

Day of Caring reaches Fluvanna

Written by Wendy Edwards, Correspondent
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About 15 volunteers converged on Carysbrook Elementary School and Fluvanna Middle School on Wednesday (Sept. 21) to help bring the United Way Day of Caring to Fluvanna.

Volunteers painted interior walls, weeded around the schools, and painted games on Carysbrook's blacktop. "Grateful students are enjoying playing Twister," said Susan Brown, a teacher at Carysbrook.

"It's really inspirational that people give when they don't have to," said Roxanne Carter-Johnston, Fluvanna County's volunteer coordinator who oversaw the event.

Once a longtime band member in the Charlottesville city schools, Carter-Johnston credited the experience of being a recipient of volunteerism as one reason she chose to reciprocate.

"Our trips were funded by volunteerism. We had parents who helped before they went to work and there they were there in the evenings when we had football games – everybody was there to help," she said. "The reason schools are able to be successful in their delivery is because they have people outside of the school to volunteer, from the parent-teacher organization to people who donate snacks."

Individual volunteers such as Charlottesville business owner Tiffany Rosales of Commonwealth Cake Company showed up to help beautify the schools. Rosales learned about the Day of Caring through a Facebook post in an online group called Fluvanna Volunteers.

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“I’ve always felt it’s important to volunteer,” Rosales said. “That’s just how I was raised and how I raise my kids. The best way to do that is to be an example and get out and do it.” Middle school principal Brad Stang appreciated the painting done at his school. “Today we’re having some painting done where we hang the kids’ art so people can see it when they come in,” he said. “It shows us how great Fluvanna is that they would be here.”

Employees of Lowe’s at Zion Crossroads and Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women were on site to help weed and beautify Alyssa’s garden – the space in front of the middle school’s entrance which honors Alyssa Divers, a local child who succumbed to osteosarcoma in 2012.

Marie Jones, chief of security at Fluvanna Correctional Center, shared pride in her team of coworkers that answered the needs of the middle school. “It’s all about doing what we can. It shows the Department of Corrections is about more than dealing with offenders. We do get out into the community, we have other jobs, we volunteer,” she said.

Carter-Johnston said there are still several ways for businesses, families or individuals to get involved with volunteering. “I will find a project for you!” she said. For more information email volunteer@fluvannacounty.com or call Carter-Johnston at 434-589-3959.