

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 1930s

*MISSION: To improve lives through the caring power of community.*

### St. Joseph Maintained Charitable Giving Efforts During Great Depression

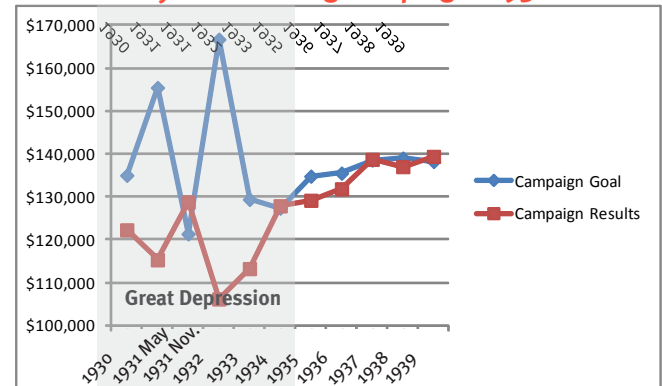
In St. Joseph, despite of being in the third year of the Great Depression and experiencing decreased campaign amounts, the first executive director was hired in 1931 for the agency now known as United Way. The executive director promoted the campaign as a social work program and encouraged coordination of local social services. Two campaigns were held to meet increasing human needs here that year, which boosted total overall contributions.

In the early 1930s, a St. Joseph citizens' committee, brought together by what is now United Way, helped establish an employment bureau and successfully persuaded the City Council to raise their funding of the Social Welfare Board.

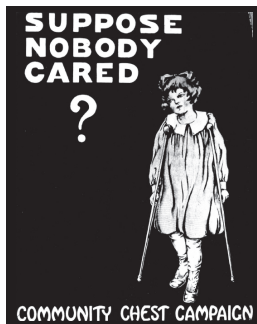
When President Franklin D. Roosevelt took office in 1933, government programs were created to meet human needs across the nation, shifting the balance from local support for local needs to more of a partnership of public and private services during the remaining years of the Depression.

In 1933, volunteer giving nationwide dropped by 76%; our community did not see such a drastic drop.

**“United Way” Fundraising Campaigns 1930s**



*In response to increased human needs during the Great Depression in St. Joseph, the agency that is now United Way increased efforts, campaign goals, and even conducted two campaigns rather than the usual one in 1931. Compared to the country at large, charitable giving in St. Joseph through the agency remained fairly stable.*



*Over the last century, our local United Way has been known by other names. The agency that began in 1916 as the St. Joseph Federation for Charity and Philanthropy and that is now United Way of Greater St. Joseph, officially became Community Chest in 1933. The agency had unofficially been using the name for the fundraising campaign for a decade.*

### “Community Chest” Name Adopted in 1933

The name “Community Chest” was a recognizable name across the country in the early 1930s, and the agency that is now United Way of Greater St. Joseph adopted the name in 1933.

During World War I (1914-1918), “War Chest” fundraising campaigns were held nationwide to help provide relief for the armed forces, their families, and European refugees. Perhaps intentionally using a similar name, a group in Rochester, New York first used the name “Community Chest” in 1919 for their own community’s fundraising campaign that allocated money to local agencies that provided important social work. The name caught on, and 353 large cities had their own Community Chests by 1929.

The Community Chest movement consisted of individual communities conducting a single community campaign to support a broad range of local social services to address area needs. The movement invited people of all income levels to accept a common responsibility for building life in their community. The movement was known for collecting money from local workers and the businesses that employed them.

Nationwide, from 1929 to 1935, the years of the Great Depression, the Community Chest movement mobilized to fight hunger and want in response to President Hoover’s request for Community Chest organizations to play a major role in relief work. Across the country and locally, people fell into serious financial difficulty, and charitable funds became harder to raise as “Let Uncle Sam Do It” became a common attitude.

**TRIVIA QUESTION:**

Can you guess which current United Way of Greater St. Joseph Partner Agencies were funded during the 1930s?

See back for answer.

# MORE DETAILS FROM the 1930s . . .

## Local Volunteer Leadership Is a Long Tradition

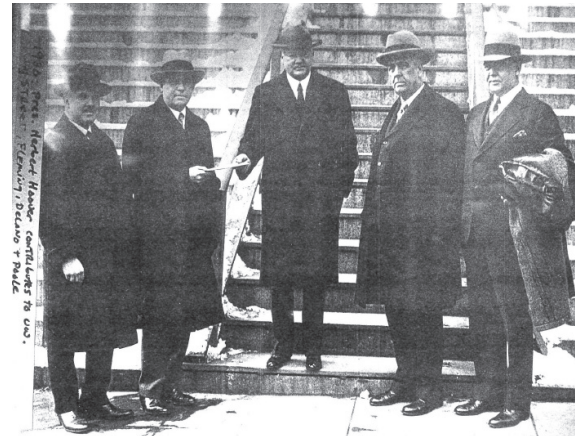
From early in United Way of Greater St. Joseph's history, the agency was overseen by a volunteer Board of Directors, and the fundraising campaign was steered by a volunteer who led the charge for helping the community raise dollars to invest in social services to improve local lives. Do you recognize any names from the 1930s?

Date	Campaign Chair	Goal	Raised
1930	J. Doyle Barrow	\$135,000	\$122,264
1931 (May)	R.L. Douglas	\$155,439	\$115,306
1931 (Nov.)	Wm. M. Wyeth	\$121,352	\$128,774
1932	R.A. Brown, Jr.	\$166,691	\$106,187
1933	Floyd M. Sprague	\$129,386	\$113,244
1934	T.W.Dodd	\$127,344	\$127,880
1935	T.W.Dodd	\$134,789	\$129,176
1936	L.H. Steckling	\$135,500	\$131,828
1937	L.H. Steckling	\$138,564	\$138,705
1938	S. R. Douglas	\$139,000	\$137,007
1939	W.F. Enright	\$138,210	\$139,397

Thirteen years after women gained the right to vote in the U.S., Mrs. A.B. McGlothlan became the first female volunteer Board President of our local Community Chest (the agency that became United Way of Greater St. Joseph) in 1933. She remained in the role through the remainder of the 30s.

Prior to her in the 1930s, the following volunteer presidents led the St. Joseph Federation for Charities and Philanthropy (the agency's name before it became Community Chest): Charles Semrad, 1930; William Wyeth, May 1931; Fred Karr, Nov. 1931; Lester Binswanger, 1932.

## Photos from United Way archives . . .



The writing on this photo reads, "1930? President Hoover contributes to United Way. (unreadable) Street, Fleming, Delano and Poole." During his presidential term (1929-1933) that coincided with the onset of the Great Depression, President Hoover encouraged communities to hold Community Chest (now United Way) campaigns to support local social services to help relieve increasing needs.



In the heart of the Great Depression (1931), the agency that is now United Way of Greater St. Joseph held an extra campaign to support local social work. During the Great Depression, 1929-1935, human needs increased as capacity to give decreased. 1932 is notable as the year with the lowest campaign contributions in St. Joseph from 1924 through present day.



United Way of Greater St. Joseph  
[stjosephunitedway.org](http://stjosephunitedway.org)

### TRIVIA ANSWER from question on front:

Current United Way of Greater St. Joseph Partner Agencies that were funded throughout the 1930s are:

- 1) American Red Cross of Northwest Missouri
- 2) Family Guidance Center
- 3) InterServ
- 4) Pony Express Council, Boy Scouts of America
- 5) Salvation Army
- 6) YMCA
- 7) YWCA

\*Note: other agencies were funded in the 1930s as well.