Kayaker: **Lack of proper equipment, caution led to tragedy**

A GROUP OF kayaking experts from throughout the area packed up their gear Sunday after they paddled off Port Washington’s south beach. The group looked for signs of missing kayaker Marcus Beilman and his boat and pondered ways to increase safety for those plying Lake Michigan in these vessels.

Flexible Kayaking: **Hippity hopping down the bunny trail**

The weather was hardly spring-like, but a crowd of little children participating in the annual Hippity Hoppy Easter egg hunt and bonnet contest at Possibility Playground posed for photos in their holiday finery and winter coats. After the contests, many of the youngsters and their parents visited downtown businesses, where they collected treats for their baskets and participated in various activities.

United Way tops local fundraising goal

By KRISTYN HALBIG ZIEHM

Ozaukee Press photo

United Way of Northern Ozaukee has met and exceeded its annual goal of $285,000, thanks to a couple last minute contributions, Executive Director Barbara Bates-Nelson has announced.

United Way, which is celebrating its 65th anniversary, received a $7,700 donation from 100+ Women Who Care, Ozaukee chapter and a gift from an estate of more than $50,000, she said.

“We were very blessed this year,” Bates-Nelson said. “For the last couple years, the campaign has increased slightly, but basically in line with the waves.”

She noted several companies have promised donations that have not yet been received. The campaign closes its book on March 31.

The unexpected donations from 100+ Women Who Care and the estate will ensure that United Way will be able to fund its agencies and put a little money aside as a cushion for next year, she said.

Until she learned of those donations, she was concerned whether the agency would manage to reach its goal this year, Bates-Nelson said.

“I was losing a lot of sleep over it,” she said, noting that the agencies funded by United Way had sought a 23% increase in their allocations.

“It was going to be a tough year to decide how to allocate the funds,” Bates-Nelson said.

“It gets tougher and tougher each year to raise money. There are a lot of great charities out there,” she said.

The funds from 100+ Women Who Care is committed to homelessness prevention in Ozaukee County, something that United Way has embraced in the last couple years, Bates-Nelson said.

Last year, she said, 102 families sought homeless assistance funds.

“That’s not something we take lightly,” she said.

The funds from the organization came just as the homelessness prevention initiative was running out of funds, Bates-Nelson said. United Way has one more fundraiser planned for this season — the second annual purse race — being held in conjunction with Ladies Night Out on April 14.

The “Power of the Purse” raffle will be held at the 2B Banquet Room in Port Washington, during the event. Roughly 20 purses will be raffled, including a handblown glass award donated by United Way.

Money raised by United Way goes to support local community agencies and to take special interest in community impact grants.

Last year, United Way of Northern Ozaukee distributed $249,730. Of that, $184,700 was through direct support of United Way agencies, Bates-Nelson said.

The community impact grants go to funds that address four priorities: children’s education, financial literacy, mental health and access to health care.

**Arsenic in well water to be discussed March 30**

An informational meeting intended to alert homeowners to the dangers of arsenic and other contaminants in water will be held from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, March 30, at the Ozaukee County fairgrounds in Cedarburg.

During the session, which will be in the Ozaukee County Pavilion, will include information on proper well testing, interpreting the results of tests and mitigation processes as well as the potential health risks of arsenic. Those risks include cancer, liver damage, nervousness and skin abnormalities, according to the Ozaukee County Public Health Department.

Most of the roughly one million private wells in Wisconsin are not tested for arsenic.

Testing well water is one of the easiest things people can do to keep care of the health and well-being of themselves and their loved ones,” Dan Ziegler, an environmental health specialist with the Public Health Department, said.

Representatives of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Department of Health Services, Water Diagnostics and the Ozaukee County Land and Water Management Department, as well as local water treatment contractors, will be at the session.

After the session, Water Diagnostics will sell test kits for arsenic and completed analytical services for $28 each.

The session will be held March 31 and June 1 at the Public Health Department, 121 W. Main St., Room 246, Port Washington.

For more information, call 284-8170 or visit www.co.ozaukee.wi.us.

**United Press International**

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