

Press Release

HARFORD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Department of Community Services



PUBLIC SAFETY

“Ensuring a Safe Harford”

EDUCATION

“Preparing Now, Building for the Future”

EFFICIENCY IN GOVERNMENT

“Governing Smarter”

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

“Growing and Sustaining Harford’s Prosperity”

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

“Protecting Our Environment”

QUALITY LIVING

“Safeguarding What is Important to Harford County Citizens”

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Volunteer Expo a Success

(Bel Air, MD) - - The first ever Harford County Volunteer Expo, presented by the Department of Community Services and held at Patterson Mill Middle-High School in Bel Air on Saturday, April 25, was a remarkable success. Nearly 450 people from in and around Harford County came out to enjoy not only the beautiful warm day, but to stop by the Expo to see what volunteer opportunities were available to them.

With participating organizations such as Luna’s House, Inc. and the Center for the Arts, to Steppingstone Farm Museum and local volunteer fire departments, the Expo had something for everyone.

“The opportunity to talk face-to-face with the public was very beneficial,” stated one vendor. “The event was very organized and had a lot of attendance,” said Todd McKinney, Recruitment and Retention Chair, Bel Air Volunteer Fire Company and participating vendor.

“The event was great,” exclaimed one community member. “The vendors represented a mix of opportunities for a wide range of ages.”

Vendors also represented from Ladew Topiary Gardens and The Sharing Table to Extreme Family Outreach and the American Cancer Society; Harford Fall Festival and Alzheimer’s Association to Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding and Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake, Inc.

“This event was incredible for us,” exclaimed Anne’ Marie Vomero-Battis, Harford Fall Festival Chairperson and participating vendor. “We were completely busy the entire time!”

Sixty-five vendors registered to participate in the first Volunteer Expo, looking for potential volunteers from the public. Hundreds of citizens came and stopped by the Expo, demonstrating a strong desire to give back to the community.

“Harford County has a strong, dedicated and community-oriented citizenship,” stated County Executive David Craig. “We want to make certain that the public can easily access volunteer prospects,” Craig remarked.

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“We were trying to fill a need – we have hundreds of organizations who need volunteers; and thousands of potential volunteers who just don’t know where to begin”, said Mary Chance, Director, of the Department of Community Services. “We wanted to help fill the gap and the Volunteer Expo allowed us the opportunity to do so.”

“Having organizations in one place was a great benefit to see what kind of volunteer opportunities are available in the county,” said one community member. One citizen simply exclaimed, “Wow!”

“At a time when so many Americans are struggling to make ends meet it was encouraging to see so many men, women, and families come out with a desire to volunteer and help those less fortunate,” said Congressman Frank Kratovil. “It was a great event that I was happy to attend, I hope that other communities follow Harford’s example.”

“We were hopeful for a good turnout, considering this was our first year and taking into account the beautiful weather, we weren’t sure what to expect,” said Jen Davis, Dept. of Community Services’ Volunteer Connection. “We were thrilled by the amount of people coming through the doors – there was a constant flow of people from beginning to end. This will definitely become an annual event,” continued Davis.

If you missed the Expo, but still want to volunteer, you haven’t missed an opportunity. The Department of Community Services’ Volunteer Connection provides personal service to potential volunteers who wish to share their time and talents. To learn more, call the Volunteer Connection at 410-638-4444 or visit www.harfordcountymd.gov/volunteer.

For a complete list of 2009 Volunteer Expo vendors, visit www.harfordcountymd.gov/services.

The Volunteer Expo was presented by the Harford County Department of Community Services and funded in part by the Corporation for National and Community Service.