

 UNI-PRES

# Kindercottage

Home of the Busy Bees!

March 2012  
Volume 6, Issue 1

564 Veronica Avenue, East St. Louis, IL 62205, [www.unipreskindercottage.org](http://www.unipreskindercottage.org)

## A Word from our Director, Brenda Crisp:

Greetings and Happy New Year,

### Inside this Edition

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### Board of Directors

Brenda Crisp, Executive Director  
Carla Monroe-Posey, Chair  
Glenn Mullins, Vice-Chair  
Howard Self, Secretary  
Carolyn Howard, Treasurer  
Chris Greenberg  
Danny Halel  
Flo Jeffreys  
Paul Johnson  
Tom Kuergeleis  
Mary Kaye Richter  
Nancy Spier-Lee  
Don Stribling  
Bill Whicher

### Mission Statement:

Uni-Pres Kindercottage is a quality early childhood program in East St. Louis serving low-income families with at-risk infants and preschool children six months to five years old.

The New Year has brought extremely unusual weather for a winter season. I hope that each of you is enjoying the New Year and that everyone had a happy and blessed Christmas too. Your surely made our families and staff enjoy a happy Christmas and I thank you all very much. It was almost difficult on many occasions listening to parents thank us and the children tell what Santa left at their house. You see, sometimes, everyone talks, cries and hugs at the same time. We were constantly saying, "We did not do this. Santa's elves allowed this to happen." The month of January was almost over before we stopped having a daily conversation about Santa. All I wanted to say was "Let's get back to playing." In the event that I missed sending a Thank You note to you or your church, please forgive me. I tried to keep up with everyone but there were occasions when several groups were leaving and arriving at the same time that it was hard to keep up.

I am sure that some of you have your own dealings with our "Great State" and you have heard discussions from the many pharmacies, hospitals, doctors and social service agencies regarding cutbacks and delayed payments. We are part of their funding and are affected by them as well. We ask that you join us in prayer for all of God's children, regardless of age, who are experiencing a hardship due to this situation. We see many people coming for food, clothing, utility assistance, rent payments and more. We refer so many people to others that sometimes I say, "What are we??" We have begun a daily prayer for our children, families and community at 10 AM and ask that you join us each day. I have been told that if you Ask, He will answer and that has been proven on many occasions in my own life and in the life of Uni-Pres Kindercottage. God has allowed us to continue serving our community since May 10, 1965 and has allowed many wonderful people to come into our lives to meet the needs of others. THANK YOU ALL!

By now, you are aware that I am very proud of the staff that I work with and know that they are all in school working on either an Associate's or a Bachelor's degree. Well, once again, they have amazed a program called "Gateway." Gateway has accepted all

staff into a credentialing program and each is working very hard to complete this certification by December of 2012. The work they do is not only to improve themselves but also to improve the quality of care given to our children.

Have you had immunizations as adults? Well as the children were recently completing theirs, a questionnaire was given to each of the staff. After completing those we were told that all of us needed a Tetanus shot. You would have thought we were the little ones. No one wanted to take this immunization. Finally as each one did with the turning of heads, closing of eyes and facial expressions, I was reminded of the children when they take theirs. Everyone required Tylenol but no one could take a nap! The children watching us thought we were so funny!

Before I leave you, I have a request. If you have not included Uni-Pres in your budget for the year, please consider it. I know that times are difficult but a yearly commitment from you eases the pain of late or delayed State reimbursements. Thank you for all that you do for our mission!

God bless each of you, Brenda Crisp

## The Grow St. Louis Contest: By Bill Whicher

Wow! \$15,000 up for grabs. Just think what Kindercottage could do with \$15,000. That's what the Monsanto Corporation was offering in its "Grow St. Louis Contest". All that we would have to do is go to the Monsanto website and do a bit of typing and mouse clicking - what could be easier? The first Grow St. Louis Contest was held in the Fall of 2011. Uni-Pres Kindercottage entered that contest with high hopes but without knowing quite what it would take to win. We knew that the prize money would be very welcome and would allow the purchase of much needed replacements for old equipment that had reached its end of life.

At the end of the first contest, Kindercottage had accumulated about forty thousand votes while the winners had well over one million. (Contest participants were invited to vote 100 times per day in the first contest.) A quick calculation showed that the winners had, over the 20 days of the contest, a minimum of 500 people voting each day while Kindercottage averaged about 20 people voting each day.

The knowledge gained from our first contest experience led us to advertise to Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ and to Lovejoy Giddings Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church, USA to gain additional contest voters. Forty-three (43) eager voters signed up to help Kindercottage. In the second contest the number of votes received by each contestant was not published so while we didn't win we don't know how close we came.

We are grateful for those who voted in both of the contests so far and we give thanks for their dedication. A third contest is in the offing and we are determined to win that elusive goal of \$15,000. So think of Kindercottage each day as you take your computer to the Internet. In the third contest a few mouse clicks at your computer could bring an enormous benefit to Kindercottage.

## LOVE was in the air...

February 14th was a day of love at Kindercottage. Traditional Valentine exchanges as well as



special treats were shared by the children and staff. Pictured are the children in the "Freshman class" at UPK enjoying their special lunch treat and prizes.

## From the Development Committee: By Carla Monroe-Posey

We were so gratified by all the generous Christmas gifts given by churches and individuals to the children and families of Kindercottage. Thank You! Your donations in 2011 made all the difference to Kindercottage's ability to move forward and thrive in the face of funding delays and uncertainties from the State of Illinois. Thank You once again!

The Development Committee is now busy planning for 2012. We expect to publish our 2011 Annual Report this Spring. It is very important to us to continue to build relationships with our supporting churches. We're happy to make presentations to

your mission committee, Session, Consistory or Council. You can arrange for a presentation by a member of the Board by contacting Judy Brickey, Development Committee coordinator, at 618-345-4889.

After the wonderful feedback we received on last year's dinner, we are already starting to plan for our Second Annual Thank You Dinner, to be held this October. We'll share more details as we have them. Again, THANKS for all you do to support Kindercottage and the precious children and families it serves. Your efforts make all the difference!

## Congratulations are in Order!

Congratulations are in order for Quanyshia Wooten and Tracey Whittby on receiving their CDA (Child Development Association) Certificates. It was a hard task but with the help of CDA Advisor, Catrice Garrett, of the UPK staff, it was a journey well worth the adventure. Now the entire staff of Uni-Pres Kindercottage has their CDA certificates and they are working toward ECE (Early Childhood Education) Credentials. Good job ladies and keep striving for success!



Tracey Whittby and Quanyshia Wooten

## A Word from the Board President: By Carla Monroe-Posey

The commitment of Brenda Crisp and her staff to excellence in nurturing and teaching is at the heart of the Kindercottage's demonstrated success in serving its precious children and their families. Brenda's particular commitment to excellence translates into her total support for all the staff in obtaining their degrees and certifications, thus improving their own lives while enhancing their abilities to serve the children. As of December, all staff members have achieved their Child Development Association certification and are working on Associates' or their Bachelors' degrees.

Elsewhere in this Newsletter, you'll learn of the recent \$30,000 grant that Kindercottage received to support the education and

training of all the staff. We are so excited about the impact of this award in furthering the staff's education. Each and every staff member has Brenda's support and encouragement in striving to obtain educational credentials that will help them on their paths in life as well as enhancing the excellence of services they provide to Kindercottage children and their families. THANK YOU, Brenda, for all your do to facilitate the growth, development and achievement of the entire Kindercottage family – the children, their families and your staff!



## Extreme Makeover Uni-Pres Edition:

One year ago, the infant room at Kindercottage, received an outstanding score from the Quality Review Team, with a note for minor improvements here and there. We also received a notice of recall on some of the equipment, including the cribs. Of course, we did not have the funding to re-do the room ourselves so a grant was written to the Ronald McDonald House Charities of St. Louis to help with this task. They came and looked at the center including the infant room. They were impressed with the center, the staff and the infant room but we knew that many changes had to be made. With the help of a grant that we received from Ronald McDonald House charities and an additional grant from the Ronald McDonald Corporate offices, we did a complete infant room makeover.

In addition to the grants, we also received donations to purchase cribs from Mrs. Elvera Miller; St. John's UCC, Collinsville; Hope Church of Belleville; Evangelical UCC, Godfrey; St. Mark's Presbyterian Church, Kirkwood; and New Horizon Presbyterian Women of St. Louis. Thank you all for making our infant room complete and compliant. Now our babies are enjoying their new room and we are ready for the Quality Review Team.





## Uni-Pres Kindercottage

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## WISH LIST

### BABY SUPPLIES:

Box Top Labels and Campbell Soup Product seals for points

Baby Diapers & Pull Ups Sizes 2-6 Boys & Girls

Baby Wipes, Lotions, Bath, Shampoo, Bibs (plastic backing), Sippy Cups and Plastic Bottles

Baby Foods, Fruits, Vegetables, Snacks Strained through Stage 4 Juice of all flavors, but lots of apple

Healthy Snacks Foods- Suggestions: Granola Bars, Yogurt, Tortilla Chips or Whole Grain Chips, Any high fiber or whole wheat crackers or other snacks containing these ingredients, fresh fruits, raisins (please check labels- no peanuts in foods, please)

Paper Products: Kleenex, Bathroom tissue, Paper Towels

Cleaning Supplies: Bleach, disinfectant, toilet bowl cleaner, window cleaner, oven cleaner

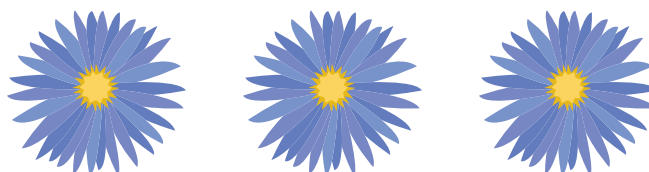
Clorox wipes, tissue, Steamer Mop, vacuum cleaner, carpet shampooer

Office Supplies: Copy Paper, (8 1/2 x 11), Ink Cartridges, HP 96, 97. Lexmark 100 XL. 3-ring binders (large size)

Manila File Folders legal cut, 8 1/2 x 11 Clasp Envelopes,

Sponsorship of one child \$ 6,000.00 per year

Include Uni-Pres Kindercottage in your church's annual budget



**“Have you remembered Uni-Pres Kindercottage in your will or estate plan?”**