

Day of Caring: award-winning local volunteer activity

Throughout the years, hundreds of volunteer projects in Broome County have been completed by people of all ages. Coworkers from large and small companies alike, as well as students, teachers, and retirees have joined together to assist local nonprofit organizations with jobs that they could not accomplish alone. From painting to planting flowers and cleaning to cooking, these volunteers have rolled



up their sleeves and shown through their work just how much they cared about their community.

But it may have taken the remembrance of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, to coalesce these volunteer efforts into something larger, a day that our community came together to remember the people who lost their lives and to show how much they cared—a **Day of Caring**.

On the first anniversary of those attacks on our nation, more than 1,000 people gathered at NYSEG Stadium in Binghamton to remember and honor. And then they spread out into the community delivering results by completing volunteer projects that, without their efforts, would have been left undone.

1,000 people participate each year as Day of Caring volunteers

That first Day of Caring has been followed by two others, each on or near the anniversary of the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Each one has been organized by volunteers working with United Way of Broome County. More than 1,000 volunteers have participated each year.



The fourth Day of Caring will be held on Friday, September 9, this year.



About 1,200 volunteers from about 50 businesses and other organizations will work on 112 Day of Caring projects at 50 different not-profit agencies and charitable organizations, including both members and nonmembers of United Way.

While the time has passed for an organization to sign up to have its employees partici-

pate in one of these hands-on projects this year, it is not too late to organize an internal drive for Day of Caring.

Several organizations that are unable to release their employees to be volunteers on the Day of Caring do a drive instead, collecting items such as food, baby items, materials for nursing homes, or school supplies for donation to the appropriate organizations as part of Day of Caring.

An added feature of Day of Caring this year is a penny drive, **People Helping People Makes "Cents"**. It provides an opportunity for people to donate their pennies so that flower bulbs and gardening supplies can be given to eldercare facilities, schools, and nursing homes, to allow them to plant Remembrance Gardens as their participation in the Day of Caring. The penny drive is being held at the **Oakdale Mall** until September 9. **Lowe's of Binghamton** is donating 10,000 flower bulbs for this project.

Day of Caring: now an annual tradition in Broome County

The Day of Caring held in 2002 was honored by the Communications Association of the Southern Tier as being the best community relations activity in our area. In addition, the two Day of Caring programs held since have been similar recognized.

Columbian Financial Group, Giant Markets, and HealthNow New York are the primary sponsors for this year's Day of Caring. Other sponsors include **BAE Systems, EIT/Huron Group, IBM, and Universal Instruments**. Many other organizations are donating materials or professional services. These include **Citadel Broadcasting, Clear Channel Radio, Press & Sun-Bulletin, Time Warner Cable, VanZandbergen Photography, Nirchi's, Precision Design, WBNG-TV, News Channel 34, WBGH-TV, Fox 40, Cool 100, Magic 101.7, Frito Lay, and Home Town Coffee House**.

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