

# Cope Close-Up

February 2010

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Community Circle  
Member of the  
Month



Our Community Circle Member of the Month for February is Platinum level member the Syar Foundation. The Syar Foundation was a major sponsor of the first Napa River Rock & Stroll last September, and will also sponsor this year's Kids' Day.

## The Latest News from Cope Family Center



Dear Cope Supporter,

This month, we open with a story about one of the many families we have helped. [VITA tax clinics](#) for Napa residents begin this month and run through early April. Volunteer tax preparers will help determine taxpayers' eligibility for the [Earned Income Tax Credit](#). The [Child Assault Prevention](#) program is providing Napa schoolchildren with the information and skills they need to stay safe, strong and free.

We'd also like to introduce you to our newest board member, [Albert Bahn](#), and invite you to [take a tour](#) of Cope Family Center.

Thank you for your support,



Joelle Gallagher, Executive Director  
[jgallagher@copefamilycenter.org](mailto:jgallagher@copefamilycenter.org)

## Single mother finds help at Cope Felicia becomes a more effective parent

A little over a year ago, Felicia\* came to Cope Family Center seeking help finding housing and counseling, as well as for parent education classes. Felicia had trouble coping with being a single mother of three boys, one with behavioral problems, all of them living in a studio apartment together. She needed to learn the skills of positive parenting and stress management.

Felicia began working with one of our home visitors, Francis Lumbreras, who got Felicia into therapy at Family Service of Napa Valley. Felicia also enrolled in our Positive Discipline class to learn how to manage her children and be a more consistent, effective parent.

The Syar Foundation is the legacy of Syar Industries founder C.M. "Tony" Syar and his wife B.M. "Boots" Syar. It is their gift to the communities of Napa, Solano, Sonoma and Yolo counties, where Syar Industries started, operated and grew into the company it is today. The Syars' desire was that the Foundation support the communities which supported them and Syar Industries for so many years.

Cope Family Center is proud to be funded by Syar Foundation!

### Important Dates

February-April: [VITA Tax Clinics](#)

February 12: [VIP Tour](#)

March 10: [VIP Tour](#)

April 1-30: [Child Abuse Prevention Awareness \(Blue Ribbon\) Month](#)

April 6: [Blue Ribbon Month Kickoff Luncheon & Awards](#)

April 23-30: ["Napa Valley 360" Online Auction](#)  
May 1: [Kids' Day](#)

### Volunteer Corner

Volunteers with good communication skills are needed for the [CAP Program](#), to present the 60-minute curriculum to 1st, 3rd and 5th graders in Napa and American Canyon schools.

Interested? Contact [Aimee Inglis](#) at 707.252.1123 x 104.

More Volunteer Ops at:

After observing the family in the home, Francis referred Felicia to Health & Human Services for psychiatric services for her middle son, which led to a diagnosis of ADHD. Felicia was then able to get medication for him so that he could focus better on his schoolwork. Francis also helped Felicia get an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) for the boy, now enrolled in speech therapy at his school, and guided her to ParentsCan, a parent-child advocacy network for families of children with disabilities.

Finally, Francis led Felicia to Community Housing, where she is now on the waiting list for a larger apartment.

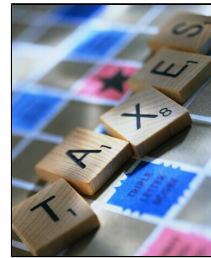
Having gotten therapy for herself and her son, improved her parenting skills, and learned to advocate for herself and her family, Felicia has "graduated" from our Home Visitation program. Felicia gained access to the resources she needed and learned valuable life and parenting skills.

*\*Name has been changed.*

### VITA tax clinics begin this month

#### Free tax preparation and filing for Napa families

An important way to help struggling families make ends meet is to assure they have expert assistance in getting all the State and Federal tax credits for which they are eligible. Once again, Cope Family Center and other family resource centers throughout Napa County have partnered with United Way of the Bay Area, the IRS, and community-based organizations to assure local families get the **free** tax assistance as part of the **Earn It! Save It! Keep It! Campaign**.



Last year, **VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)** clinics in Napa filed 216 tax returns, for a total of \$445,820 in refunds (averaging \$1,870 per return) to Napa families. This year's clinics will run from this month through early April at the following sites:

#### **Napa Valley College:**

Tuesdays, 2-6pm AND Fridays 1-4:30pm, February through April 13;

Saturday, February 20, 10am-2pm

#### **Umpqua Bank** (1500 Soscol Avenue):

Wednesdays, 9am-4pm, February through April 14

Saturdays, 10am-2pm, March only

#### **Cope Family Center:**

Saturdays, February 6 & 13, March 6 & 13, 10am-4pm

For information about eligibility, appointments and what documents to bring, visit [www.copefamilycenter.org/vita\\_html](http://www.copefamilycenter.org/vita_html) or call us at 707.252.1123.

### Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Awareness

Many families overlook an important tax credit that could put up to \$5,600 in their



[www.copefamilycenter.org](http://www.copefamilycenter.org)

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pockets. The **Earned Income Tax Credit, or EITC**, can be the needed financial boost for working people hit by hard economic times.



However, the IRS estimates that one in four eligible taxpayers miss out on getting the EITC because they aren't aware of it. That's why January 29th has been declared **Annual EITC Awareness Day** by both Napa County and the City of Napa.

VITA volunteers will screen all applicants for their EITC eligibility. Find out more at [www.copefamilycenter.org/vita\\_info](http://www.copefamilycenter.org/vita_info)

### [CAP program in full swing](#), [Child Assault Prevention empowers schoolkids](#)

Last fall, Cope Family Center relaunched the Child Assault Prevention program, with the goal of serving 800 Napa Valley Unified School District students during the 2009-10 school year. So far, Supervised Visitation Program Manager **Melinda Daugherty**



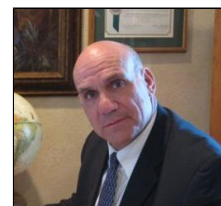
and several other staff members have presented the program to 386 first, third and fifth graders at Napa Valley Language Academy and Shearer Elementary School, with Donaldson Way Elementary scheduled next.

The CAP program assures children that **everyone has the right to be safe, strong, and free**. Through role play and guided discussions, the presentations teach children how to recognize potentially dangerous situations and give them strategies for dealing with them. The goal is for children to feel empowered and capable of handling difficult or scary situations that may come up in their own lives.

The response from the classroom has been overwhelmingly positive, with teachers citing the presentations as "effective," "important," and saying that "everything was clear and at their level." Especially important to students was the information how to deal with bullies.

### [Cope welcomes new board member](#), [Albert Bahn joins Cope BOD](#)

This month we welcome the newest member of our Board of Directors, **Albert Bahn**. With 20 years experience as a police officer, both in San Francisco and Napa, and 8 years as an educator and administrator, Bahn has great insight into the magnitude of the problem of



child abuse. As a board member, Bahn brings new perspectives on gang activity, substance abuse, internet safety and parent education.

After his retirement from Napa Valley Unified School District in 2009, Bahn launched Edu-Safe Associates. A consulting firm focused on school and personal safety, Edu-Safe seeks to meet the need for school-safety training for teachers and administrators, offering personal safety training and seminars for educators. Bahn is also a licensed private investigator (A.E. Bahn Investigations).

Al Bahn lives in Napa with his wife, Mary Lou, a labor and delivery nurse at Queen of the Valley Medical Center. They have two grown children, Natalie and Charlie.

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### Insider's tours give insight Take a VIP tour of Cope Family Center

Have you ever been inside Cope Family Center? If not, here's your chance to take a tour of our family resource center (FRC) from top to bottom.

One day each month, we offer house tours to people interested in learning more about our programs and facility. Upcoming tour dates include Wednesday, February 17 at 11am and 1pm, and Wednesday, March 10 at 11am and 1pm. Interested? Contact Liz Marks at 707.252.1123 x 108 to reserve a spot!



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First Stop for Families  
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