



# HIGHLIGHTS & HAPPENINGS

## Campaign 2013—Every One Counts

Our annual campaign is underway, with over 100 dedicated volunteers in the community advocating for United Way and our partner agencies.

United Way works to advance the common good by focusing on education, income and health. These are the building blocks for a good life – a quality education that leads to a stable job, enough income to support a family through retirement, and good health.

Our goal is to create long-lasting changes that prevent problems from happening in the first place. We recruit people and organizations from our communities who bring the passion, expertise and resources needed to get things done.

We invite you to be part of the change. EVERY ONE COUNTS – Every need, every gift, every volunteer. Together we can inspire hope and create opportunities for a better tomorrow.

### Did You Know?

- 1 in 4 children in Ohio lives with food insecurity.
- In Wayne County, 21% of people live below 150% of poverty level.
- Since 2007, the cost of basic needs (food, housing, transportation, child care, and health care) has soared by 23%.
- Median income in Ohio has only increased by 2% in the same time frame.
- According to a study, the Self-Sufficiency Standard for Ohio 2013, a family of four needs two adults working full-time, each earning \$15 per hour, to cover necessities without using any government or private assistance.
- According to the same study, there is no place in Ohio where a single person earning the state's \$7.85 per hour minimum wage can meet his or her own basic needs.



### Percy's Programs

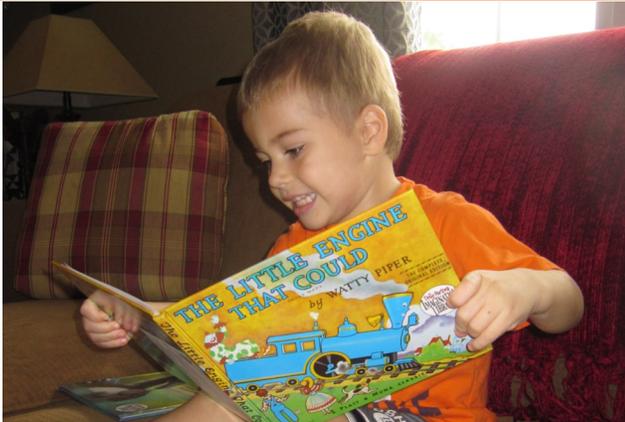
You may have heard our spokespenguin Percy talk about his cool programs that help kids and families in our local area. But if you haven't, here's the scoop:

Happy Feet For Kids provides new shoes, socks and boots to income-eligible students. Payless Shoes is our partner in this project and gives us a discount on shoe vouchers, and our generous community members donate new socks.

Sweet Dreams For Kids provides new sheets and blankets to income-eligible families with children. Again, our generous local community donates the new bedding for this project.

Percy's Backpack Program provides food items for the weekend in backpacks for selected students who are experiencing food insecurity to take home to their families.

These programs are administered by Salvation Army's Maiwurm Service Center in Orrville. We are proud to partner with them!



Jaden Haislip reading Dolly Parton's favorite book.



Jaden with little brother Jordan.

### Dolly Parton Imagination Library

Dolly Parton grew up with very few books. She loved reading and she dreamed that when she was grown she could have as many books as she wanted.

That dream came true, and when it did Dolly wanted to share it with as many children as possible. The Dollywood Foundation created the Imagination Library to provide new books to all children from birth to age 5.

When we at Orrville Area United Way heard about the program, we wanted to become a partner in this dream, and in 2009 we began sponsoring the program in our service area.

Every child from birth to age 5 in our service area can be enrolled and receive a new book in the mail each month—regardless of family income.

Early literacy is crucial to later school success. Enroll your children and grandchildren and read to them and with them every day.

[www.imaginationlibrary.com](http://www.imaginationlibrary.com)

### Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

Each year in February, our United Way sponsors a VITA site for individuals and families who qualify for **free** tax assistance. Pickett & Pickett Tax & Investments coordinates and supervises the Site, and the Orrville Public Library provides the

space for the service. We also utilize many dedicated volunteers who make the whole thing work. Our VITA site prepared 144 tax returns in 2013, for a total of \$298,293 in refunds and tax credits claimed! Our goal is to serve even more families in 2014.

This is an excellent benefit to our community, and you can be a part of it. If you decide to volunteer as a tax preparer, you will receive training materials in December and will need to take a test online at the IRS to be certified. You can also volunteer as a greeter/intake person which doesn't require any training. The Picketts provide lots of support and assistance, and our volunteers have fun!

*If you are willing to volunteer as a tax preparer or greeter for VITA, contact our United Way at 330-683-8181.*