

VIP: VOLUNTEERS IN POWER

Winter 2016

Fast February

February is a quick month, so it deserves an extra day every four years. Here's to Leap Year in 2016! It's also the start of a new year full of volunteer opportunities starting with the annual Bowl-A-Thon on February 27. Spring and fall are usually MLGW volunteers' busiest times.

Coming up in Fast February and later this spring will be volunteer events such as the Mid-South Home Show, Southern Women's Show, Spring Gas Day, Memphis Black Expo, Career Days, Tour de Cure and Africa in April as well as fundraising walks, bike rides and much more. So there's a lot you can participate in.

We list upcoming volunteer events in each issue's Volunteer Calendar, which is also available on our Intranet. The contact email links are active, so you can click on them, find out more and sign up. You can also contact Community Relations (commrelations@mlgw.org) or Employee Activities (mlwhite@mlgw.org). Let's make this a banner year for our volunteer and community efforts.

And spend that "Leap Day" wisely! Send your volunteer photos, selfies, event reports and calendar items to VIP editor **Dan Hope**, Communications and Public Relations, at dhope@mlgw.org or call me at 528-4557.

Correction: In the Nov./Dec. VIP, **Edwina Jones**, Gas Engnrng., was misidentified in Volunteer Views' Overton Square Book Fair piece as a "volunteer from the Book Fair organizers." She's actually an MLGW volunteer!

For Whom Doth the Bell Toll?

The smaller the bell, the larger the heart and the less ominous the headline sounds. At least that's the way it works when MLGW volunteers ring the small red bells for the Salvation Army's Kettle Campaign in front of the Walgreens on Main Street each December.



MLGW President and CEO **Jerry Collins Jr.** drops a donation into the Salvation Army Kettle as **Clifton Ford**, Elec. Meter, rings the bell.

The bell tolls for Christmas Kettle donations that will be used in the community to help those who are in need. Again this year, not only were there bells, but also angel trumpets, sax and a small concert tuba provided by MLGW volunteer musicians **Bill Bullock**, Mgr., Commerc. Indust. Cust. Care; **Daniel Hochstein**, Rates/Reg. Affairs; **Gene Rosser**, Sys. Security Cntrl., and **Jimmy McMorris**, Elec. Meter.

MLGW volunteers stood outside Walgreens almost every day in December from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. or later ringing red bells and raising funds. The kettle

became quite heavy as it was carried back to the Administration Building each day. The collected kettle contributions are donated to assist the Memphis area Salvation Army and its programs, helping prevent chronic homelessness, stabilizing children, overcoming addiction and ministering to those in crisis. Special thanks goes out to all our Kettle Campaign volunteers – too numerous to name here! (More Kettle Campaign photos can be found in *Volunteer Views* on page 8.)



Santa hats make all the difference as (l-r) **James Street**, Prop. Mgmt. Survey, **Roger McNeary**, Transf. Elec. Motor Shop, and **Thomas Maslowski**, Prop. Mgmt. Survey, clearly demonstrate.



Bill Bullock (not pictured), **Jimmy McMorris** and **Daniel Hochstein** (l-r) form the brass section as **Lynda Pruitt**, Credit Ops., **Clifton Ford** and **Susan Reynolds**, Credit Ops., take care of the brass bell section.

AHA! Nice Day for a Walk

After a few high-energy warm-up exercises in the Administration Building, MLGW employees participating in the American Heart Association's Heart Walk hoofed it over to Court Square for a few words of inspiration, some group photos and an energized 5K walk through downtown Memphis on Saturday, November 7. At the start, they headed south down Second Street, turned west on Beale, trundled down Main past MLGW – pausing for water offered by MLGW volunteers, then hiked south past the Green Beetle, turned right towards the Mississippi, headed back north along the Riverwalk and Riverside, and ascended the bluff at Court St. to the finish line.

This year, MLGW walkers participated in honor of late employee Weslynn Bates. "Weslynn was not only a heart transplant recipient," said MLGW Heart Walk Coordinator **Mary White**, Employee Activities, "She was also one of the Division's coordinators for the Mid-South Heart Walk Drive and a Top Walker for several years. We sure miss her." Being a Top Walker means that, through your efforts, \$1,000 or more is contributed to the overall annual fundraising goal. "For 2015, we honored her memory by wearing her picture on the back of our T-shirts during the walk," Mary said.

Several teams of MLGW volunteers placed orange cones along the route and handed out water to walkers. Thanks goes out to those volunteers! Participating Division employees had to find sponsors for their walk, raising funds from friends and coworkers that totaled more than \$8,981. That takes a lot of heart! Many thanks to all those who walked! (*More Heart Walk photos can be found in Volunteer Views on page 9.*)



Shelby County Mayor Jim Luttrell joined MLGW Heart Walkers in Court Square for a photo op before the American Heart Association Heart Walk commenced.

Midday United Way Music

Eine Kleine Nacht Musik? How about "a little night music" for midday? MLGW's United Way Campaign this year featured a new and fun musical fundraiser that had toes tapping and bodies swaying.

Thinking out of the box, this great new idea was the brainchild of **Judith Wrushen**, Commerc./Indust.



*Playing for United Way, Broke Clock features (l-r) **Marty Bond**, Rates/Reg. Affairs; **Steve Shepard**, Water Dist. – SSC; **Dan Buchignani**, retired, and **Dan Hope**, Comms. and PR. (More photos, page 8)*

Cust. Care Mgr's Ofc., an MLGW United Way Steering Committee member who helped coordinate the performances and rustle up a few MLGW musicians. For a couple of weeks in November, the United Way Midday Music series entertained employees in the Administration Building lobby. Then in December, a holiday music performance was held for Netters. The downtown performances featured Two Trumpets, the MLGW blues band Broke Clock and R&B band Solid Rock, as well as solo gospel and blues performer **Eddie Mosley**. The Netters performance featured the Two Trumpets and a Tuba.

The United Way Midday Music series raised funds by collecting "tips" in a bucket totaling more than \$490. Let's hope this great idea happens again in 2016. We all love a little music...



*Gospel and R&B musician **Eddie Mosley**, Cust. Svc. North, performed gospel and blues as Music Series organizer **Judith Wrushen** held the mic.*

Volunteer Spotlight

Philip Miller: Transforming Young Minds

Whether referring to the Transformer movies or to large pieces of electric equipment, to transform means to change. When it comes to young minds in search of a direction, transformation can be a very important process. **Philip Miller** knows about transformers.

Originally from Little Rock, Philip's first year at MLGW was 2000 when he started at the South Center as a utility worker in the Water department, often repairing leaks. "You get wet and muddy every day," he says. "It's been an amazing ride. I went from a utility worker to a meter reader at Hickory Hill Service Center and stayed in that position for three years before becoming a transformer repairer. I've been in this department since October 2003. I entered the apprenticeship which was three-and-one-half years, at which point I became a journeyman, then a crew leader before becoming Power Transformer foreman in August 2014."

Philip didn't know he wanted to volunteer at MLGW until seeing a Community Relations volunteer appeal for employees to talk to schoolchildren for Career Day events in 2007. "When the opportunity came to volunteer for Career Days, I jumped at the chance because I felt this was a way to give back to the community," Philip recalls.

"I thought, if more people knew about the good MLGW does, they would have a better image of us," Philip says. "Most hear something negative, and kids are raised hearing negative views about MLGW. If we give back to the community by talking to kids (and adults) at events like Career Days, those views can change." Transformation?

Philip has participated in Career Days at several schools including Oak, Crosswind, Douglass and Millington Elementary Schools and Sheffield High, among others. "I spoke to children of all ages about what we do in my department and how we maintain the overall health of our electric system, starting with the most critical component, substation transformers," Philip says. "I also had an opportunity to speak at Messick Adult Center about my job and career opportunities at MLGW."



Philip Miller

"I want to let kids know that there are important job trades to learn, and that you can earn a living and have a job that you can be proud of without a college degree," says Philip. "I take a transformer to Career Days to explain what we do, what a transformer is and then talk about safety. I tell them that those green boxes out there that they climb all over in yards or by curbs are actually high-voltage transformers and not to play on them. I also tell them about job opportunities at MLGW."

"It's always cute when talking to smaller children to make them

understand what a transformer is," Philip says. "I mention the Transformer movies. They all understand that in the movie, the cars transform into robots. I tell them that a transformer changes a really high voltage so that they can play their video games and watch TV. The highlight is getting a student volunteer to dress up in one of our switching jackets that goes all the way to the floor, a big hard hat that hides their head, huge high-voltage gloves and safety glasses. The entire class gets a laugh out of that!"

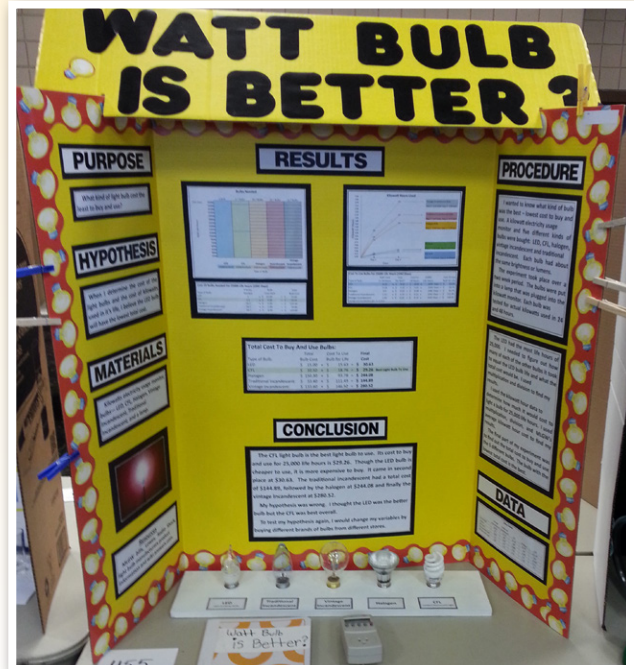
"My favorite volunteer event has been as a judge for Memphis and Shelby County School System Science Fairs for five years," says Philip. "It was interesting to see the innovative entries from lots of young creative minds. What they come up with at that age!" The daylong science fairs have been held at places like the Germantown Performing Arts Center with entries laid out in rows where judges review all the projects and tabulate results. MLGW judges pick first, second and third place and award prizes related to the Division. "I was blessed that I had bosses who supported me and allowed me to judge all day," Philip explains.

Philip has also volunteered to staff info tables at the Delta Fair and participated in early Community Conservation Days. "Now that I'm foreman, I'm on call twenty-four/seven and chained to the phone," he says. "I'm looking for someone to go to Career Days with me who can sub if the phone rings and maybe take over in the future."

Outside of MLGW, Philip, a Jehovah's Witness, volunteers for his church telling others about events that lead to better lives and teaching about the Bible. He participated in their relief effort after Hurricane Katrina, gathering and loading relief supplies that were sent to several hard-hit areas. He also helps construct places of worship in the community.

“My message to potential volunteers is, don't hold back!” Philip urges. “We need to let our community know that at MLGW, we are all about them. And we can do this by volunteering. We all have a role to play as ambassadors of this company.

“I believe that it's better to give than to receive, and with that being said, I go home after a day of Career Days, judging science fairs or taking care of our booth at the fair and although tired from answering the same questions at times, hopefully I was able to inform and inspire them.” The result can transform some young lives.



A Science Fair project Philip judged.

Volunteer Events Calendar

Join your co-workers and volunteer for these fun and rewarding MLGW volunteer events. Contact information is listed by each event. The contacts' email addresses below are active – all you have to do is click on them.

February 2016

- MLGW Community Energy Conservation Day – Date and location TBA. Contact: **Jackie Royston**, Residential Services, 528-4188 or jroyston@mlgw.org
- Home Show of the Mid-South – February 12-14. Agricenter. Contact: **Stacey Greenberg**, Community Relations, 528-4821 or commrelations@mlgw.org
- Bowling on the River Bowl-A-Thon benefiting Junior Achievement – February 27. Billy Hardwick's Lanes, Quince and White Station. Contact: **Dianna Dean**, VP's Ofc., Engineering & Operations, 528-4481 or ddean@mlgw.org or **Mary White**, Employee Activities, 528-4245 or mlwhite@mlgw.org

March 2016

- MLGW Community Energy Conservation Day – Date and location TBA. Contact: **Jackie Royston**, Residential Services, 528-4188 or jroyston@mlgw.org
- Southern Women's Show – March 11-13. Agricenter, 7777 Walnut Grove. Contact: **Stacey Greenberg**, Community Relations, 528-4821 or commrelations@mlgw.org

Volunteer your time and give back to our community.

Students Fail to Let Clouds Ruin Solar Car Race

They built car bodies from shoe boxes, 12-pack Coke containers and egg cartons. They stripped tires from toy race cars, recycled jelly jar tops and even fashioned wheels from compact discs.

Under cloudy skies, Bartlett High and White Station Middle teams dominated the third annual MLGW A-Blazing Solar Car Race. Both grabbed first place in speed and best use of materials. East High STEM Academy and Houston Middle won for best notebooks. The lack of sun prevented the cars from hitting their true top speeds.

This year MLGW partnered with U of M's Engineering Day events on October 23. The car race attracted 19 teams. In all, 22 MLGW workers volunteered for what was the biggest turnout compared to previous races. Organizer **Kerry Roy**, Enviro. Engrng., called the change of venue a success. Next year, she said, "We are talking about adding a (vehicle) battery or having artificial lights to use in inclement weather."



MLGW engineers (l-r) **Carol Whelchel**, Gas Engrng., **Lindsey Widick**, Transm. Ops. Planning, and **Jana East**, an MLGW co-op and U of M student, inspect solar cars before they race.



White Station Middle students toast their success in having the fastest solar car at the A-Blazing Race. They also won for having the best use of materials.

U of M STEM

The Tennessee Chapter of the American Association of Blacks in Energy held a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) seminar for area middle school and high school students at the University of Memphis University Center on October 23, sponsored and organized by MLGW. Students from several schools assembled to hear speakers talk about the importance of STEM courses, staying in school, preparing for college, avoiding drugs and distracted driving, and more.

Hosted by Tennessee AABE Chapter President **Cliff DeBerry Jr.**, Analysis, Strategy and Performance, and Vice President **Barbara Martin**, Credit Ops., the event was part of Black Energy Awareness Month (BEAM). Several MLGW AABE-member employees were present and volunteered to help coordinate and staff the BEAM event.



MLGW staff who are AABE members organized and presented the STEM seminar for local students at U of M.



Seminar speaker **Darrell S. Freeman Sr.** engages middle school students at AABE's seminar with the message, "the Sky is Not the Limit."

STEM

On the Wings of Angels

Those who witnessed the gleaming array of bikes and holiday gifts assembled in the Administration Building lobby around Thanksgiving had every right to exclaim “Awesome!” It was indeed an awesome display, and those gifts were destined for some special Angels chosen by MLGW employees as part of the Salvation Army Angel Tree program.

Division employees adopted Angels as individuals, as areas and departments came together to once again do an excellent job in covering the 100 Angels – 65 children and 35 seniors – adopted for Christmas. There were more than 40 bikes; and there were TVs, microwave ovens and basketball goals, just to name a few of the many items employees purchased from the adopted Angels’ wish list. Angel Tree coordinator **Mary White**, Employee Activities, just received a Thank You note from the Salvation Army for MLGW’s continued “Faithfulness” to such a worthy cause.



*Admiring the Angel Tree gifts MLGW employees donated are HR Vice President **Von Goodloe** and **Mary White** and **Edward Castro**, HR Svcs.*



Gas Attack

An army of volunteers set out near dawn to raid local Lowe’s stores in an effort to educate their customers on natural gas safety. “Got Gas?” was their rally cry. But seriously... MLGW volunteers and staff from Gas Engineering host Natural Gas Safety Days twice a year in the community, in the spring and fall. The fall Gas Safety Day was held Nov. 20 at area Lowe’s Home Improvement stores. The fall theme was gas appliance and pipeline safety and gas leak recognition and response. **Joseph Jaffe**, Gas Measurement, and **Ashley Sizemore**, Gas Engrng., worked the info table at the Cordova Lowe’s (pictured at left).

United Way Pie-an-Executive (North Center)

Many in the workforce might daydream about smashing their bosses in the face with a pie, but only MLGW makes dreams come true. For a donation to United Way, employees were given a whipped cream pie to throw at an MLGW executive. President and CEO **Jerry Collins Jr.** and **Nick Newman**, VP, Construction and Maintenance (pictured), at the North Service Center and **Chris Bieber**, VP, Customer Care, at Netters were great sports and only threatened to fire a few of the more talented pie tossers.



Holiday Boxers

The Gas Engineering department held a friendly internal competition to build camaraderie and help some families in need. Two teams designed and built boxes to hold snacks and supplies to be delivered to the Ronald McDonald House. The teams brought their completed boxes to be judged and enjoyed a celebratory fried catfish meal. The impartial judges deemed Team #2 (The Procrastinators) the winners for their rolling, to-scale model of a gas engineering truck. Gas Engineers (pictured) with their RMH boxes include (l-r) **Jana East**, **Keisha Williams**, **Carol Whelchel**, **Tavares Weddle**, **Craig Moore**, **Dee Crick**, **Cole McDaniel**, **Michael Avanzi**, **Ray Ward**, **Joan Brown**, **Edwina Jones**, **Rick Henderson** and **Rusty Hollingsworth**.



Volunteer Views

More photos of MLGW volunteers are posted in albums on MLGW's Intranet under "Corporate Fast Links" and "MLGW Volunteer News" on the pull-down menu. Or you can use your home computer or mobile device to view photo albums at www.flickr.com/photos/mlgwpix/albums/.)



Kettle Music: An alternate version of MLGW's Salvation Army brass band features (l-r) **Gene Rosser**, **Jimmy McMorris** and **Bill Bullock** playing for Kettle Campaign donations.



Questions? Ask Someone in a Red Shirt: VP of Engineering and Operations **Alonzo Weaver**, 2015 JEPE Chairman **Jason Mayo** and a host of professional and junior engineers gathered after a successful JEPE day-long seminar that MLGW hosted on Dec. 3 at the University of Memphis FedEx Institute.



Call That a Wrap!: There was even something for the kids at Wraps of Warmth at Oak Court Mall. In her holiday striped hat, **Jacqueline Williams**, Transf. Elec. Motor Shop, passed out colorful plastic hard hats and energy-related coloring books.



Off the CLIF: Spreading the message not to text, visit social media or surf the internet while driving are several MLGW employees who helped coordinate the CLIF Walk in Overton Park Nov. 7. Even McGruff the Crime Dog was there to say, "Don't drive distracted!"



It's a Wrap: For Wraps of Warmth, MLGW employees volunteered to gift wrap Oak Court Mall visitors' holiday presents on Saturday, Dec. 12 as part of our holiday outreach to the community and the Helping Hands program. **Gabrielle Earl**, Mgmt. Acctng., and **Lillian Johnson**, Comms & PR, show their wrapping talents.

Volunteer Views



Breast Cancer Walk: A small cadre of MLGW walkers gathered in near monsoon conditions to participate in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk at the Liberty Bowl on Sunday, Oct. 25, including **Mary White**, Employee Activities; **Antwaun Collins**, Physical Security; **Maria Armstrong**, CCC; **Clifton Ford**, Elec. Meter, and **Rutha Griffin**, HR Svcs., huddled under an umbrella.



Power of Warmth: Neighborhood Christian Center volunteer Tonya Williams helps Yolanda Gray get an electric blanket through MLGW's Power of Warmth program on Wednesday, Dec. 16. MLGW and the NCC gave away 100 space heaters and 200 electric blankets to help low-income and disabled residents in Shelby County.



Playing Midday Music: Solid Rock features (l-r) **Calvin Bonds**, Elec. Dist. Engrng.; **Jimmie Billingsley**, Prop. Mgmt. Survey; **Rodney Garrett**; **Michelle Bland**; **Kim Bonds**, retired; and **Ed Smith**, Elec. Dist. Engrng.



Ring My Bell: **Judith Wrushen**, Commerc./Indust. Cust. Care Mgr.'s Ofc., and **LaQuita Wade**, Gas Engrng. & Ops. Mgr.'s Ofc., implore holiday passersby to donate to the Salvation Army outside Walgreens on Main.



More Midday Music: **Bill Bullock**, Commerc./Indust. Cust. Care Mgr., and **Daniel Hochstein**, Rates/Reg. Affairs, perform as Two Trumpets for MLGW's United Way Campaign.

Volunteer Views



Led by **Vickie Fox-Price**, Sys. Security Cntrl., employees participating in the Heart Walk burn through some energetic warm-ups in the Administration Building lobby beforehand.

More Heart Walkers



Rutha Griffin, HR Svcs., and **Marcia Mason**, Corp. Security, carry the torch for heart disease survivors as they make their way along the Riverwalk.



MLGW walkers pin photos to their backs as they walk in honor of late employee **Weslynn Bates**.



The Heart Walk includes a scenic tour of the Riverwalk overlooking Tom Lee Park and the Mighty Mississippi, enjoyed by MLGW CCC team captain **Derek Stanley** and friend **Bobby Phillips**, MPD.



Division volunteers pass out water to thirsty Heart Walkers in the shadow of the MLGW Administration Building on Main.