



the **ANTI-HUNGER
ADVOCATE**

Brought to you by the Anti-Hunger Action Committee

January 2007

ON JANUARY 15 BRING YOUR FRIENDS TO THE CAPITOL

On January 15, 2007 hundreds of Utahns will be gathering at the Utah State Capitol Complex to ask legislators to start coming up with solutions to Utah's healthcare crisis. January 15 is the first day of the 2007 legislative session. It is also the day when people around the country will be celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

People will begin to gather at 1 PM. Our goal is to have as many people present as possible at 2 PM when the House and Senate convene for the first time of the year. AHAC members will be present in the East and West Buildings handing out stickers that say, "Basic Healthcare is not a luxury," and handing out information about Utah's healthcare crisis. To volunteer to help call Bill Germundson at 364-7765 ex 131.

AHAC and numerous other community organizations are working to make this event a success. If everyone who is impacted by skyrocketing healthcare costs began to work together we can convince our elected officials to solve this problem.

**LEARN MORE ABOUT
BASIC HEALTHCARE
DAY AT AHAC'S BLOG:
www.utahhealthstories.blogspot.com**

AVOID PARKING AT THE CAPITOL

With construction it is hard to park at the Capitol. That is why many groups are carpooling to this event or allowing people to use their parking lots for parking, UTA bus route 23 will be running from downtown to the Capitol, for free, every 15 minutes.

"Of all forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane."



The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Basic Healthcare Day
at the Utah Capitol
January 15, 2007
1 PM to 3 PM**

One in four Utahns cannot afford the healthcare that they need. Together we can solve that problem. Come help make the health crisis visible.

For more information call
Bill Germundson at Crossroads
Urban Center, 364-7765.

www.utahhealthstories.blogspot.com

WHAT CAN THE LEGISLATURE DO THIS YEAR?

FUND MEDICAID VISION AND DENTAL BENEFITS

Governor Huntsman placed these important services for seniors and people with disabilities in his budget for next year. AHAC members will be meeting with legislators and testifying in budget committee meetings to make sure that they make it into the final budget.

RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

Senator Ed Mayne and Representative Neal Hansen are both running bills to raise Utah's minimum wage. The minimum wage has been frozen at \$5.15 per hour since 1997. Almost every state that borders Utah has voted to raise its minimum wage. It is time to raise Utah's minimum wage and index it for inflation so that it will never go back to being as low as it is now.

ELIMINATE THE REST OF THE SALES TAX ON FOOD

On January 1 the sales tax on food will be reduced by two percent. This year legislators need to take off the rest of this stupid tax. Leaders in the House and Senate are talking about cutting income taxes by \$100-\$300 million in ways that will primarily benefit the wealthy. Eliminating the rest of the sales tax on food would be simpler and would benefit everyone. We don't tax people for breathing air or buying medicine. Why do we tax people when they buy food?

MAKE HEALTHCARE A RIGHT FOR ALL UTAHNS

Senator Scott McCoy is sponsoring a resolution that would allow voters to decide whether the Utah Constitution should say that every Utahn has a right to basic healthcare. 132 Utahns will die in 2007 because they cannot afford healthcare. Given how many people do not have insurance in this state it is amazing that number is not higher. Right now 1 in 4 Utahns cannot afford the healthcare that they need. We can do better. No one in this state should die because they cannot afford healthcare.

ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS MY TWO FRONT TEETH

by Margo Westley

As Christmas time is but a warm memory to most. I wonder how many had the old lament “ All I want for Christmas is my two front teeth.” I know I had it for many years after losing my four front teeth in a soccer accident when I was in ninth grade. It wasn’t until I was twenty-five that I was finally insured and able to get my teeth fixed. My smile was back. I could talk without holding my hand over my mouth wow was it great. They lasted thirty years and changed my life.

But they need to be replaced now. After a truck roll over I found myself on assistance and with Medicaid. They have helped me with my medical problems but not with my dental situation. I have found myself not smiling and having to cover my mouth when I speak. It’s a flash back to when I got my teeth knocked out. Our teeth affect not only our appearances but also our health. Gum disease is directly connected to heart issues. When one applies for work your mouth can give you that winning edge. We ask that you all join us this coming January 15th and also up at the capitol getting our legislative workers that represent us to fund our dental needs. We know how important dental health is lets but our money where our mouth is.



Get a free copy of this bumper sticker by calling 364-7765.



Painting by Virgil Day

Doug Cotant’s Joke of the Month:

- Here in downtown
- Salt Lake City, we
- celebrate First Night
- on New Year’s Eve;
- I wonder, if this is
- First Night; then what
- happened to Second
- Night?



Profile of **AHAC** *Member:* **Rudy Roca**



Rudy E. Roca was born on October 22, 1927 and lived in Isabella Negros Occidental, Philippines for the first 62 years of his life. Rudy has been married for 50 years to Aurora Gurdiel, with whom he has a daughter, Leila. Leila, a Registered Nurse at Salt Lake Regional Hospital, has 5 children, 3 boys and 2 girls. Rudy is a “born chef and a born gardener,” and describes himself as a “party animal.” He also loves to sing and entertain people.

In the Philippines, Rudy graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service from Lyceum of the Philippines. He then worked at the Department of Local Government and Community Development. Rudy moved to Salt Lake in 1989, and after spending 1990 – 1994 in Chicago, moved back to Salt Lake City.

Rudy worked as an Americorps VISTA (Volunteer in Service to America) for three years at Crossroads Urban Center. It was at this time that Rudy started getting involved with many of the advocacy groups that are housed at Crossroads. Rudy was active in the Utah Hud Tenants Association

(UHTA), and is active in the Coalition of Religious Communities, along with being a Board Member of Crossroads and AHAC. It was his interest in helping low-income people that led to Rudy’s involvement in AHAC.

AHAC meets Rudy’s interests because he enjoys contacting and forming relationships with politicians. He also enjoys “meeting people from all walks of life” and loves the diversity that can be found in AHAC. Some activities that Rudy has found especially enjoyable have been lobbying legislators at the State Capitol, and working to restore the vision and dental benefits to the state Medicaid program.

The healthcare issue is very important to Rudy. He can still remember a billboard from his childhood that said “Your Health is Your Wealth.” This made an experience on Rudy because, as he says, “no matter how rich we are, if we are sick we can’t do anything.” This understanding has led Rudy to believe in a “sound mind and a sound body,” which, Rudy asserts, you can’t achieve without proper healthcare.

All of these beliefs surrounding the Healthcare issue have led Rudy to be a leader in doing outreach for AHAC’s Basic Healthcare Day at the Capitol. Rudy has invited many people at different community events, in his community, and even on the bus. He has done a great job of getting the word out. There is even a video on the internet of him inviting people to come out on January 15th. You can check it out at www.utahhealthstories.blogspot.com

The *Anti-Hunger Advocate* is a monthly newsletter of the Anti-Hunger Action Committee (AHAC).

Our Mission: The Anti-Hunger Action Committee is a membership organization composed of and led by food pantry clients and their friends.

- We unite many different kinds of people served by food pantries in order to increase community involvement of low income Utahns.
- We educate Salt Lake County residents about available resources and issues facing food pantry clients.
- We organize food pantry clients and their friends to take action on their own behalf.
- We promote solutions to problems that cause hunger and poverty in the lives of our members.

Our Supporters: AHAC receives funding from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the United Methodist Church’s Domestic Hunger and Poverty Program, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Hunger Grant Program, the United Church of Christ Hunger Action Fund, MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger and the Crossroads Urban Center.

Submissions: To submit an item to the newsletter, please contact AHAC at Crossroads Urban Center, 364-7765.

Previous issues of the newsletter are available either at Crossroads, or on-line at: www.crossroads-u-c.org