember, this time of year is exciting for both the students and their families. With a little extra precaution, this day can be remembered for years to come!**

If you would like a yard sign to promote alcohol-free graduation parties or promote parents not providing alcohol to minors, please contact your local ASAC office: Linn County 319-390-1884, Benton County 319-472-2443, Clinton County 563-243-2124, Jackson County 563-652-2215, and Jones County 319-462-4327.

**The Benton County Above the Influence Coalition** is proud to announce the receipt of a grant totaling more than \$4,000 from the Hawkeye Area Community Action Program (HACAP). Grant funds will allow the group to produce a youth summit during the summer of 2010. The summit will be student-led and will focus on how alcohol and drugs affect youths' futures. The event will culminate with the young people producing a street marketing campaign geared toward reaching their peers at this year's county fair. The Benton County Above the Influence Coalition is a group of community members from throughout Benton County who work to reduce underage drinking and drug use.

**For more information, please contact Jennifer Ritch at 319-472-2443 or visit [www.coalitionconnections.com/bc-above-the-influence.php](http://www.coalitionconnections.com/bc-above-the-influence.php).**

## Updates on April Prevention Activities

### Alcohol Awareness Month

To help promote April as Alcohol Awareness Month, Kirkwood Community College had seven apartment complexes participate in a red ribbon campaign. Each housing complex had volunteers tie red ribbons on each car antenna in their parking lots. Many of the housing complexes also sent out a memo about why the ribbons were being tie and posted a red yard sign that stated April is Alcohol Awareness Month.

The students kept the red ribbons on their cars and some even shared stories with the apartment managers and other volunteers stating how they felt it was important that this issue was being talked about. It was a great feeling to come back a week later and still see cars with the ribbons tied on them. Many of the housing complexes kept their yard signs out for the entire month of April.

The red ribbons and the yard signs helped get the students attention about the concerns of alcohol abuse. It also let them know that there are people from their housing complexes and their college that are dedicated to having a safe healthy environment.

### Prescription Drug Drop-Off

Properly disposing of medication can often be frustrating. It can be hard to know which to flush and which to throw out with the kitty litter. Often times, instead of disposing of prescription drugs at all, people keep them in their medicine cabinet for years. Keeping the medications rather than properly disposing of them can put you and others at risk. Statistics show that 70% of prescription drug abusers get their drugs from family and friends; typically without friends and family even knowing!

ASAC partnered with the Benton County Above the Influence Coalition, Jones County Safe & Healthy Youth Coalition, Linn County Partnership on Substance Abuse, the Belle Plaine Police Department, Jones County Sheriff, Linn County Sheriff, and Linn County Solid Waste to coordinate a three-county initiative to clean out our medicine cabinets and protect our children and environment from the dangers of prescription drugs.

The initiative took place on April 24, 2010 at three separate locations. Within just three hours, over 800 pounds of prescription drugs were collected and will be disposed of properly. For more information on prescription drug abuse prevention or proper disposal, contact Keiaffa Green at 390-1884 x 209.

### Film Honored for Accurate Portrayal of Addiction

The Oscar-nominated film "Crazy Heart," which features Jeff Bridges as an alcoholic country singer, was honored in the annual Prism Awards for its accurate portrayal of the disease of addiction. Bridges and co-star Maggie Gyllenhaal also won individual awards for their performances. The awards are given annually by the Entertainment Industries Council and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

### Volunteer with Web Design Skills Needed

ASAC's web site could use a fresh look. We currently use FrontPage for web site design and maintenance. To view ASAC's web site please go to [www.asac.us](http://www.asac.us).

If you think you can help, call 390-4611 and ask for Steph Boesenberg.