
OUR VIEW

Let's show support for the United Way kickoff

Local nonprofit and social service agencies know all too well how tough economic conditions can affect those in need of help.

During the recent Great Recession, hours and staff were cut, programs curtailed, admissions slowed or stopped.

That's why this year's fundraising campaign for the United Way of Northwest Georgia is more important than ever.

The campaign kickoff is Tuesday at 6 p.m. at Dalton Green with a Kickoff Block Party and CEO Trike Race. The United Way board will announce this year's campaign goal at 6 p.m., followed by the popular CEO Trike Race, in which local business executives get to cut loose and race in adult-sized tricycles.

At 7 p.m. Barrelhouse will perform. Dinner tickets will be sold at the event for \$10 for adults and \$5 for those 12 and under.

If you previously haven't been involved in the campaign or think it's just for a chosen few, it's not. The campaign is a set amount of time — in this case, through the first of the year — in which United Way and its supporters try to raise a set amount of money.

Last year's campaign raised \$3.8 million. We expect this year's campaign to exceed that.

The local United Way, which concentrates on Whitfield and Murray counties, works with local industries, businesses, churches, governments and community volunteers to fill in the cracks when funding is lacking. The agency focuses on three building blocks for a good life: education, basic needs and health.

It does this by working with about two dozen organizations that provide services that range from after-school and child care programs, disaster relief services, community meals, help for victims of domestic violence and aid for families struggling to make ends meet. Boy and Girl Scouts aren't forgotten, either.

Recent United Way campaign goals have been close to \$4 million, which is an incredible amount for a community of this size. But it's a reflection of this community's character which has shown to be generous in helping those who need it. And the United Way is a proven, effective steward of the money raised, making sure agency programs serve the greatest needs here and that the money is wisely spent.

We hope to see you Tuesday evening at Dalton Green showing support for both the United Way and a community "living united."