



THE NORTH STAR

CMMHC

CENTRAL MINNESOTA MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2025

Welcome to 'The North Star' Newsletter, a quarterly update that aims to keep you informed about the latest news, achievements, and initiatives at CMMHC. The 'North Star' name originates from the CMMHC logo, which symbolizes inspiration and hope guiding life's purpose and mission; it is a fixed destination we depend on as our lives and the world around us change.

PERSPECTIVE BY CHAD BÖSL, MA, LMFT

In this section, we invite you to get to know the leaders within CMMHC and share information from their unique perspectives, providing insights into their roles and contributions to our organization.



Chad Bösl, MA, LMFT: Director of Training & Outreach - As a member of the leadership team focused on CMMHC's Education and Training pillars, Chad's responsibilities include the internship program, community outreach, internal training, professional development, and the TIC/RIA Team.

Celebrating Growth: Year One of Training & Outreach

As we approach the first anniversary of the Director of Training and Outreach role,

I'm proud to reflect on the significant strides made through this new position. Created as an investment in the growth and development of our employees, as well as in providing education and resources to the broader community, it has already made a lasting impact.

In its inaugural year, the Training and Outreach Department has launched several exciting programs designed to support our staff, interns, and future leaders. These initiatives focus on enhancing professional development, expanding mentorship opportunities, and strengthening community education.

Leadership Development Program

The first initiative is rooted in Brené Brown's Dare to Lead framework. A select cohort of staff—recommended for their leadership potential—engage in both individual and group sessions with the Director of Training and Outreach. Together, they explore personal leadership identity and build critical leadership skills. The goal is to cultivate future leaders and support current ones across the agency. The program concludes with a collaborative project designed by the cohort to benefit the entire organization.

Internship Cohort Program

This program provides clinical interns with additional guidance, mentorship, and peer support beyond standard supervision. Led by the Director of Training and Outreach, it offers a safe and supportive environment where interns can process their experiences, grow as emerging clinicians, and feel connected throughout their internship journey.

Continued from page 1

Staff Mentorship Opportunities

Through one-on-one mentorship with CMMHC leaders, staff receive personalized guidance, increased support, and help navigating professional challenges. These mentorship relationships foster growth, build confidence, and encourage continuous learning. By investing in our staff and interns, we're not only enriching individual experiences but also strengthening our organizational culture and the quality of care we provide to the community.

In addition to the previous new initiatives, I also oversee the following:

Community Engagement & Education

CMMHC is fortunate to have Dexter Hanson, Community Engagement Specialist, representing it in the community. He actively participates in numerous committees, groups, and events, passionately sharing CMMHC's mission and connecting with people, organizations, and partners. Dexter's work strengthens collaborations across our region and helps ensure that community members have access to essential mental health, chemical health, and crisis services.

Training & Outreach in the Community

In addition to internal development, the Training and Outreach department also provides external training and speaking engagements. CMMHC offers educational sessions on topics such as mental health, chemical health, and crisis services for schools, community partners, and local organizations. These trainings play a vital role in raising awareness, reducing stigma, and fostering open, informed dialogue around behavioral health in our communities.

I came to CMMHC because of our shared belief that by investing in people, we create a better organization, better services, and a better community. I'm excited to continue building programs and initiatives that provide more opportunities for learning, growth, and support—for both our team and the people we serve.

CAUGHT ON CAMERA



Surprise denim jacket day at the Buffalo Office



Alyssa Toratti and Susan Fuchs-Hoeschen show off tie-dyed shirts from the summer getTOGETHER.



BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



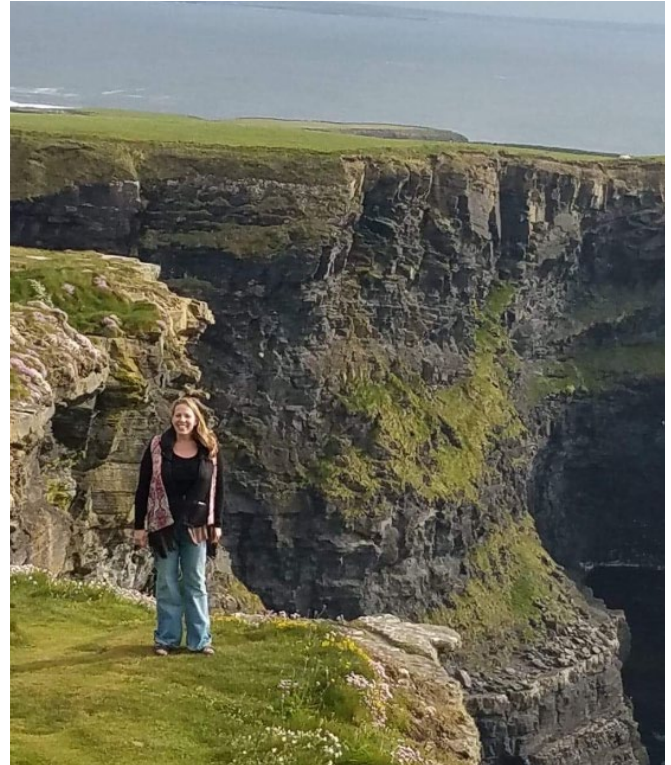
JOLENE FOSS
Board Member
since 2020

What would you like the CMMHC community to know about you?

I am a native of Central Minnesota and have had the honor of working in a variety of environments and roles. I am currently the Single-Family Housing Program Manager for Central Minnesota Housing Partnership. CMHP has played a crucial role in fulfilling the residential needs of low- to moderate-income families within 16 counties for over 30 years. My past employment includes Licensed Childcare Director, Special Education Para-Professional for Emotional Behavioral Disorders, and Ceramic Tile Installation for Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Local Union #1. Additionally, I have experience as City Planning/Community Development Director/Zoning Administrator and Regional County Economic Development Director.

How do you support your mental health?

I like swimming for exercise and enjoy many types of live music and traveling. I have begun a Tai Chi beginners practice and enjoy all 4 seasons of nature. Recognizing mental status in yourself and friends/family is extremely important. I have seen numerous outlets geared toward helping people offered through CMMHC and want to help support this needed branch of healthcare.



What do you like best about your role as a Board Member?

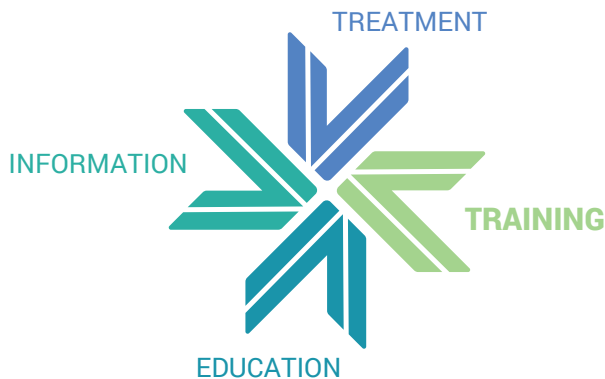
My goal is to be intimately involved in creating and implementing lives lived more easily for future generations. I strive to improve the quality of life for the people around me. I know that CMMHC covers a large geography, and many people who reside within these counties face life's difficulties. I acknowledge and accept that all humans have times of struggle, and mental, emotional, and behavioral healthcare is a necessity to help keep each other safe and secure. Being a Board Member gives me a sense of accomplishment in truly helping others and reinforcing mental health.





ORGANIZATION INSIGHTS

Our exploration of CMMHC's pillars continues this quarter with the focus on **Training**. Led by trained CMMHC staff, presentations and panels focus on topics essential to children, youth, adults, and families. We are committed to mental and chemical health training for individuals, businesses, civic organizations, police departments, healthcare professionals, and other community partners.



What are the goals of CMMHC Training?

- Create an informed, supportive, and inclusive community that advocates for mental and chemical health and well-being and challenges the stigma surrounding these topics.
- Educate individuals about the signs and symptoms of mental health issues and substance use, which are crucial for early identification and intervention.
- Promote mental wellness by empowering individuals to take proactive and preventive steps toward maintaining their mental health.
- Facilitate collaboration among social service organizations, businesses, and community stakeholders, aiming to develop strategies and initiatives to address mental health and substance abuse issues on a broader scale.

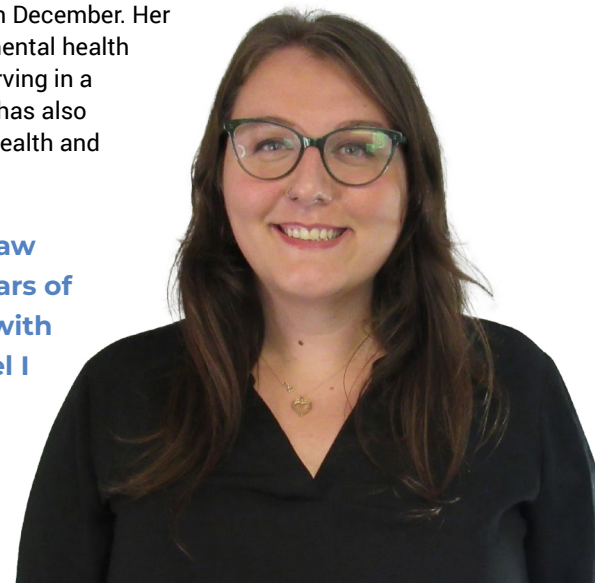
Instruction for individuals, families, and community partners significantly improves outcomes and helps build healthier communities.

WELCOME TO CMMHC'S NEW CHILD RESPONSE INITIATIVE (CRI) ADVOCATE

Madison Scheierl, MHP is the new trauma informed advocate responsible for coordinating mental health services for children and families who have experienced a traumatic event. Once CMMHC receives a referral from local law enforcement, the advocate contacts the family within 24 hours to provide immediate intervention to reduce the client's level of distress. They identify available community resources to support the child and family's needs and connect them with those resources.

Madi brings a wealth of experience to her role. She is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Integrated Studies (BIS) with a focus on the arts and education, and expects to graduate in December. Her job experience includes working in a group home with individuals who have a mental health diagnosis, supporting middle school students in EBD special education, and serving in a behavioral center for children with ASD and other intellectual disabilities. Madi has also worked at a residential treatment facility for adolescents experiencing mental health and SUD issues, and at both a crisis center and an IRTS facility for adults.

"I am beyond grateful to be working with CMMHC and local law enforcement to best serve this community. With almost 9 years of experience working in the field of mental health, combined with my background working in a school/educational setting, I feel I am well prepared to take on the roles and responsibilities for this position."



15-DAY SELF-CARE CHALLENGE

National Self-Care Awareness Month in September provided an opportunity for CMMHC staff to emphasize the importance of prioritizing mental, physical, and emotional well-being. The TIC-RIA Team encouraged employees to participate in a Self-Care Challenge, providing daily tips to foster company-wide engagement. Staff then shared tips that stood out the most or ones they would recommend to someone else. Here are a couple of responses we received:

"The self-care tip that stood out to me and would recommend to others is 'celebrate the small wins.' I incorporate this by getting my family on an app called 'Gratitude Plus,' which allows us to write three things that we are grateful for each day. This allows us to celebrate the small wins, especially when having a hard time. This app allows us to comment and continue to provide positivity for each other."

Jazmin Rost
SLMH, Monticello

The TIC/RIA entered everyone who emailed their thoughts into a drawing for a prize of their choice. The winners of the drawing are JAZMIN ROST, who chose four tickets to the MN Renaissance Festival, and ESTHER MUCKENHIRN, who picked yard games donated by Green Thumb Etc. Thanks to everyone who participated in the challenge!

September 2025 Self-Care Challenge

DAY 1

Mindful Breathing Breaks

A few deep breaths can lower stress levels instantly.

Take 1–2 minutes today to inhale deeply through your nose, hold, and exhale slowly.

DAY 2

Desk Stretches

Sitting for long periods causes tension in muscles and joints.

Roll your shoulders, stretch your arms overhead, and rotate your wrists and ankles a few times per day.

DAY 3

Hydration Habits

Staying hydrated improves focus and energy levels.

Keep a water bottle at your desk and aim for small sips throughout the day.

DAY 4

Posture Check-Ins

Good posture prevents back and neck pain.

Adjust your chair and monitor so your back is straight and feet are flat on the floor.

DAY 5

Mini-Meditation Moments

Short meditations can improve clarity and calmness.

Close your eyes for 2 minutes, focusing on your breath or a calming word.

DAY 6

Snack Smart

Nutritious snacks fuel your brain and body.

Keep nuts, fruit, or yogurt nearby instead of processed snacks.

DAY 7

Digital Detox Pauses

Constant screen time strains your eyes and mind.

Follow the 20-20-20 rule. Every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds.

DAY 8

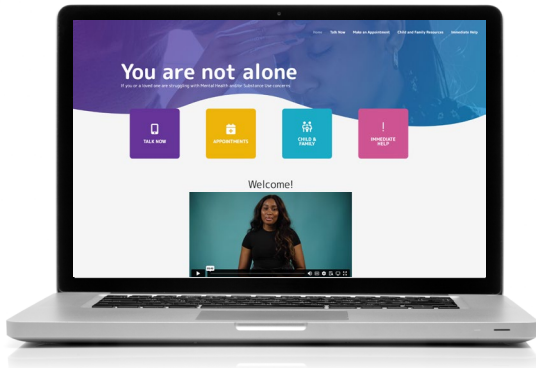
Gratitude Notes

Practicing gratitude boosts mood and positivity.

Write down one thing you're grateful for each morning or afternoon.

"I have several health care tips that I would recommend: movement/walking/stretching/yoga (from days 2/13), connection moments (from day 9), and celebrating small wins (day 15). The true challenge is ONGOING!"

Esther Muckenhirn
SLMH, Independence ES



LAUNCH OF NEW MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCE WEBSITE

Started by Scott Roeder, who lost his son to suicide in 2017, this new website is a collaborative effort with local organizations in Central Minnesota (including CMMHC) to serve as a mental health resource. The website, helpingcentralmn.org, aims to provide mental health navigation for individuals experiencing mental health struggles or concerned friends and family members. Read more about it [here](#).



CHECK OUT CMMHC JOB OPENINGS

Visit <https://cmmhc.org/careers/> to explore open positions that may interest you or someone you know. We have several open positions!



CMMHC DISCONTINUING WITHDRAWAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Based on a decision by the Executive Leadership Team and the Board, CMMHC will discontinue WM services, effective January 1, 2026. The closing is due to several factors, including low census numbers in 2024 and 2025, financial losses for the program, low reimbursement rates, and staffing shortages. Continuation down this path is not feasible while maintaining the effectiveness of our many other programs and services.



Ascension Recovery Services is building a large detox and residential treatment facility in St. Cloud. We look forward to developing a successful collaboration with them to ensure that those who need access to services can find them. We plan to expand our Crisis Services to meet the growing needs in this area, as the residential crisis program has seen a census increase of more than 30%.

CMMHC is working to identify opportunities for affected employees to transition to other programs and encourage them to apply for open positions in various departments. We acknowledge our dedicated employees who have worked at Detox/Withdrawal Management over the years and recognize that many clients who have benefited from their excellent care have gone on to sustained recovery from alcohol or drug addiction.





COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS/ SERVICES SPOTLIGHT

Salem Community Outpost Opens

In August, several organizations gathered for a ribbon-cutting at St. Cloud's newest community outpost (nicknamed COP House), opening on the east side in Salem Lutheran Church. By bringing vital healthcare resources for healing the body and mind to the neighborhood, CMMHC proudly contributes to the Mental Health Response Unit. Collaborating with the St. Cloud Police Department, paramedics, and social workers, this team is available to help community members in crisis. We are excited to see the positive impact the outpost will have on the ever-increasing number of mental health calls in St. Cloud!

The following CMMHC staff will be working as part of the Mental Health Response Unit:



Jake Hawkins



Madison Scheierl



Kaiya Smith



OUTPATIENT THERAPY APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE

We have several new Therapists on the CMMHC team who have immediate openings. Please share the information with those who need support and have them contact one of our offices to schedule an appointment.

New providers and locations include:

Stephanie Owens - St. Cloud
Madison Dingmann - Waite Park
Melody Windhurst - Elk River

Elayna Holbrook – Monticello
Megan Krippner – Buffalo



PEER PERSPECTIVE

Our Peer Support Specialists share their unique views on healing and recovery to reach individuals with similar mental and chemical health challenges.

What is a Peer Support Specialist?

This quarter, we're taking a different approach. Instead of our usual focus on client support from a Peer Specialist's perspective, we're shining a light on the unique and crucial role of Peer Support Specialists. These individuals are a vital part of the comprehensive mental health services we offer at CMMHC, often playing a pivotal role in the healing process for our clients.

Peer Support or Recovery Specialists are not just non-clinical professionals. They're individuals who provide support and hope by sharing their own stories and serving as role models for wellness. Individuals must demonstrate leadership and advocacy skills, as well as a lived experience with mental health conditions, substance use, or both, and a demonstrated time in recovery. Each undergoes specialized training, passes a certification exam, and engages in supervised work experience hours. CMMHC also requires that they qualify as Mental Health Practitioners. A training opportunity in MN is available [HERE](#).

Certified Peer Support provides support both individually and in groups in these areas:

Certified Peer Specialist - Assists in breaking down barriers to community resources and encourages individuals to get involved in activities that align with their goals and interests.

Certified Peer Recovery Specialist - Empowers individuals to seek treatment by exploring their recovery options and supporting their readiness to do so.

Certified Family Support Specialists play a crucial role in educating parents and caregivers about mental illness and substance use, the availability of community resources, and advocating for culturally appropriate services for a child in treatment to increase a child's ability to function at home, school, and in the community.

Clients must participate in another service to utilize Peer Support Services, either by accessing services from CMMHC or by receiving services from another community provider with whom we can collaborate. This requirement ensures that clients are actively engaged in their recovery journey and can benefit from additional support.



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Certified Peer Support provides support both individually and in groups in these areas:

Certified Peer Specialist - Assists in breaking down barriers to community resources and encourages individuals to get involved in activities that align with their goals and interests.

Certified Peer Recovery Specialist - Helps individuals become ready and willing to seek treatment by supporting the individual in exploring their options for recovery or treatment.

Certified Family Support Specialists - Play a crucial role in educating parents and caregivers about mental illness and substance use, the availability of community resources, and advocating for culturally appropriate services for a child in treatment to increase a child's ability to function at home, school, and in the community.

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Central Minnesota
CMMHC
MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

We are the evidence; we hold the hope.

CMMHC ADS AROUND TOWN

We're getting CMMHC's message out on buses and benches throughout St. Cloud. Keep an eye out as you are driving around town!





CMMHC EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATE IN UNITED WAY DAYS OF CARING

A group of outstanding volunteers gathered in September at the Great River Children's Museum to give back to the community. The CMMHC Team assisted with deep cleaning of the museum to make it more vibrant for visitors.

United Way reported that the Days of Caring resulted in the completion of 102 projects for 32 local nonprofits. More than 730 volunteers, including our own CMMHC team, contributed 2,242 hours of service, resulting in an estimated economic impact of over \$85,555.00 for our community. We are proud to be part of this initiative, making a significant difference in our local community.

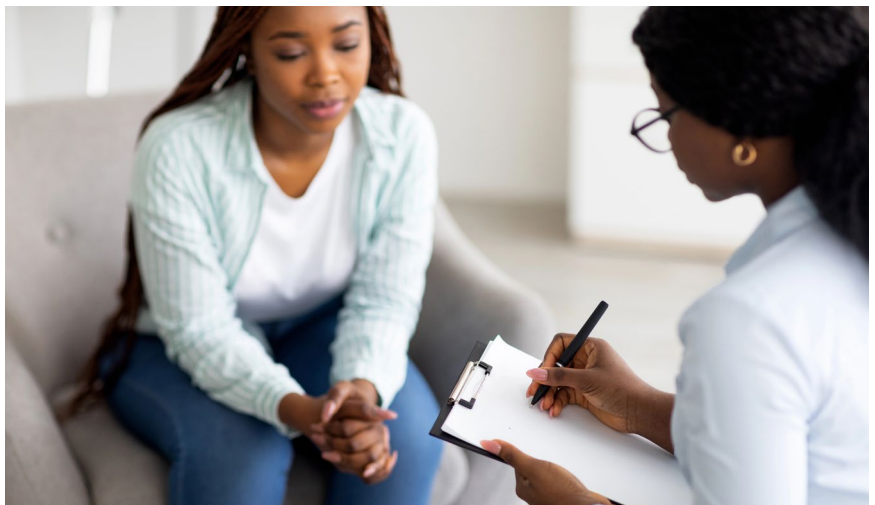


CLIENT STORY

This story is about a family utilizing CMMHC's Outpatient Therapy Services - mental health support for individuals, couples, families, and groups of any age seeking help for various reasons, including sadness, hopelessness, stress, anxiety, or problems adjusting to life changes.

A family seeking supportive services recently "graduated" with the assistance of Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CCP) after 16 months. This early childhood evidence-based treatment intervention is a method that considers how a parent's trauma history can impact the parent-child relationship. Medical providers referred the child of the family due to the conflicting nature of physical symptoms and concern that the characteristics may have been more related to mental health than bodily health or a specific medical issue.

Through CCP, the child's mother was able to gain insight into how her childhood trauma had been impacting how she parented. She was able to feel supported through child-parent psychotherapy, which gave her the ability to be assertive with medical providers regarding the child's medical needs. As a result, this intervention resolved the child's medical issues, and the parent-child relationship improved. Ultimately, the reduction of the client's unstable emotions and troublesome behavior was apparent across his home, school, and community settings.





PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY

FROM JULY THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2025 INCLUDES:

EVENTS

- Monticello Fire Department Open House
- ECFE in the Park at Highline Park in Big Lake
- Wright Sherburne Pride Festival at Ellison Park in Monticello
- All County Safe Schools Meeting at the Wright County Government Center
- Rivers of Hope Color Run & Walk at Lakeside Park in Big Lake
- Back 2 School Bash at Monticello Middle School
- SCSU Veterans Resource Center Student Welcome Back Cookout
- Open House at Sauk Rapids Middle School
- Get to Know You Days at Independence Middle School in Big Lake
- Grill & Chill BBQ at SCTCC Multicultural Center
- Hispanic Heritage Celebration at Lake George Park in St. Cloud
- Anxious Nation Video Screening at Saron Lutheran Church in Big Lake
- St. Cloud Pride at Lake George Park
- Mental Health Matters Volleyball Game at Big Lake High School
- Touch a Truck at Buffalo Public Library
- AFSP Out of Darkness Walk at Lake George Park in St. Cloud

PANELS & PRESENTATIONS

Responding with Compassion: Trauma Informed Care for Older Adults Across Cultures (Presentation)

*Resource Training & Solutions, Sartell, MN
Steven Loos, Chief Clinical Officer*



IMMEDIATE REFERRAL OPENINGS FOR ARMHS AND ACT

CMMHC has openings for referrals for both Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services (ARMHS) and Assertive Community Treatment (ACT).

ARMHS works side by side in real-world settings with clients aged 18 years or older to overcome impairments caused by symptoms of mental illness so they can function independently in their residence and the community.

You can refer clients to ARMHS by completing our standard **Referral Form**.

ACT is a community-based and intensive treatment to help adults diagnosed with SPMI, who have primary thought disorders and have repeated inpatient hospitalizations, become independent and integrate into the community as they experience recovery.

To submit a referral for the CMMHC ACT team, [click here](#) for the ACT-specific referral form.



THINGS TO WATCH FOR



Dental Clinic
November 17th
Monticello Office

GIVING
TUESDAY

Giving Tuesday
December 2nd

DONOR RECOGNITION

Thank you to the following individuals and organizations for their monetary and in-kind donations to CMMHC.

General

Amy Goodsen
Buffalo Strong
Greater Twin Cities United Way

In-Kind (Prizes for Mental Health Awareness Month Scavenger Hunt)

Social Indoors

We apologize if we unintentionally omitted a donor. Please contact CMMHC (development@cmmhc.org) so we can acknowledge you in the next newsletter.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Is there something you want to know more about? Let us know, and we can include it in a future newsletter. Email communications@cmmhc.org and put "Newsletter Topic" in the subject line.

Thank you to everyone who contributes information to the newsletter on a quarterly basis. Your assistance makes this publication possible.

