



Love Out Loud Executive Producer Chuck Spang.

MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR

Program aims to recruit droves of holiday volunteers

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

Area non-profits may receive unprecedented levels of volunteer assistance this holiday season, thanks to the inception of an ambitious new project.

"Love Out Loud: 30 Days, 30 Initiatives, 1 Choice" is a month-long initiative that aims to deploy hundreds of volunteers into the community to aid non-profits with a wide variety of missions, according to Chuck Spang, executive producer of the program and the arts pastor at Winston-Salem First, a mega church near Wake Forest University.

"Our goal isn't to build a ministry, our goal is simply to partner with people who are already doing that work and fuse them with people who are willing to serve," he explained. "We feel strongly that we were literally supposed to be as comprehensive as we can be."

Love Out Loud is the result of the collaboration of more than 30 local churches. They came together two years ago to host Christmas for the City, an ongoing free three-day event that offers services, activities and entertainment.

Spong said Love Out Loud was inspired by a Thanksgiving event Winston-Salem First hosted last year. The church had planned to assemble and distribute 100 baskets of Thanksgiving goodies to needy families. Four hundred members of the church's congregation showed up to volunteer for the effort. Spong said the turnout proved that people have a desire to help their fellow man.

"We feel like a lot of the church culture and the culture at large is embracing their responsibility to give back to the community," he said.

Six volunteer leaders will serve during the 30-day period. Each will be given a theme based on the scripture Matt 25: 34 (I was hungry and you gave me something to eat ...) and a block of days on which to organize their teams of volunteers to serve identified needs.

"You can't be everything to everybody, and there's so many nonprofits out there that are already doing the work," said Winston-Salem First's Outreach Pastor Stephen Powell. "(This effort) is just a way of coming alongside someone and then helping them with the customers that they serve and their staff, to help accomplish their goal."

The objective is for the volunteers to find a cause they can be passionate about, explained Powell.

"Hopefully, it opens up other opportunities for people to build relationships, to understand what nonprofits really do and to become a part of that," said Powell, who also heads the church's transitional housing facility for ex-offenders. "By learning about a nonprofit and the work that they do, and then going to help out, (volunteers) may find a place that they will continue to volun-



Outreach Pastor Stephen Powell is taking part.

ter." The effort will require substantial planning and considerable community support in order to be successful, but Spong said he is confident that city residents are up for the task.

"We're clearly not proceeding with caution; we're actually kind of proceeding with abandon," he declared. "We feel like it's what God

has called us to do. It's a walk of faith and we're swinging for the fences."

Love Out Loud: 30 Days, 30 Initiatives, 1 Choice will take place Nov. 23-Dec. 22, 2010. For more information or to register your nonprofit to receive volunteers, visit www.christmasforthe-city.com. Christmas for the City will be held Dec. 21-23.

The Chronicle (USPS 067-910) was established by Ernest H. Pitt and Ndubisi Egemonye in 1974 and is published every Thursday by Winston-Salem Chronicle Publishing Co., Inc., 617 N. Liberty Street, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27101. Periodicals postage paid at Winston-Salem, N.C. Annual subscription price is \$30.72.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
The Chronicle, P.O. Box 1636
Winston-Salem, NC 27102-1636



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Sponsored by the Comprehensive Cancer Center of Wake Forest University, the Department of Urology and Downtown Health Plaza



News Clips

Air show starts Saturday

The Winston-Salem Air Show will be on Sept. 11 and 12. Among the attractions will be the Geico Skytypers, who use six of the remaining 11 WWII North American SNJ-2 planes left in the world to create messages at an altitude of 10,000 forming letters in a dot-matrix-like pattern.

Admission is \$11 if tickets are purchased in advance, or \$15 at the gate; elementary-aged children are free when accompanied by a paying adult and military and senior discounts are available. For more information, go to wsairshow.com.

Beamon improves her community

Ann Beamon, director of development for the College of Arts and Sciences at North Carolina A&T State University, has continued to contribute to the local community through her involvement in the Communities in School (CIS) and Leadership North Carolina programs.

Beamon recently began a "Feed-a-Family Monthly" initiative with CIS of Greater Greensboro and received the Champion's Cup, the highest honor that is bestowed upon an individual or organization by the CIS. Only those who have made a considerable difference to the agency and/or to its students are considered for the award. She is also a graduate of the 2009-2010 class of the Leadership North Carolina program.



Beamon

The Leadership North Carolina program is designed to inform, develop and engage committed leaders by broadcasting their understanding and involvement in issues and opportunities facing the state. Beamon was one of 45 citizens selected from 18 counties across the state.

Family Promise needs votes to win funds

Family Promise of Forsyth County, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping homeless families with children, is a finalist to receive \$50,000 in the Pepsi Refresh Project. The agency is asking the public to help it secure the funds.

The public can vote for finalist agencies at www.refresheverything.com/familypromiseforsyth or sign up or vote from a mobile phone by texting 102312 to Pepsi (73774). Standard text messaging rates apply. The top 10 vote-getters in each category win.

Pepsi is giving away millions each month to support good ideas that make a positive impact in the community. Family Promise needs the funds to operate its Interfaith Hospitality Network and Day Center, which helps parents get back on their feet and children to stay in school.

"You may vote once a day until September 30," says Debbi Butner, executive director of Family Promise. "We encourage supporters to add it to their daily 'to do' list and to ask friends and family to vote, too. The number of homeless families is increasing at an alarming rate—they need our help."

Food for the hungry raised during football game

The 14th Annual Soup Bowl football game and food drive between Greensboro College and crosstown rival Guilford College Saturday night collected 7,119 cans of food for the Greensboro Urban Ministry homeless ministry and Second Harvest Food Bank. The Pride won the football game 17-15 in a game that wasn't decided until the

final minute.

Fans coming to the game, held this year at Guilford's Armfield Athletic Center, received free admission in exchange for two cans of food. Guilford supporters contributed 4,519 cans, while Greensboro fans contributed 2,600. Both colleges also held food drives on campus during the days leading up to the game. Greensboro College's collection was anchored by the softball team, whose 20 members gathered 296 cans.

The event was organized on the Greensboro College campus by Anna Davis, coordinator of the Village 401 program and a volunteer with the government anti-poverty program AmeriCorps Vista. Village 401 is a community-outreach effort to benefit the people and institutions that share the college's 27401 zip code. It is part of the N.C. Campus Compact, an umbrella organization for community service programs on more than two dozen N.C. college campuses.

Author at WSSU

Zee Edgell, retired Kent State University English professor and the first Belizean author whose work reached an international audience, will speak at Winston-Salem State University (WSSU) at 3 p.m. on Sept. 10, in 228 Hall-Patterson Building.

In addition to Edgell's visit to WSSU, she will also participate in Bookmarks Festival of Books on Saturday, Sept. 11 from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Edgell's program will be held from 2:30 - 3:15 p.m. in Artworks Gallery on Sixth and Trade Streets in the downtown Arts District.

Considered Belize's principal contemporary writer, she is the author of four novels. Her first novel, "Beka Lamb" has become a modern classic of Caribbean Literature. An entire generation of people in the Caribbean read "Beka Lamb" as part of their high school literature curricula.

Edgell was born in Belize City, then the capital of a country known as British Honduras.



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