

**Macoupin County Inter-Agency Meeting
Wednesday, October 10, 2007 - 9:00 a.m.
The Job Center/WCDC Conference Room**

The Macoupin County Inter-Agency Group met on Wednesday, October 10, 2007, at the Job Center/WCDC Conference Room, located at 116 South Plum Street in Carlinville. In the absence of President Regina Byots, Janie Ashworth presided. She welcomed all the attendees and commented that the group seemed a littler smaller than past meetings. She challenged all the attendees to contact a co-worker, agency, or business person to come along with them to the next meeting, which will be held on January 9, 2008.

Janie Ashworth janieashworth@frontiernet.net Ms. Ashworth took a few minutes to present a brief summary of the Carlinville Our Town Hospitality Welcome Wagon program. This is a volunteer program that greets new residents to the community, newlyweds, and families that have a new baby. The welcome baskets contain gifts, as well as information about the various services and resources offered by the agencies within Macoupin County.

Judy Bates jbates@roe40.com Ms. Bates, Director of the Alternative Education Center, introduced Ms. Danlee Whitler, a new staff member at the Center. The Alternative Education Center operates two programs, the GED Preparation Program and the Safe Schools Program.

Danlee Whitler dwhitler@roe40.com Ms. Whitler was introduced to the group and she currently works at the Alternative Education Center for the Regional Office of Education.

Mike Sherer msherer2@hotmail.com Mr. Sherer represents the Job Center and West Central Development Council. He reported on several events including the recent closing of the Virden Coal Mine. The Job Center along with the Illinois Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the UMW, AFL-CIO, the Farm Resource Center, and the Dept. of Employment Security are working with the laid off workers to help them with finding another job or entering a training program. Surveys indicate that many of the laid off workers are interested in finding a new career. The Job Center will be requesting funds to assist with the training costs. He also updated the attendees on the Workforce Investment Act Programs, announcing that funds are still available in the dislocated worker program.

Joe Broers ivedc@frontiernet.net Mr. Joe Broers reported for Illinois Valley Economic Development Council. He passed out several brochures on the Energy Assistance Program and outlined the various components of the program and eligibility requirements. The LIHEAP Program (Low Income Home Energy Assistance) is designed to assist eligible low-income households pay for winter energy services. For more information on how to apply, Joe suggested that individuals call the IVEDC Office at 217-839-4431. He also presented an overview of the Ameren Special Assistance Program that is available to help individuals with their utility bills. This program is also being operated by Illinois Valley.

Carol Little carolslittle@yahoo.com Ms. Little represents the Lincoln Land Community College TEAL-Adult Education and Literacy Program. She informed the attendees about several GED programs currently being operated in Girard and Virden. She is hopeful that a GED class will be held during the day in Virden beginning in January 2008. Part of her job is to build public awareness about the availability of literacy classes in the rural communities of Virden, Girard, Nilwood, Thayer, etc., where many of the families that need assistance have a problem getting to the classes.

Laura Snyder laura.snyder@midstatespec.org Ms. Snyder, Mid-State Special Education District representative, briefly summarized that Mid-State is divided into three service regions, Bond/Fayette, Christian, and Montgomery/Carlinville. They offer education services to approximately 2800 students within the regions who are between the ages of 3-21 who have special needs. Ms. Snyder reported that she works with high school students and helps them transition from school to work, etc.

Dawn Reising dreising@roe40.com Ms. Reising is the Student Services Coordinator for ROE and the Truancy Officer for Macoupin that serves 15 school districts. She is currently focusing on elementary school students, grades 3-4, who have a problem with school attendance. She reported that the problems are usually with the families who have difficulty getting up in the morning and making sure the students get to school. The Truancy Review Board meets regularly and many parents are fined or arrested for failure to get their children to school. The group discussed various problems that contribute to truancy, including home schooling, lack transportation, and teen problems/peer pressure.

Donna Mitchell dmitchell@aginglinc.org Ms. Donna Mitchell, Area Agency on Aging, was next to report. She updated the group on a variety of Senior programs, including the Circuit Breaker Program, Senior Employment, Legal Assistance Program, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, and Transportation. She reported that the Macoupin County Public Health Department is currently handling the transportation program for Senior in Macoupin County and that the Locust Street Resource Center also had many of the programs she discussed. If you need more information on Senior Services, please call 1-888-369-9510 or 1-217-854-3223.

Kim Cottingham kc@macmhc.org Ms. Cottingham of the Macoupin County Mental Health/Locust Street Resource Center discussed several new services that are available for emotionally distraught youth. The TSFY Program (Transitional Services for Youth Program) offers assistance to teens ages 16-18 with severe emotional and/or behavioral problems. This is a new program for the agency and more information will be forthcoming. However, she did report that the program is intended to offer linkages to vocational training, education, and mental health agencies where the focus is on life skills training and filling in the gaps so no child is without appropriate services.. For more information about the TSFY Program contact Molly Ondrey or Kim Cottingham at 217-854-3166.

Vicki Lubrant Vicki.lubrant@west-central.org Ms. Vicki Lubrant reported for the Job Center and West Central Development Council. Several staff have been working with the State of Illinois on the new IllinoisWorkNet website that is being launched statewide. She passed out information on the portal and reported that this website has many links to jobs, human service agencies, career information, and businesses. The Job Center and WCDC will be seeking partners (agencies, libraries, schools, etc.) to help promote the portal and to possibly become site coordinators. She encouraged the attendees to take a few minutes, log on, and surf the site.

In closing, Ms. Ashworth reminded the members that the next meeting date of the Macoupin County Inter-Agency Group would be Wednesday, January 9, 2008, at the Job Center/WCDC Conference Room. All members are being challenged to contact a co-worker, friend, Macoupin County business person, or past member to attend the next meeting. In the meantime, have a safe and happy holiday season.

Macoupin County Inter-Agency E-mail Listing - October 2007

Below is a summary of the individuals that I have on my e-mail list. (Some of the people have been added just recently so hopefully, they will become active members again.)

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New emails that need to be added to mailing list:

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