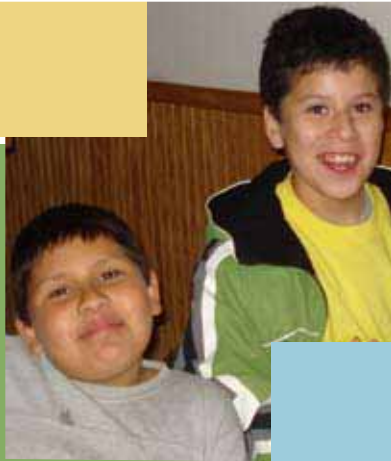




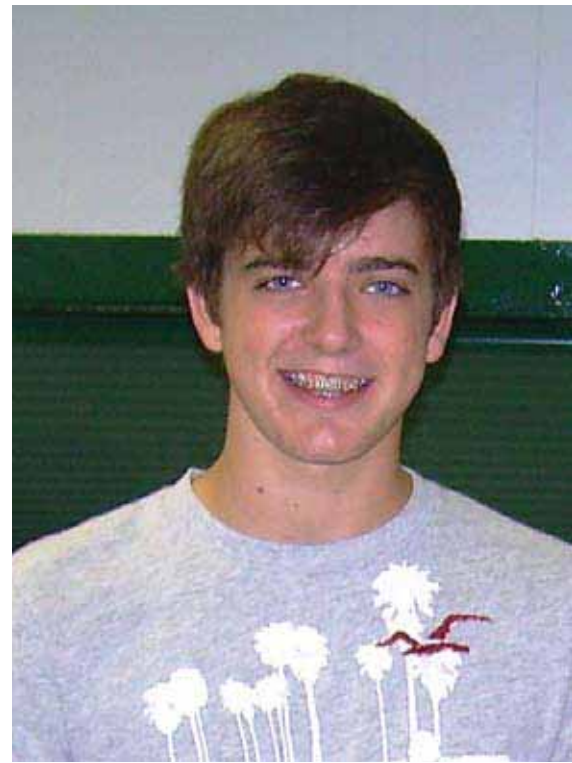
ISSUE 3 ■ WINTER ■ 2009

VIABLE OPTIONS IN COMMUNITY ENDEAVORS

# VOICE



## GIVING BACK YEAR ROUND



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**I'M LEARNING HOW TO LEVERAGE MY PASSION AND CREATIVITY, WHILE FEELING THE INCREDIBLE THRILL OF SERVING OTHERS."**

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world," Anne Frank.

VOICE T.O.O.L. Participant Kyle Montgomery takes his favorite quote to heart and uses it as a guideline for his life's work.

Kyle Montgomery of Frost is quick to share with his peers that the best time to give back to the community is when you are young. Kyle, more formally known as Andrew Kyle Montgomery, is in the first group of T.O.O.L. Participants at VOICE. VOICE announced the first T.O.O.L. Training Our Own Leaders participants last May with the program concluding in May 2009.

T.O.O.L. is a leadership and volunteer training program designed to prepare high school students for service learning and employment opportunities. Acceptance into the program was a competitive process with the requirement that applicants complete an application

which included 3 letters of reference and an official high school transcript. Applications were reviewed based on grades for the fall semester, personal references, leadership and volunteer experience, and responses to application questions. The selection process consisted of a review of the submitted information and the applicants were ranked based on the strength of their applications.

T.O.O.L. requires 50 hours of volunteer time per year. The comprehensive program also consists of 5 training dates, and a B average in school. Participants successfully completing all requirements of the program will earn a one time \$500 scholarship awarded to their college to be used to help offset expenses for tuition and fees.

Kyle was told about the VOICE T.O.O.L. Program by his school counselor. He felt it was a great opportunity to help the community and to obtain a scholarship to help with college costs after graduation. **Continued on Pg 2**



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## GIVING BACK Continued

While Kyle is still uncertain of his plans, he is certain that higher education and community service is in his future.

While many have been successful at achieving the goals of the program, Kyle has taken the lessons one step further. "Kyle has received lots of compliments from across Navarro County for his volunteer work," reports John Goodnight, Program Director. Kyle has taken advantage of volunteer opportunities in Frost but has also been spotted helping with activities in Kerens, Corsicana, and throughout the county. When asked why it is important to give back to the community Kyle quickly answers, "I try to focus my energy on things I care about, and my community is important to me. I'm learning how to leverage my passion and creativity, while feeling the incredible thrill of serving other."

Since May, Kyle has volunteered with a variety of people and activities. Among his favorite activity so far, Kyle says hands down it was driving the Kiddies Train at the Kerens Cotton Harvest Festival with his best friend Elizabeth Burluson.

"Kyle has been a shining example of what we would like for our T.O.O.L. Participants and future adults to be," said John Goodnight.

Kyle's word of advice is to not limit your giving spirit to just the Holiday Season but throughout the year. Kyle's encouraging words are "don't miss your chance to give back to the community!"

## T.O.O.L.'S Impact

**INVOLVEMENT WITH T.O.O.L.  
CAN HAVE A PERSONAL  
IMPACT THAT MAY GO  
UNSEEN**

The three lessons Kyle personally feels he has learned since being involved in T.O.O.L. are:

- You can be a leader just because you have never lead a group doesn't mean you don't possess the skills
- Everyone is in need of some kind of service
- Everyone can serve in some capacity and it is great to reach out to others

# Successful La Voz para la Familia in Kerens

**"THIS PROGRAM BENEFITTED ME AND  
GAVE ME MORE CONFIDENCE AND  
IMPROVED MY COMMUNICATION..."**



...it also helped me learn to speak with my son about drugs and alcohol." Maria Mendez

This statement, translated from Spanish, is one of the many from the La Voz para la Familia Program that began in Kerens in October. VOICE began a partnership with the Kerens Library to provide parenting and ESL Classes to families in the Kerens area. This program boasted 7 families with 8 adults and 16 children in attendance twice per week. Parents were taught English for beginners while their children enjoyed games, arts and crafts, homework time, and reading.

La Voz para la Familia was so successful that the parents and children have encouraged VOICE to continue the program to help them to learn even more. Leticia Ipina would like to learn more about English so that she can be more involved in my children's lives. "It is important for me to be with other parents who are also Hispanic. This is a unique opportunity to do that." Maria Ochoa echoed similar statements, "I have been practicing English communication with my children each day since starting classes," she added "I have learned to have an open communication with my children's teachers"

After completing their first six weeks, the families celebrated with their new friends by participating in the Kerens Christmas Parade. Following the parade, the group was treated to a Christmas Party at the Double D Steakhouse.

VOICE Staff looks forward to La Voz para la Familia resuming in January in Kerens. "We look forward to working with the families we have met along with any other families that might want to attend," said Maybeth Mendez. Dates, time, and location of the classes will be published in local newspapers, there is no charge for the class. The next La Voz para la Familia Class in Kerens will start on Thursday, January 29 and go each Thursday through March 26. The hours are 5:00-6:30pm and the class will be held at the Kerens First United Methodist Church. The class is free and open to parents and their children.

**For more information contact VOICE at 903-872-0180 or [www.voiceinc.org](http://www.voiceinc.org)**

## Texas Youth Tobacco Awareness Program January 20-29 & February 17-26

VOICE will offer the Texas Youth Tobacco Awareness Program, a state-approved program for minors charged with attempted purchase, consumption, or possession of tobacco and is designed to the mandates of Texas law. VOICE staff is certified to facilitate this program. The class will be an eight-hour program divided into four two-hour sessions. This first session will be January 20, 22, 27, and 29 from 4pm-6pm or The second session will be February 17, 18, 24, and 26 from 4pm-6pm.. Participants are required to attend all sessions. Classes are \$100 (cash only) for all sessions. All Participants MUST PRE-REGISTER. For more information, contact John Goodnight at (903) 872-0180 or [jgoodnight@voiceinc.org](mailto:jgoodnight@voiceinc.org).

# Family Fun Fall Festival



The 2008 VOICE Family Fun Fall Festival had a tremendous turn-out of families and children. It is estimated that around 1,500 attended the festival this year. Those attending enjoyed free hot dogs and snacks, games, bounce houses, t-shirts, face and hair painting, and more. The group was treated this year to a professional magician and clown. This year's giveaway was a Nintendo Wii Party Bundle. Out of the over 800 entries, Steelee Benner was the lucky winner. A special thanks to Movie Gallery, Curves, and Boys and Girls Club who partnered for this very fun and successful event.



## 2009 VOICE 4th Annual Mens Lunch-ON! "Get Your Lunch On!"

Mark your calendar for lunch plans for Thursday, January 29, 2009!

The VOICE 4th Annual Men's Lunch-ON will be on Thursday, January 29 at noon at The Cook Center in Corsicana. This year's Lunch-ON is being chaired by VOICE Board Member Eric R. Meyers, Jr. The Lunch-ON (as it is playfully called) is known for its humor and fun.

"This is a lighthearted lunch is especially for the men of our community although anyone is welcome," said Gina Dieterichs, Director of Marketing & Development. "Luncheons seldom cater specifically to the men we have had a very positive response to this event each year."

The Lunch-ON includes an action packed lunch hour complete with prize pack drawing, a silent auction, and a BBQ Lunch.

The Lunch-ON was started four years ago with the "roasting" of Mayor C.L. (Buster) Brown. The following years have featured Dallas Sportscaster Mike Doocy and Smith County Sheriff J.B. Smith. This year Tweed Scott, humorous Texas author and speaker will be the featured speaker.

Tweed Scott is a laugh-out-loud funny motivational speaker. Retired from 31 years of broadcasting, his broadcasting accomplishments include operating the highest rated FM station in America and later the 5th highest rated AM station in America.

Scott is also an award winning speaker and the author of the 3-time national award-winning book, Texas In Her Own Words. He describes it as a peek into the Texas psyche and explains why Texans are the way they are...where all that attitude comes from. The owner of Tejas Communications, a writing and professional speaking company, Scott is also the president of the board for the Writers' League of Texas serving some 1,500 members. He recently joined the board of Celebrate Texas.

To show your support of VOICE through a sponsorships or table at the Lunch-ON call or email Gina Dieterichs for more information 903-872-0180 or [gdieterichs@voiceinc.org](mailto:gdieterichs@voiceinc.org). Plenty of laughs and fun are promised there is no better way to spend your Thursday Lunch Hour!!



## Spring Training

### A Free Spring Break Day Camp

Focusing on Health and Fitness

Cornerstone Baptist Church

March 16-20

Students in Kindergarten-5th Grade, Must be enrolled by March 11

## Kerens Spring Training

### A Free Spring Break Day Camp

Focusing on Health and Fitness

Kerens First United Methodist Church

March 16-20

Students in Pre-Kindergaren-4th Grade, Must be enrolled by March 11

## VOICE 20th Anniversary Party & Business After Hours

Help us to celebrate 20 years of serving children and families

Tuesday, February 17, 5pm-7pm

VOICE Office, 100 N Main (Bank of America Building) Suite 308

## La Voz para la Familia

First United Methodist Church, Kerens

Thursdays January 29-March 26

5pm-6:30pm

Free Basic ESL and Parenting Classes for parents, activities for children

## Texas Youth Tobacco Awareness Program

January 20-29, 4pm-6pm

February 17-26, 4pm-6pm

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

# La Voz Para la Familia Christmas Kerens



## DONATE!

*Please help us make a difference in the lives of children and families!*

\_\_\_ \$35 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ \$75 \_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_ Other

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*Please make checks payable to VOICE, Inc. Your contribution is tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law and is truly appreciated.*

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STRONG FAMILIES. BRIGHT FUTURES.