

November 2022 -- Foto News Article
Merrill Area United Way
Dee Olsen, Executive Director

Every day at United Way has something interesting in it. This past week we were challenged with loss of power, followed by the loss of internet service for a full week, and then a water pipe burst at the office building, shutting down the water (plus restrooms). Yet, our optimism prevails, and we reflect on all the positives. United Way has just wrapped up our fall campaign which supports the agencies in 2023. With 2021 being our best campaign year ever, we cannot be disappointed with an eleven percent decline in our campaign total for 2022-23. Our Board Allocation Teams meet this month to determine what the funding level recommendations will be.

During this special time of Thanksgiving, the Merrill Area United Way is so very grateful and blessed to have such caring people in our community. MAUW is also thankful for the wonderful companies that engage in an employee giving campaign, and of course, the many individuals, retirees and small businesses that have donated to United Way. We also have churches and organizations that support our ongoing efforts. Not just at Thanksgiving time, but all year long, one of the very important things we are thankful for are the wonderful agencies who carry out the many tasks that make a real difference in the lives of many people through these great works.

Thanksgiving is a unique time to reflect and truly focus our attention on the most meaningful things in our lives. Of course, a loving and caring family; close friends; good health; having a job; having a place to call home; and having enough money to cover the things that make life comfortable are some of the many things we are grateful for. Not everyone is privileged to have these valuable things in their lives. But by "LIVING UNITED" we can take steps to elevate people's lifestyles, little by little.

Every time someone is helped with the very basic of needs such as food, shelter, having a safe and secure place to stay, we are thankful. Our agencies help direct people to the resources to make certain no one goes hungry; they stay warm and have a roof over their head. They guide them into areas of financial management to help sustain self-sufficiency. Developing leadership, good values, responsibility, skills, and character in our children and teens through the educational programs we assist with funding is beneficial.

The staff at our funded agencies and the hundreds of volunteers that participate in the work of these agencies are giving all the time. They work with a passion for others. For these wonderful people we are most grateful. Merrill is a "Giving Community." Those that "pay it forward" are sure to find their rewards along the way too. Yes, Thanksgiving is a time to acknowledge what is important in life and how grateful we are for our blessings. Of course, there is always more to be done. Make HOLIDAY GIVING a family event. People can find ways to help others by volunteering, i.e., ringing bells with the Salvation Army, giving to Food For Kids, donating food to the Merrill Food Pantry or your church food pantry, providing children Christmas gifts through the Christmas Spirit Appeal program, or area Churches to ensure a Christmas gift for all children that would not otherwise have a Christmas.

MAUW wishes all donors and partners a Happy Thanksgiving and a very Merry Christmas!

Remember United Way accepts donations year-round and is determined to make a positive difference in the Merrill area. To support our cause, send checks to Merrill Area United Way, at P. O. Box 813, Merrill 54452. Our website is www.merrillareaunderway.org where Pay Pal donations can now be made. For further information email us at delores.olsen@merrillareaunderway.org; or call our part-time office at 715-536-2016.