



VIP: VOLUNTEERS IN POWER

Holidays 2016

Giving Thanks

What were we thankful for as we celebrated Thanksgiving with the holiday season and a new year fast approaching? It's interesting to note that half of "Thanksgiving" is "giving." And you, our MLGW volunteers and donors, do a lot of giving!

Yes, another holiday season is upon us just as another MLGW United Way Campaign has concluded. Our employees come together to give back to the community each year through United Way, and for that, we are indeed grateful.

As holidays near, many employees participate in our Salvation Army Angel Tree and Kettle Campaigns, giving their time and donations generously. We're always inspired to see the display of Angel Tree gifts destined for local children and seniors in need. Our bell ringers stand on Main Street during the holidays gathering donations for the Salvation Army's community needs. Our Gift of Comfort and Plus-1 programs encourage our neighbors and customers to join us in generosity.

Enjoy the warm glow you feel when you and your co-workers give, donate, volunteer and contribute. Happy Holidays!

Send your holiday volunteer selfies, event reports and Volunteer Spotlight suggestions to VIP editor **Dan Hope**, Communications and Public Relations, at dhope@mlgw.org or call me at 528-4557.

Pledging Our Support Year-Round

While MLGW's United Way of the Mid-South campaign provides several opportunities to support the organization, the biggest contribution to the cause comes from the annual pledges from employees.

During the weeks of October 24 - November 4, key people from each area hosted meetings to encourage fellow workers in their departments to give via payroll deductions. Representatives from local charities supported by United Way came to share the life-changing work their agencies do in Mid-South communities and the importance of MLGW's employee giving.

This year, MLGW's goal is to raise \$667,000 for United

Way of the Mid-South. The money raised will play a vital role in supporting the services its agencies provide for those in Memphis, Shelby County and the surrounding area who are in need. MLGW's 2016 campaign slogan is Power to Unite Within the Community.

If you missed the chance to participate during the initial push for contributions, you can still help change lives by giving to United Way. Contact your area's key person for details about how to give, or email co-chairs **Juanita Ford Boothe**, jford@mlgw.org, or **Sharika Hollingsworth**, shollingsworth@mlgw.org. Keep an eye out for other opportunities to participate as well, including Park Like an Executive (*see p.6*), Midday Music and more.



United Way Campaign

2016

**Power to Unite
Within the Community**



MLGW's United Way Campaign Steering Committee and volunteers pose at the National Civil Rights Museum prior to heading out to their work sites for Day of Caring.

Making an Impact with a Hands-on Day of Caring

More than 1,000 volunteers from local companies and government agencies came together on Friday, September 16 to serve charities across Memphis. Forty-two of these volunteers were MLGW employees, who were more than happy to trade a day on the job for an opportunity to give back to our community.

Each year, the United Way Day of Caring marks the beginning of MLGW's annual campaign to highlight United Way of the Mid-South and the agencies it helps fund. Volunteers have an opportunity to see some of the good work they are enabling with their financial support.



Do a little dance... MLGW President and CEO Jerry Collins Jr. (front center) and MLGW cheerleader Glynis Finnie (front right), Elec. Dist. Suppt., lead MLGW volunteers in a warm-up dance in front of the Civil Rights Museum on Day of Caring.



*Pulling up several rooms of carpeting at Grace House was dusty business. Hauling dusty, dirty carpet are (l-r) Steering Committee members **Brandon Still**, Accts. Payable, and **Derrick Smith**, Gas Transm. Svc., along with **Chris Cleaves**, Transf. Elec. Motor Shop.*

MLGW President and CEO Jerry Collins Jr., who also serves as the current UWMS Board chairman, started the day off with a rallying speech at the National Civil Rights Museum, praising the volunteers for their generosity. After some dancing and Zumba to get muscles stretched and brains woken up, workers were sent out to begin serving their assigned non-profits. MLGW volunteers split up to visit two similarly named but unrelated organizations: Hope House and Grace House.



MLGW volunteers pose outside Hope House where they cleaned up, painted and repaired the property on Day of Caring.



It takes a little carpentry to fix up Hope House, as FedEx/United Way loaned executive Yvonne Johnson and Cruz Iglezias, Res. Svcs., demonstrate.

Hope House is a Midtown-based non-profit that provides therapeutic daycare, social services and more to HIV-affected adults, children and their families. MLGW workers cleaned playground equipment, gardened, pulled weeds, mowed, painted daycare walls, repaired a porch, washed a bus and spent time with children. They got a lot of work done in just a few hours, and every part of Hope House was left improved by the volunteers.

Grace House provides residential treatment and assistance to local women whose lives have been negatively impacted by alcohol, drugs and other substance abuse. Recently, the organization acquired property from the state to serve even more women. Before the new residences could be used, they



Stephanie Darnell and Jackie Royston, Residential Svcs., wrestle tomato cages and tomato plants as they do a little gardening at Hope House for Day of Caring.

needed help from MLGW volunteers to remove hundreds of square feet of carpet, clean and paint furniture, clear out a shed and haul away trash. Because of their hard work, Grace House can begin making a new home for women in need.

At each location, volunteers got to meet some of the people who benefit from the services these charities provide. After seeing the gratitude in their smiles, no one could doubt their continued support of United Way makes a difference in our community. *(For more photos of Day of Caring, see Volunteer Views on page 8).*



Grace House was graced with the presence of MLGW volunteers who removed carpeting, painted furniture, hauled out trash and cleaned up.

Walking with Heart/Riding with the Blues



Recent retiree **William Gardner**; **Markus Holt**, Substation Transmission Engrng.; **Clifford DeBerry Jr.**, Dir., Analysis, Strategy and Performance; **Dan Haddow** and **Richard Finnie**, Employee Development, were among the bikers representing MLGW's Cycle Team at the Bluff City Blues 100.

As the sun ascended the sky from its nocturnal nap on October 1, members of MLGW's cycle team gathered early for the largest bike ride in Memphis, the Bluff City Blues 100. A core group of riders talked briskly about their routes as they arrived at Charles Greenhill Stadium at Firestone Park in Frayser before traversing 20, 40, 62 or 100 miles in support of the event sponsor, Memphis Hightailers Foundation. The Foundation advocates for bicycle-friendly policies in the Greater Memphis Area, offers bike safety classes and consults on transportation planning issues in our region.

Meanwhile, downtown, a group of dedicated walkers started their morning at the Administration Building, warming up with stretches and exercises lead by **Vickie Price**, Systems Security Control. After everyone was limber, they struck out north on Main Street to Court Square for the American Heart Association's Annual Heart Walk, a three-mile circuit through city streets.



The Heart Walk featured men in tutus, part of the walk's Red Dress Dash 5K.

The Heart Walk is the American Heart Association's premiere event to raise funds to save lives from this country's No. 1 and No. 5 killers – heart disease and stroke. Designed to promote physical activity and heart-healthy living, the Heart Walk creates an environment that's fun and rewarding for the entire family. This year, part of that fun was the Red Dress Dash 5K. Runners donned boas, tutus, skirts and, of course, dresses for the cause.

Some MLGW team members walked in honor of a beloved coworker, Weslynn Bates, who passed in March of 2015. Weslynn retired from the Division as a Computer Software Analyst in 2014 with 24 years of service. Her coworkers took each stride with Weslynn's smiling image on the back of their T-shirts. Weslynn received a heart transplant in 2000 and was a passionate Heart Walk supporter until her health failed.



Portia Williams, Sys Ops. Mgr's Ofc., and **Arnisa Davis**, Customer and Geographical Info Systems, walked to honor the memory of former Computer Software Analyst, **Weslynn Bates**.

Teams organized by MLGW's Employee Activities raised \$6,636 for AHA's cause.



A few MLGW Team Members posed by the Court Square Fountain before the main event: Back row (l to r) **Tom Maslowski**, Property Management and Survey; **Patrick Jones**, System Lighting and Maintenance; **Von Goodloe**, VP, Human Resources, and **Paula S. Mitchell**, Credit. Front row (l to r) **Dorothy Collier**, Cashiering Operations, and her daughter, **Rebecca Jones**; **Michael Jones**, Gas Distribution - BSC, and **Vickie Price**, Systems Security Control.

Volunteer Spotlight

Positive Role Model: Ricky Truitt

There's a vast need in our community, and it's not something necessarily fixed just with money. It takes people – people who care, those who get involved in the community. In order to reach young people today, especially those challenged by their situations, we need positive role models. That's what Ricky Truitt believes.

Ricky was first hired by MLGW's Body Shop in February 1982 when it was still in Central Shops. After working there a year, he was accepted into and completed the Electric Motor Repairer three-and-one-half-year Apprenticeship Program in the Motor Shop. "I rose to the top position, and I always put my best efforts into what I was doing," he recalls. Ricky worked at Central Shops for 30 years.

"The last five years, I have been learning a new challenge as General Foreman of the Construction and Maintenance Tool Room at NSC," Ricky says. "I'm only the third person in this position and want to do my best for MLGW and improve this department for the future. The 35 years I've been at MLGW haven't always been easy, but the challenges and tough times have matured me and made me a better person." He's also close to earning a degree in business administration at LeMoyne-Owen College.

Ricky spent over 15 years as a Union Steward and Chief Steward. Volunteering to create better working conditions and management/union relationships as a steward was a start. "Stewards are supposed to be exemplary leaders and are encouraged to volunteer as Division representatives for the charities MLGW and IBEW contribute to," he says. "I participated in all of them at one time or another. Volunteering is a great way to network at MLGW and in the community. It makes me feel good about myself, and it's a way of giving back what was given to me: A chance or opportunity."

Those first volunteer experiences at Central Shops as a steward included being a key person both for United Way and Operation Feed, as well as many other volunteer opportunities. "The tours of United Way



Ricky Truitt

agencies opened my eyes to why I should be giving," Ricky says. "MLGW sets a huge example as volunteers to the community. People take the view that MLGW only takes, but that's far from true. The Division and its employees give tremendously, donating to charity and volunteering. We make an enormous impact on the community."

Ricky's MLGW volunteer experiences also include Bowl-A-Thons and staffing info tables at various community events such as the Southern Heritage Classic, college/career fairs and SCS STEM events. One career fair at the Fairgrounds' Pipkin Bldg. was eight hours of buses filled with young people and adults coming in all day long. The building was always full!

His favorite volunteer effort involves career days and talking to kids, especially through the MLGW Goes to School program. "I love MLGW Goes to School," Ricky explains. "I talk to middle and high school kids about opportunities at MLGW. I'm a huge proponent of the vocations as a career choice. Pointing them in the right direction, letting them know what they need to do to get jobs here helps create a work-ready workforce for the Division."

"I volunteer to visit schools now primarily, so the kids and young adults in our community can see positive role models, be given sound educational and career advice, stay in touch with reality in our community, and stay out of trouble," he says.

Working with teens in his family and in the community, Ricky provides mentoring and encouragement. He gets invited to talk to community, church and school groups about careers, opportunities and staying on track, despite all the distractions teens are subject to. Ricky was invited by Mayor Wharton's administration to speak at one of the Mayor's Career Conferences held at the Cook Convention Center, part of the Mayor's Youth Initiative. As an alumnus, he's regularly invited to speak to students at Hamilton High.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT Positive Role Model: Ricky Truitt

“I also make myself available to parents both single and married to mentor and provide an outside perspective to teens. I tell them, ‘Make your parents proud.’ And I train and provide advice for young adults in the HVAC business,” Ricky says.

To potential volunteers, Ricky says, “Blessings and favor have been afforded to you, so give of yourself to the community. Volunteering is socially responsible, and giving back makes you an asset to your community.”

During a United Way visit to the Food Bank, Ricky recalls,



Ricky (left) at the Bartlett High Career Fair in March.

“I heard the story of an elementary school kid taking food from the lunchroom to his grandmother’s house for her and his sisters and brothers in her care. This was a half-mile round trip. His classmates knew and allowed him to skip to the front of the line so he could make it there and back to school. When the teachers found out what was happening, they got the grandmother the help they needed but the touching part for me was, here was this kid taking on ‘grown folk’ responsibilities. It still brings tears to my eyes just thinking about it years later. Why would I not volunteer in some capacity?”

Bells a-Ringing

Join us as we volunteer for the Salvation Army Kettle Campaign and ring handbells for red kettle donations outside the Walgreens at Main and Madison through December 21.

Donations go to the Salvation Army’s efforts in our communities. To sign up, contact **Kim Bond**, Communications and PR, 528-4820 or kbond@mlgw.org.



Volunteer Events Calendar

Join your co-workers and volunteer for these fun and rewarding MLGW volunteer events. Contact information is listed by each event. The contacts’ email addresses below are active – all you have to do is click on them.

December 2016

- Salvation Army Kettle Campaign – through December 21, Walgreens at Madison and Main. Bellringer volunteers needed. Contact: **Kim Bond**, Communications and PR, 528-4820 or kbond@mlgw.org
- Park Like an Executive – Bid to park in one of 10 MLGW Executive Parking spots from Dec. 7-11 at the Admin. Bldg., Netters, North Center and MLGW U for a week to benefit United Way. An online silent auction will be held Dec. 5-9 at noon on MLGW’s Intranet. For more information, contact MLGW’s United Way office at 528-4612.

January 2017

- United Way Key Person Appreciation Luncheon – TBA, MLGW University. Contact: **Juanita Ford Boothe**, jford@mlgw.org, or **Sharika Hollingsworth**, shollingsworth@mlgw.org

Volunteer your time and give back to our community.

FIRST Robotics

MLGW's JEPE program, in partnership with TVA, local schools and representatives from VEX Robotics and the For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) program hosted a robotics exhibition on October 4 in the Administration Bldg. lobby. "We also received a lot of internal support from various MLGW departments, which contributed greatly to the success of the event," said JEPE President **Kerry Roy**, Environmental Affairs. JEPE members volunteered to coordinate and supervise the event. Student teams from seven schools showed off their robot and computer-controlled creations, which picked up



The robots on display at the FIRST Robotics Exhibition were nothing short of amazing! Here's Collierville's Dragon Robotics team.



JEPE Chair Kerry Roy (l) watches students work robotic magic at the FIRST robotics exhibition.

and threw basketballs, moved over obstacles, transported objects and navigated paths. FIRST participation encourages students to pursue education and careers in STEM-related fields and inspires them to become leaders and innovators.

"It is amazing to see firsthand what the students have accomplished through the FIRST and VEX programs," said Roy. "The programs rely upon community involvement, as many of the local teams need mentors and sponsors. MLGW wanted to showcase these talented children because by supporting our students, we are growing our next generation of employees."

A-Blazing Training

MLGW's JEPE group hosted a workshop on Saturday, September 17 for students who had registered for the A-Blazing Solar Car Race in October. The students were taught about different engineering principles such as energy transmission, friction and aerodynamics. These principles assist the students in the design of their solar cars. They also learned to document their design process in a notebook. Pictured are students and A-Blazing Race coordinator **Beverly Perkins**, Communications and PR. Look for A-Blazing Race coverage next issue.



Surrey Down

The Stone Soul Picnic centered around local and nationally recognized gospel singers had the Levitt Shell in Overton Park rocking on Saturday, September 3. MLGW volunteers (pictured, l&r) **Edward Boone**, Elec. Meter, and **Vetrice Wilson**, Residential Resource Ctr., enjoyed the



inspiring music as they staffed an MLGW info booth. "It's a really nice event to attend," says Edward. "It's one of my favorite events to volunteer for. It gives the citizens of Memphis an opportunity to hear some good old-fashioned gospel music and MLGW an opportunity to have one-on-one time to answer questions and offer energy-saving tips for some of our wonderful customers!"

Volunteer Views

More recent photos of MLGW volunteers will be posted soon in albums on MLGW's Intranet under "Corporate Fast Links" and "MLGW Volunteer News" on the pull-down menu. Or you can use your home computer or mobile device to view photo albums at www.flickr.com/photos/mlgwpix/albums.)



The Key to Training: MLGW's United Way Key Persons went through a day of training on Friday, October 7 at the SCS Learning Academy in Midtown to prepare for the United Way Campaign.



Richard Rides: Richard Finnie, Employee Dev., rode his bike in the Ride to Fight On held Sept. 17 at Shelby Farms to raise funds for West Cancer Center.



Relay Ride for St. Jude: Cliff DeBerry, Dir., Analysis, Strategy and Performance, rode his bike to raise funds for St. Jude as MLGW bike riders joined teams from other organizations riding in a 24-hour relay ride on Riverside by Tom Lee Park on Oct. 21.



A Day for Caring: MLGW United Way volunteers and Steering Committee members posed outside the National Civil Rights Museum where the citywide United Way Campaign kicked off Sept. 16.

Volunteer Views



Fare for the Delta: Staffing an info MLGW booth on saving energy and lowering utility costs at the Delta Fair in September are (l-r) **Alicia Hampton** and **Mica Burke**, Mach. Welding Shop, and **Tammy Been'e**, Telecom. Engrng.



O'Square Book Fair: Book lovers came out in force to the Overton Square Book Fair, and MLGW volunteers (l-r) **Eddie Scheaffer**, Water Plant Maint. Supply Ops.; **Brandon Still**, Acts. Payable; and **Barbara Davis**, Payroll, had energy saving information for them.



Step Out Walkers: A large group of MLGW walkers participated in the ADA Step Out Walk at the Botanic Garden on Sept. 17.

Happy
Holidays