

Local

United Way kicks off annual campaign with 'Day of Sharing'

 By Jacob Dick Messenger-Inquirer

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The United Way of Ohio Valley kicked off its annual fall campaign to support local services in a slightly unique way this year with some help from Volunteer Owensboro.

To celebrate the support that donors give to volunteer organizations, teams from local businesses participated in a “Day of Sharing” on Friday morning, dedicating their time to help six agencies.

Kathy Oliver, director of community services for United Way, said the organization decided to bring back the “Day of Sharing” tradition this year to give their partners a chance to work with the agencies that their commitments aid.

“We thought this would help people connect with the services and agencies that mostly rely on volunteers to perform their work,” Oliver said. “Volunteers are the fabric of a community and we thought our partners would enjoy being a part of what makes their community wonderful.”

The United Way enlists the efforts of businesses and individuals to raise money that allows local or national organizations to complete projects and continue services. Oliver said local donations stay in the communities in which they were made unless otherwise noted by the donor.

About 89 percent of the \$1.66 million raised in Daviess County during the last campaign came from payroll deductions pledged by employees at local partner businesses.

Teams from Anthem Medicaid, BB&T Bank, Health First, Kentucky BioProcessing, Meijer, Old National Bank, Republic Bank and U.S. Bank gathered in support with Volunteer Owensboro. The volunteer collaboration organization often works with corporations, small businesses and school groups to match up volunteers with appropriate service organizations in need of a helping hand.

Angie DeWitt, assistant director of Volunteer Owensboro, said the enthusiasm and support volunteers showed at the event would hopefully grow into a continued connection with their respective agencies.

“This has been a wonderful way to start the day and we’ve been happy to see the support from companies letting their employees take time away to help others,” DeWitt said. “We hope that this might grow into a relationship between the volunteer and the organization so they continue to help out at a place they love and believe in.”

After a catered breakfast and entertainment from Randy Lanham and company at the Owensboro Christian Church community room, volunteers headed out pitch-in for their assigned agencies.

Volunteers visited AACCS Head Start, Building Stronger Families, the Cliff Hagan Boys and Girls Club, Mentor KidsKentucky and Oasis.

DeWitt said each team was able to select an agency that best suited their time and interests.

A team of women from BB&T said they took advantage of the option to choose to support Building Stronger Families because of their interest in helping local families stay together.

"I'm all about family, so it was a blessing that I could help other families today," said Trisha Todd, of BB&T.

The group of five spent the morning with Linda Wahl, program director of Building Stronger Families, organizing files, putting together information packets and sorting the community closet.

Theresea Daugherty said what seemed like busy work actually meant a world of difference for the program.

"They told us what we did in about an hour or so would have taken them forever to get around to with everything else they do," Daugherty said. "We were freeing up hours they can now spend helping families."

Andrea Crabtree said she was happy to work somewhere that allowed her to help impact the agencies in her community.

"It's been such a blessing to work at a place that encourages us to go out and make a difference," Crabtree said. "I wish we could do it at least twice a year."

More information about United Way's campaign and ways to support local and national causes can be found at <http://www.uwov.org/>.

Volunteer opportunities, updates on community initiatives and information about how to participate with Volunteer Owensboro can be found at <http://www.volunteerowensboro.com/>.

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Alan Warren

Photo by Alan Warren, Messenger-Inquirer/awarren@messenger-inquirer.com

Kelsi Swope, Amanda Tipton and John Shepherd of KBP (Kentucky Bio Processing) move a new pool table they put together into place at the Cliff Hagan Boys and Girls Club at 3415 Buckland Square during the Day of Sharing.



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Landon Humphrey from Meijer, far left, Tyler Green, Brooklynn Yeckering and Tamarra Miller, of Republic Bank, paint the day care walls at the H. L. Neblett Community Center at 801 West Fifth Street during the Day of Sharing. The Day of Sharing is a joint partnership between the United Way of Ohio Valley and Volunteer Owensboro.