

I was in Decorah, Iowa recently taking my son on a college visit and I had the opportunity, while there, to visit the bustling Oneota Food Cooperative; to visit a small independent bookstore in the quaint downtown area and buy the book "Building the Agricultural City: A Handbook of Rural Renewal" by Robert Wolf, a resident of Decorah (and former Chicago Tribune journalist

whose work about regionalism in rural America has appeared in or on Oxford University Press, Iowa Public Radio, and a few other places); and to participate in a community conversation and book review at the local library concerning the aforementioned book and the possibility of working towards a more col-

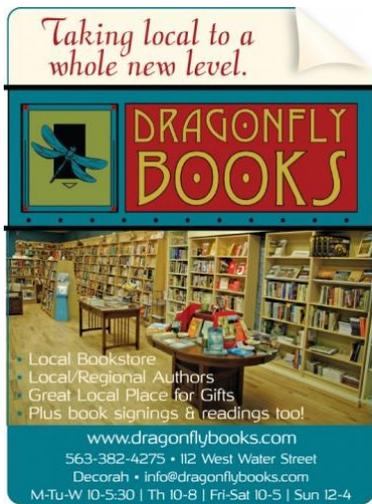


From the desk of Chris Thompson, President and CEO

laborative, de-centralized, regional economy in what is referred to as the "Driftless" region of Northeast Iowa, Northwest Illinois, Southwest Wisconsin, and Southeast Minnesota – an area not terribly dissimilar from parts of our region with its rolling hills, streams, springs, good fishing, strong agricultural heritage, and, unfortunately, economically troubled rural communities with boarded up main streets. The trip to

Decorah inspired me a bit as it is a town in a region on the move in doing many of the things we envision for communities in the West

Central region. Many of Decorah's main street restaurants use locally-sourced foods, with a couple of restaurants described to me as be-



Dragonfly Books, Decorah, Iowa



Main Street, Decorah, Iowa

In this Issue:

Page 1 From the Desk of Chris Thompson, President and CEO



Page 2 Week of the Young Child

Page 3 What is Advocacy?

Page 4 Quilting Club

Page 4 In-Service Training

Page 5 Testimonies

Page 6 It's Time To Grow!



ing owned by farmers who supply much of the produce for the restaurants. Also, the area is home to the Seed Savers Exchange and Farm whose purpose

(cont'd. on page 5)



Seed Savers Exchange, Decorah, Iowa



Sponsored by the National Association for the Education for Young Children



# April 24-28, 2017

## WOYC Activities

**Monday, April 24**  
Music Monday (Sing, dance, celebrate and learn)

**Tuesday, April 25**  
Taco Tuesday (Healthy eating and fitness at home and school)

**Wednesday, April 26**  
Work Together Wednesday (Work together, build together, learn together)

**Thursday, April 27**  
Artsy Thursday (Think, problem solve, create)

**Friday, April 28**  
Family Friday (Sharing family stories)



(NAEYC), the Week of the Young Child is an annual celebration focusing public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs.

NAEYC established the Week

of the Young Child in 1971, recognizing that the early childhood years

(birth through age 8) lay the foundation for children's success in school and later life. It is a time to plan how we--as citizens of a community, of a state, and of a nation--will better meet the needs of all

young children and their families.

NAEYC designates the Week of the Young Child dates and theme, but events are planned and implemented by local communities. Celebrations are organized and coordinated by regional,



state, and local NAEYC affiliates, and by individual early childhood

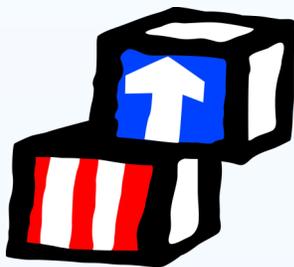
programs and community organizations providing services to young children and families. Local communities may tailor celebrations to meet their own needs. For example, while NAEYC traditionally designates a Week of the Young Child, some groups generate so much enthusiasm and support that they celebrate the "Month of the Young Child." Others have modified the dates of their celebration to coordinate with other community scheduled events.

However adapted, the central purpose remains unchanged--to promote the

needs of young children, their families, and the early childhood programs that serve them.

West Central Head Start locations will celebrate Week of the Young Child with lots of exciting activities. Both students and teachers alike look forward to this yearly celebration!

(content courtesy of [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org))



Head Start Employment Applications are taken YEAR ROUND!

[WWW.WCMCAA.ORG](http://WWW.WCMCAA.ORG)

**APPLY TODAY!**

660-476-2185.

# Advocacy

support of an i  
the act of plea

*We live in very unpredictable times for Community Action and as passionate as we all are about being “the voice in our communities”...for those who need it most”, it’s very important to remember what it truly means to advocate.*

## **What is Advocacy?**

Advocacy means to speak up, to plead the case of another, or to fight for a cause. Derived from the Latin word *advocare*, which means “coming to the aid of someone,” advocacy is an important function of most nonprofit organizations. It describes a wide range of expressions, actions and activities that seek to influence outcomes directly affecting the lives of the people served by the organization. All nonprofits advocate to varying degrees. For some, advocacy is the focus of their work, while other organizations may use advocacy to respond to issues pertaining to their mission.

Advocacy should not be confused with lobbying. Lobbying, as defined by the Internal Revenue Service, involves attempts to influence legislation at the local, state or federal level. Lobbying always involves

advocacy, though advocacy does not always involve lobbying.

## **How to Become an Effective Advocate**

1) Know the facts: To gain and maintain credibility, it is critical that you have the all of the facts on both sides of any issue. Having this information at your fingertips will help you in conversations with government officials, the media, other advocates, and the general public.

2) Use the facts: Any position you take should be grounded in the facts. It is often helpful to put your facts into one-pagers that you can distribute.

3) Have clear and concise message: Government officials, the press and the general public do not have time for long-winded conversations or documents—you need to

get to your point quickly and concisely. And remember to watch out for the jargon and acronyms used in different fields—you want everyone to understand the issues you are raising.

4) Nurture relationships and work collaboratively: Advocacy is a joint venture- you need to find your allies and work with them. Your chances of success are much greater when there are large numbers of organizations and people on your side. Whenever possible, be sure you and your allies have consistent data and the same messages.

5) Engage the public: Use the media, social media, petitions, letters, e-mails and other grassroots strategies to engage as many people as you can. Remember numbers speak loudly to elected officials!

Make your voice heard! Advocacy is not the

place for being shy. Make sure you spread the word—through meetings with government officials, press conferences, letters, petitions, rallies, and phone calls. And don’t forget to talk about what you are advocating for at dinner parties and social events- you never know who can become a useful ally.

Say thank you:

Remember that everyone is busy and their time is valuable. Keep your meetings short and always say thank you afterwards. When your advocacy is a success, always thank everyone who helped you achieve your victory!

Content copy courtesy of:  
<https://www.learningtogive.org/resources/nonprofit-advocacy>

<http://www.ccnnyork.org/about/what-is-effective-advocacy/>

# Quilting Club

Residents at Maplewood Estates have formed a Quilting Club. These ladies, humorously call themselves “The Strippers” (because they cuts strips of cloth to make the quilts) and they meet every Monday in order to create these handmade works of art.

It’s important for a Senior’s well-being to have a social network. People need social connections in order to thrive, and this is true no matter the age.



In contrast, studies show negative health consequences of Seniors who are lonely and do not have regular interaction with others.

This quilting club is a wonderful way for these ladies to create those connections.

Service Coordinator, Fonda Cauthron, encourages and assists our Seniors at Maplewood and Hickory Estates and helps to plan their activities.

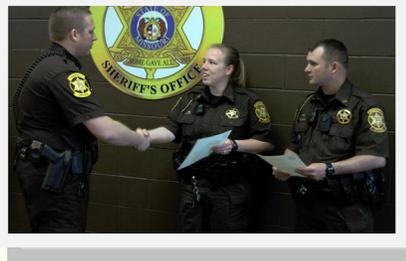
## In-service Training



In-home Services recently held their In-Service meetings (Unit-wide) and one of those meetings took place at Moore-Few Care Center in Nevada.

Speakers were brought in to provide the Aides with necessary information to help them recognize certain situations they may find themselves in when they enter a client’s home.

One of the speakers provided information about Bed Bugs: how to recognize them and what to do if a client is in that situation.



One of the Vernon County Sherriff’s Deputies came to share information about how to spot drug activity in homes and what to do when it is suspected.

An Aflac representative provided information regarding the policies one can acquire through Aflac and the benefits of those policies.

Everyone brought something for a “pot luck” Taco Bar and dessert.



Director, Lea Ann Gatzemeyer dropped in to give West Central updates.

It was a successful day of training and fun for everyone!

# This is **my story**

*"I never thought I would be in that position."*

"I found myself starting life over after the age of 40. My financial security was gone. I was getting a divorce and facing the fact that I had raise my 2 children on my salary from West Central Missouri Community Action Agency. This was no small feat for a person. I also had to find a place to live, heat my house and feed my 2 kids. We were lucky enough to find a house to rent from a wonderful family who worked with me on getting the rent money, and setting up my utilities.

I discovered that I needed some propane for heat and cooking right away. (We all know how expensive a tank of propane is.) With West Central's help I was able to secure LIHEAP funding for some propane. I was so grateful for that ray of sunshine!

I had never been in this position before and have not used any of the resources that West Central had to offer since, but I was so glad it was there in my time of need. You never know when your time of need will be, as I never thought I would be in that position."

*"...I found it at West Central!"*

"As a survivor of domestic violence, I never thought I'd have anything of my own. I never thought my children would know stability and I blamed myself for everything.

Several years ago, I was a struggling single mother who was trying to pick up the pieces of my life and start again.

A friend told me about Head Start and she suggested I enroll my two children, who were both under the age of 5 at that time.

I took her advice and enrolled my babies. A wonderful teacher at Head Start encouraged me to get in touch with West Central's Employment and Training unit so that I could find some job training programs. I took her advice.

I didn't know where my life was headed, but knew that I had to do something different in order to give my children a better life.

Now, looking back, I know it was the best decision of my life!

I'm recently remarried, and on my way to a nursing degree. All thanks to West Central! My children now have a stable home with two parents who love them, and I'm on my way to earning a degree that is all mine. My degree will be a pride that no one can strip me of. Ever. I'm so grateful for West Central and the genuine care that they showed me and my two children. I only wish everyone who is struggling could find their way to a West Central door so that they too, can see that good does exist and there are people who care. There is hope and I found it at West Central! "

*(Desk of CEO...cont'd from page 1)*

it is to "conserve and promote America's culturally diverse but endangered garden and food crop heritage for future generations by collecting, growing, and sharing heirloom seeds and plants;" the town has a fairly vibrant art and music scene even though it is no larger than Clinton; and the main street is full of locally owned small businesses. Additionally, the local college owns a wind generator that produces electricity for the college.



*Luther College, Decorah, Iowa*

The hope of the author of the book mentioned above is to begin the work of creating a "sustainable, self-reliant economy on a grassroots level for the benefit of locals..." Decorah and other communities in the Driftless region are charting their course. May we aspire to do the same in our region? May we offer a collective vision for a more sustainable, more collaborative future in which we, societally, value local solutions over global solutions, cooperation and collaboration over competition, horizontal over vertical relationships, small enterprises over large corporations, and resilient, community-oriented businesses over profit maximizing, shareholder-oriented businesses?

# It's Time to Grow!

## WHEN TO PLANT...

VEGETABLE	SOW	PLANT OUT	HARVEST
Asparagus	Jan - Feb	Apr - May	Apr - Jun
Broad beans	Feb - May		May - Oct
Beetroot	Mar - Jul		Jun - Oct
Broccoli	Apr - Jun	Jun - Jul	Jul - Aug
Cabbage	Feb - Jun	Mar - Jun	Jun - Oct
Carrot	Feb - Aug		Jun - Oct
Cauliflower	Jan - Jun	Mar - Jul	Jul - Nov
Celeriac	Feb - Apr	Apr - May	Oct - Dec
Celery	Feb - May	Mar - Jun	Jul - Nov
Cucumber	Feb - Apr	Mar - May	Apr - Jul
Endive	Mar - Jul	May - Aug	Jul - Oct
French beans	Apr - Jun	May - Jun	May - Oct
Leek	Mar - May	Apr - May	Jul - Nov
Lettuce	Feb - Aug	Apr - Aug	Jun - Sep
Melon	Mar - Apr	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep
Mustard	Jun - Sep		Jul - Oct
Onion	Feb - Apr		Aug - Oct
Parsley	Feb - Jul		Jun - Sep
Peas	Mar - Jun		Jun - Sep
Peppers	Mar - Apr	Apr - Jun	Jun - Oct
Spinach	Mar - Jul		Apr - Oct
Squash	Mar - Apr	May - Jun	Jun - Sep
Strawberry	Dec - Jan		May - Sep
Tomato	Nov - Mar	Feb - May	Aug - Oct

