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[May 08, 2011]

Volunteers sought for event Thursday for event

LUMBERTON, May 08, 2011 (The Robesonian - McClatchy-Tribune Information Services via COMTEX) -- Volunteers are still needed for the the United Way of Robeson County's ninth annual Day of Caring, which will be held Thursday.

The event, which brings people together for fun, fellowship and to do volunteer work for people in need, includes a food drive, a knit-in and several beautification and construction projects. But it won't be all-work as Jerry Johnson's car dealership will be the site of plenty of festivities.

Sandra Oliver, executive director of the United Way, said United Way hopes to collect 30,000 pounds of food during the drive. Collection sites will be set up throughout the county.

"We're still looking for folks to help that day, to especially come out to Jerry Johnson's on that Thursday to bring non-perishable food items," Oliver said.

That's where the fun will begin.

"If they bring food between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30, they can get free hot dogs, chips and soft drinks, and then listen to beach music from the Carolina Breakers," she said.

Volunteers are needed to work outside the Food Lion in Fairmont on the Day of Caring.

"We need some help from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. You pass out fliers to people as they go in the grocery store, asking them to donate food items, which they can drop off in a box on their way out," Oliver said.

Drop-off sites for food donations Thursday include: Jerry Johnson Chevrolet; Walmart in Lumberton; Coastal Speech; Lumbee Guaranty Bank; Biggs Park Mall; Lumberton City Hall; Fairmont Town Hall; and Southeastern Regional Medical Center.

Hundreds of students from the public schools are being encouraged to bring canned foods during a field trip to the dealership, where they will get fingerprinted for identification cards and will receive a book, Oliver said.

On Saturday only, Lumberton residents can place can goods beside their mailbox for the mail carrier to collect, a joint project of United Way and the U.S. Postal Service.

Volunteers are also needed for food sorting after the Day of Caring, Oliver said, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. on May 17, 9 to 11 a.m. and 3 to 5 p.m. on May 18. That will be done at the Robeson County Church and Community Center on West Fifth Street.

The food will be donated to the Robeson County Church and Community Center, BART, Sacred Pathways, Lumberton Christian Care Center and Southeastern Family Violence Center, which will provide it directly to needy people.

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United Way is also sponsoring a knit-in on Thursday beginning at 9 a.m. at O.P. Owen's Agricultural Center. Anyone who can knit, crochet, quilt or sew is welcome to make baby blankets for premature babies at Southeastern Regional Medical Center and lap blankets for hospice patients. Oliver said more volunteers are needed for this project as well.

Other volunteer projects that day include: -- The West Lumberton Kiwanis Club and the Community for the Challenged will build two wheelchair ramps and install two temporary ramps at local homes.

-- The Robeson County Bar Association will be constructing two wheelchair ramps for clients of the RCCCC.

-- Walmart employees and some students at The University of North Carolina at Pembroke will do some painting at the Boys and Girls Club in Lumberton.

-- The Kiwanis Club or Robeson County/Lumberton will install vinyl siding and plant a garden at the Odum Home in Pembroke.

Oliver also people to donate blood on the Day of Caring to the American Red Cross. To make an appointment, call (910) 738-5057.

"We are really grateful to Jerry Johnson and the folks at the dealership -- they just go in that day and take over, and there is lots going on. We are really pleased about the expansion of the event, we're getting a lot of help hat day," Oliver said.

If you would like to get involved, call the United Way office at (910) 739-4249.

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