

UNITED WAY

A little generosity can mean a lot

By: Sheila Nero on October 22, 2012 4:56 PM

Note to readers: *The United Way campaign at our company will continue until Oct. 31, During the campaign, regular posts will be made to this blog, Comments are welcome. Join the United Way campaign -- please give generously when your solicitor contacts you.*

In the recent migration of our department from WCB to G.O., employees were told to clean out desks and files, and put the spare items on a table marked "up for grabs." A stack of outdated reference books and other flotsam grew by the day. In this process, a 20-year-old dictionary was set on the table.

The outdated dictionary was unearthed by a professional writer who needs the latest and most up-to-date edition, for competitive reasons.

One early evening, during our department's purging phase, a custodial worker saw the dictionary. She politely asked me, "Does 'up for grabs' mean anyone can have it?" I checked with my supervisor, who answered, "Absolutely!" The worker said, "I want a word book. They say to look words up on the computer, but I want my own word book."

The truth is: Most of the words in the English language haven't changed for the past few hundred years. If the custodial worker just wants to be sure of "i before e except after c" a used dictionary would do the trick. If her children in grade school need to sort out the spellings of "to, two and too" a used dictionary works.

With United Way, it's the same dynamic. That \$1 a week or \$10 a week, which many people can spare, can make a crucial difference to someone who doesn't have a hot meal or access to medical care.

Facing hunger at home

By Sheila Nero on September 28. 2012 3:31 PM

Note to readers: *The United Way campaign at our company will continue until Oct. 31. During the campaign, regular posts will be made to this blog. Comments are welcome. Join the United Way campaign -- please give generously when your solicitor contacts you.*

A Michigan family's story shows how unexpectedly our lives can change:

<http://liveunitedsem.org/blog/entry/food-for-thought-i-overcame-hunger>

UNITED WAY

Pedaling 208 miles in two days in western Michigan

By Sheila Nero on September 21, 2012 5:00 PM

Note to readers: *The United Way campaign at our company will continue until Oct. 31. During the campaign, regular posts will be made to this blog. Comments are welcome. Join the United Way campaign -- please give generously when your solicitor contacts you.*



In the photo above by Mark Houston, a friendly police escort is provided to the Sept. 6 Ride United bike ride to benefit United Way as the group neared the DTE facility in Muskegon, Mich.

The group included Mike Demos, supervisor, Gas Operations, Mount Pleasant, who led DTE's involvement in the rides.

Of the 31 riders in the Sept. 6 ride from Hart, Mich. to Muskegon, Mich., 18 rode 100 miles and 13 rode 50 miles. Demos said his wife, Tracy Demos, New Service Representative, Gas Operations, Kentwood, was the first woman to cross the finish line for the 50-mile ride. Demos noted 14 DTE employees in Muskegon were involved in various ways in the Ride United effort.

UNITED WAY

"United Way of the Lakeshore did a phenomenal job organizing the ride. It was like a Swiss clock; it's the best that I've seen," Demos commented.

Demos said he put 208 miles on his bike in two days, which was his plan as he rode 100 miles each in the Sept. 6 100-mile "century ride" and the Sept. 7 century ride from Comstock Park, Mich. to Mount Pleasant, Mich.

Of the eight riders in the Sept. 7 ride, only one rider didn't finish the planned route, but still completed 65 of the 100 miles. At the DTE location in Mount Pleasant, nine employees total were involved in some capacity, whether biking or behind the scenes. The proceeds from pledges are still being tallied.

To see a slideshow of photos by Mark Houston, please click <http://quest.dteco.com/news/uwBikeSlideshowSept2012.htm>

DTE partners with United Way to re-ignite a torch of tradition

By Sheila Nero on September 14, 2012 12:42 PM

This morning, a landmark torch in Detroit was re-ignited after sleeping unlit for several years. The lighting of the United Way torch in Hart Plaza, fueled by DTE Energy and the expertise of its employees, signaled the start of the 2012 United Way Campaign.

However, the torch's symbolism goes deeper than that. As the 4 million BTUs blazing back to life sent out flames that reached across the sky, for many viewers, the torch also became a symbol of Detroit emerging from the "dark ages" of the recent recession.

United Way's torch lighting announcement said: "A special thanks to our partners at DTE Energy who have worked to restore the torch, which had been inoperable for some years."

Brothers Chris Dube and Paul Dube, both General Service Technicians in the Appliance Repair Group at MichCon's Allen Road facility, have maintained the torch since the 1990s. Their father, Melvin Dube, was among the few people that handled the maintenance in the 1950s and 1960s, when it was a wooden structure erected especially for the annual campaign.

In October 1969, the steel and aluminum sculpture created by Dario Bonucchi was placed and dedicated. The 75-foot torch is three feet wide.

In the photo below by Mark Houston: Members of the United Way Core Committee at the Torchlighting Ceremony include: Cindy Kehrer, (left) office administrator, Advanced Metering Infrastructure; Alicia Dennis, specialist, Revenue Management and Protection-Advocacy; Bryce Smith, maintenance craftsman, Belle River Power Plant; Joe Dams,

UNITED WAY

sheet metal worker, St. Clair Power Plant; and Bert Wilson, maintenance journeyman electrician, Monroe Power Plant.

