

- Special to the Daily Leader

The 2010 Seward County United Way Campaign is currently \$9,000 over its \$310,000 goal, but that is not the final total for the campaign, according to Kay Burtzloff, executive director. The local United Way currently has donations and pledges totaling \$319,905.

“We still don’t have final results on some of our campaigns, but I am hoping to have everything in by our Campaign Celebration on Wednesday, Jan. 27, so I can announce it then,” she said.



“We have had a very successful campaign this year thanks to some hardworking volunteers. Jack Cooley my 2010 chair, was great at helping at all the special events and presentations,” Burtzloff said. “However, the bulk of the work is really done by our campaign coordinators at the individual businesses and organizations. They are the unsung heroes that truly make a campaign successful.”

Burtzloff said, however, that this year’s campaign really benefited from some significant increases in key payroll deduction campaigns. The campaigns that showed the biggest increases this year were National Beef, Southwest Medical Center and USD No. 480. From the previous year, National Beef increased \$8,537, Southwest Medical Center \$8,933 and USD 480 \$4,216.

"It's amazing how much National Beef has increased its giving in the last three campaigns. In the 2007 Campaign, they pledged \$139,434. That means they have increased their giving by more than \$37,000 in just three years," she said. "The staff at National Beef Human Resources just does an outstanding job of promoting United Way to the National Beef employees. National Beef's contribution represents 57 percent of our total campaign. I would hate to imagine what we would do without the National Beef employees."

"We won't announce our final total until our campaign celebration on Wednesday because we have not received final figures on several of our payroll campaigns," Burtzloff said. "We want people to know that it's not too late to still give and have it count on this year's campaign."

The Seward County United Way will host its annual meeting and celebration on Wednesday in the First National Bank Community Room at 1700 N. Lincoln. The Community Room is located in the bank's basement and the elevator is located at the bank's east entrance. The buffet will open at 11:30 a.m., the annual meeting will be at 12:10 p.m., and the recognition of donors and volunteers will start at 12:20 p.m.

"The event is open to all Seward County United Way donors and volunteers," Burtzloff said.

The Stepping Stone Shelter staff is serving as the caterer for the event and Burtzloff said she's calling it a "Souper Bowl."

"We'll be serving three different kinds of soup, hot rolls, brownies and cake. We can promise everyone a great lunch and a short event. We do plan to have everything done before 1 p.m."

Burtzloff also credits the special events that the United Way has had this year with getting people involved with United Way as well as raising significant funds for the campaign.

"We really have to thank McDonald's, Vargas Restaurant, Ruffino's Italian Restaurant and Pizza Hut for kicking things off with the Eat Out for United Way special event. It gave people a fun way

to help out the United Way,” she said.

Other special events have included the ExxonMobil Golf Tournament for United Way, Goofy Golf Tournament at Kids Inc.'s Grif Golf course, and Trick or Treat for United Way at the Southgate Mall.

“All of these special events not only raised money, but I think it helped to remind people what a vital role United Way and its agencies plays in our community,” Burtzloff said.

“Every year, the Seward County United Way Board has raised my goal, and I’ve always had to have faith that our community will come through for me,” Burtzloff said. “So far, they have never let me down.”

The Seward County United Way is currently reviewing 28 applications for funding in 2010.

“We switched our funding cycle to a post-campaign allocation process,” she said. “We used to allocate funds and then go raise the money. Now we’re taking the more business-like approach of raising the funds and then allocating them.”

In 2009, the Seward County United Way funded 26 agencies, including American Red Cross, Arthritis Foundation, Big Brother / Big Sister, Boy Scouts, Crossroads, Girl Scouts, Homecare, Inc. (Liberal Food Cupboard), Kansas Children’s Service League, KIDS Inc., Liberal Area Rape Crisis and Domestic Violence Services, LINK, Liberal Care Center, Liberal Latchkey, Liberal Weissel Boxing Club, Parents and Children Together (PACT), Salvation Army, Senior Citizen Friendship Meals, Seward County Safety Council, Seward County Senior Care, Seward County Veterans Services, SKADAF (Drug and Alcohol Treatment), Smart Start Grant, Stepping Stone Shelter, Southwest Guidance Center, United Cerebral Palsy and the Whirlwind Career Counseling and Guidance Center for Veteran’s and First Responders.

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