

Showing they care



TAMMI NAUDUS

Michael Uhlan, left, and Alan Cyr from Bauer Inc. do some spring clean up at BARC on Jerome Avenue for last Friday's United Way of West Central Connecticut's Day of Caring.

Rain fails to halt acts of caring

By KAITLYN NAPLES
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Despite the intermittent rainfall last Friday, volunteers from all over the area worked hard at giving back to their local community for the 23rd annual Day of Caring.

The annual event, organized by the United Way of West Central Connecticut, is where volunteers donate their day to do various tasks at local non-profit organizations.

At the Bristol Adult Resource Center (BARC), volunteers were busy painting walls, and Paul Arruda, who does the marketing for BARC and is a volunteer coordinator, said in preparation for the event he sent a list of tasks needing to be done.

There were about 30 volunteers at the Jerome Avenue location last Friday; 22 of them were from Bristol-based Bauer. Bauer's president Lou Auletta said it

was the first year the company was participating.

"As a company, we decided we wanted to be more involved in the United Way, and the Day of Caring was the perfect event to be a part of," Auletta said as he painted a wall in the dining room at BARC.

Non-profits like BARC benefit from and appreciate the work that is done during the Day of Caring, and Arruda said the painting being performed last Friday

will give the facility "a fresh look."

Also at BARC, members of the United Way's Youth Board were volunteering their time helping to paint inside of the greenhouse.

Youth Board members Zach Aldieri and Brian Rackliffe said they were enjoying being able to give back to the community.

"It's great to be on the

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Youth Board and be able to take part in helping a local charity and making a difference," said Rackliffe, 16, who is a student at St. Paul Catholic High School.

Aldieri, 15, is a student at Bristol Central High School agreed and added that while volunteering "you see how it makes a difference for the charities, and the people are so grateful."

General Electric employees from Plainville were volunteering their time at the Bristol Adult Resource Center facility on Lake Avenue. Those volunteers were extending flower beds, planting, cleaning windows, edging, mulching, and more.

Jonathan Potter, engineering manager at GE, said he has been volunteering for the Day of Caring for the last five or six years and

has visited about three different sites.

"It's a very rewarding experience to be able to give back to the local community," Potter said, adding GE is a company that encourages its employees to get involved and give back to their communities.

Edli Papadhima, a design engineer at GE, said he has been volunteering during the annual event for about seven years and said it is one of his favorite events to participate in.

"GE encourages us to do this and it's nice to get out of the office for the day and give back," he added.

Every year, the United Way gathers up a group of volunteers for one day, who are dispersed to various organizations in the towns it covers, including Bristol, Plainville, Burlington and Plymouth, for a variety of

community service projects. Projects in the past have included painting, cleaning, gardening, and other maintenance, or projects like working with the homeless, elderly, or children.

In the past, about 700 volunteers have participated in the annual Day of Caring, which all started in September of 1992, where 100 volunteers participated in completing 45 projects. On Sept. 11, 2001, after hearing of the attacks on the World Trade Centers in New York City, about 300 volunteers still devoted their day to helping the communities, and in 2006 the Day of Caring was moved to the spring, instead of the fall, to accommodate youth volunteers.