

15 MINUTES

WITH DOUG ZIEGLER AND TED NEITZKE

"We will ask everyone to get involved, whether it's a small donation or a large one."

Teaming up to keep United Way strong

Doug Ziegler might not beat California Chrome in a foot race, but the 87-year-old is completing a Triple Crown of his own. Ziegler has been named honorary co-chairman of the 2014 United Way of Washington County's fundraising campaign for the third time. Ziegler will assist Ted Neitzke, the 43-year-old West Bend School District superintendent and a first-time campaign leader.

Last year, United Way of Washington County raised a record-breaking \$1.23 million — and the co-chairmen hope to top it this year. They have no choice if they want to meet the growing community need, both said. According to last year's audit, 82.2 percent of funds raised in the campaign were spent on community projects, with 17.8 percent covering overhead expenses, said Kristin Brandner, executive director.

Ziegler and Neitzke talked to Daily News correspondent Jill Badzinski about the campaign and why they got involved.

Daily News: You are both very busy people. Why did you decide to step up on this campaign?

Ted Neitzke: I actually tried to come up with every reason I could to not do it because I am busy. Then Doug told me that they had chairmen lined up for coming years, but needed someone for this year. When he said he would co-chair with me, I signed right on for the chance to work with him. Plus, as a dad, I try to teach my kids to help others instead of focus on themselves so I figured I should do that, too. It wouldn't set a good example if I focused on myself and said I'm too busy.

Doug Ziegler: I was glad to accept the responsibility. The first time I chaired the United Way campaign was in 1965, when I was the sole chairman. In 1997, I co-chaired with my wife (Sharon). Now I'm working with Ted. In 1997, my wife and I were the first co-chairs to raise more than a million bucks. This year we are aiming for 1.3 (million dollars). That really hasn't gone up too much in all those years so I'm confident we can do it.

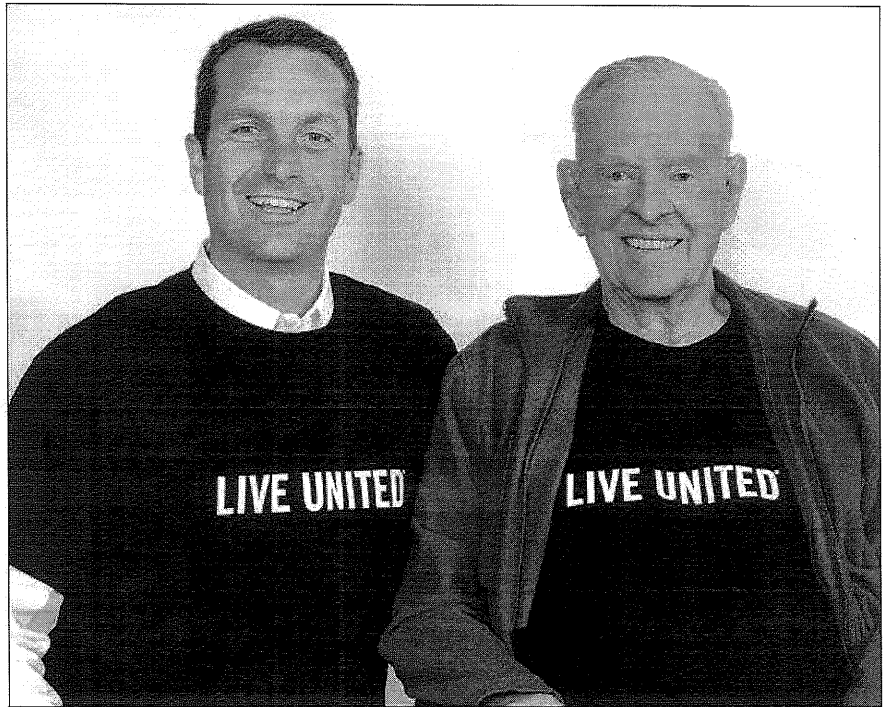
DN: Did the two of you have a good relationship prior to this?

TN: I had gotten to know Doug when he was on the School Board. Sometimes he supported me; other times he challenged me. He has been quietly mentoring me for many years and I have learned so much from him. Doug is a local legend. There was no way I would pass on a chance to work side by side with him.

DZ: We have gotten to know one another and I see him regularly, but this is our first real joint effort. Ted is a very, very valuable asset to our community. He has incredible energy and a willingness to take on assignments like this, even though he is already very busy.

DN: Are you excited about the multi-generational nature of this leadership team?

TN: Absolutely. Someone looked at the photo and said Doug looked a lot older than I am — which he is! Doug is more than 20 years older than my dad. But he is so smart and so sharp and so committed and enthusiastic. He has already lead two



Submitted photo
Ted Neitzke, left, and Doug Ziegler are honorary co-chairmen of the 2014 United Way of Washington County's fundraising campaign.

United Way campaigns as well as many others. He knows how to do this. I bring what I have learned and a lot of enthusiasm, plus I bring my phone — which I will use to shoot videos and really bring social media to this campaign. We will work well together.

DZ: It is important to always continue to develop new community leaders, but our primary job on this campaign is to focus on United Way and help it meet its goal. I have always been very supportive of United Way because it provides funds for many of the nonprofits in our county. I think it is very important to keep it strong

and allow it to keep on serving those organizations that rely on the funding.

DN: What about United Way appeals to you?

TN: My eyes were opened during the West Bend Chamber leadership program's human service day to how many organizations receive funding from United Way. Almost every nonprofit agency we visited that day highlighted that they receive funds from United Way. I realized the broad scope and impact that United Way has on our community.

DZ: United Way programs have such a wide reach. Almost everyone in the coun-

ty either uses a program that is supported by United Way or knows someone who does. You don't find that kind of reach often.

DN: What is your strategy for reaching the goal?

TN: We will ask everyone to get involved, whether it's a small donation or a large one. Everyone can make a contribution to help keep our community strong. I think that is something that people will want to do, particularly if we can engage them and let them know that they have an ability to make a difference.

DZ: Our strategy is to target the organizations that have not supported United

Way in the past — to go for employee contributions and corporate gifts. I think there is more capacity to support this.

Beyond that, we need to remind people that we all have an obligation to give back to the community. Whether it is five dollars or five hundred dollars, we all have the ability to help in some way. People want to know that they have done something to help, and a small donation to the United Way can do that.

Plus we are starting our campaign early this year. We decided not to wait until September but to get started right now.

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YOURVIEWS

Mobilizing Communities ready to bear fruit

In June 2012, United Way of Washington County made a bold decision — to adopt a new business model called Mobilizing Communities. Mobilizing Communities “is a community investment strategy that improves local conditions by addressing the underlying root causes of the critical needs within a county.”

As a United Way Board member and former director of a funded United Way agency, Casa Guadalupe Education Center, I had more questions than answers. What does Mobilizing Communities mean to the clients of

currently funded nonprofit funded non-profit partner agency programs? How will Washington County’s “critical needs and roots causes” be identified? What is a “Mobilizing Communities Impact Pillar Investment Model” and how does a “Pillar” help United Way identify and fund agencies whose programs address Washington County’s critical needs? The answers lie within the Mobilizing Communities Process.

First, in 2013, Washington County residents were invited to complete a survey, asking them to prioritize six identified community needs. Health, education and income emerged, as the most critical community needs. Secondly, the 19 partner agencies were

asked to submit a funding application that addresses these specific community needs.

Finally, in May, United Way Board members volunteers, like myself, reviewed the 22 program proposals, which had been submitted as addressing a health, income or education pillar need. We discussed program outcomes and measurements, examined proposal accountability. We listened to agency representatives explain their proposal’s alignment to identified health, income or education pillar need.

Mary Lynn Bennett
United Way of Washington County —
Mobilizing Communities Health Panel
Chairwoman