

## SVFD collecting for Crusade, preparing for 60th anniversary celebration

Written by Janna Ross

Thursday, 28 May 2009 00:00 - Last Updated Thursday, 28 May 2009 08:41

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Area motorists may have noticed busy intersections having guests with buckets collecting in recent weeks. When one looks at the calendar after seeing the collectors at intersections, the combination means one thing, it's WHAS Crusade for Children time.

Local fire departments are kept busy the weeks leading up to the annual event. Members of the Sellersburg Volunteer Fire Department are no exception. Historically the department holds their first roadblocks over Memorial Day weekend and continue collecting the two weeks leading to Crusade weekend.

This past weekend members of the department shared the roadway with the motorists at the intersection of 311 and 60, their traditional roadblock location.

The Sellersburg Volunteer Fire Department is one of the original departments that collected for the Crusade. This is the 56th year of the Crusade. The department was formed in September 1949.

"We have collected since the very first Crusade for Children," stated Rick Cannon, one of the Co-Chairs of the Crusade for the department.

Cannon and Charlie Heishman have co-chaired the department's Crusade effort for some 15 years.

The Crusade effort is a family tradition for the two. Both of their wives are actively involved with the Crusade as well as their sons.

A family effort is exactly the answer as the department has had many members of the Sellersburg Volunteer Fire Department family volunteering to work the roadblocks this past weekend.

"We have had 40 people working already. We have had Clark County EMS working this weekend also," Cannon stated.

Once the buckets are filled, the money is then counted. Again, by Sellersburg Fire family. A running tab is kept as the change and bills are tallied.

"We count all our own money. We have an old coin counter from the post office. It is huge," Cannon explained. "I bet it is from the 1800's."

The effort from the fire department has not gone unnoticed by the WHAS Crusade for Children. In 1998 the department was awarded the Walton Award as they collected \$101,264.30 on the year.

The department is also approaching another Crusade milestone. Sellersburg Fire members are a little less than \$100,000 away from contributing \$1,000,000 to the worthy-cause.

The Sellersburg Fire Department has continued to collect and make worthy contributions to the cause. The department collected \$2,944 from 1959 to 1965 before tallying \$17,706.90 from 1966 to 1970 when individual year tallies were then kept.

The fire department collections from then to present day are: 1971- \$5,410; 1972- \$5,665; 1973- \$7,033.71; 1974- \$8,610; 1975- \$9,375.71; 1976- \$10,152.98; 1977- \$12,865.20; 1978- \$13,662.72; 1979- \$14,010.31; 1980- \$17,410; 1981- \$18,635.35; 1982- \$15,808.57; 1983- \$16,348; 1984- \$16,266; 1985- \$16,685; 1986- \$19,287; 1987- \$15,920.91; 1988- \$14,433.76; 1989- \$17,057.52; 1990- \$20,000; 1991- \$21,700.61; 1992- \$20,719; 1993- \$22,474.24; 1994- \$17,358.34; 1995- \$23,532.07; 1996- \$35,393.26; 1997- \$45,476; 1998- \$101,264.30; 1999- \$38,055; 2000- \$38,550; 2001- \$43,978.93; 2002- \$36,680.49; 2003- \$38,580.89; 2004- \$33,000; 2005- \$33,000; 2006- \$20,546.52; 2007- \$17,350 and 2008- \$25,000.

The department has collected a grand total of \$907,998.36 from 1959 to 2008.

The department will again be collecting at the intersection of 311 and 60 this weekend. If you would like to make a donation to the Crusade for Children, you may also send a check or

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drop off a donation to the department at 426 E. Utica Street in Sellersburg. You may also send a donation to Sellersburg Volunteer Fire Department, P.O. Box 82, Sellersburg, IN 47172.

Cannon and Heishman were quick to answer why they dedicated so much time to the Crusade collecting.

"I have a 24 year old that if it wasn't for the WHAS Crusade for Children probably wouldn't be here. She was born nine and a half weeks premature. She was in need of an incubator. WHAS donated a brand new incubator to Children's," Heishman stated. "We just have it in our blood, plus it's a way to give back to the community.

Cannon agreed, "It's just tradition. We know the money is going to go to a child in need. It's for a good cause," Cannon concluded.

Heishman added, "If a local child needs help. We know they will get the help they need."

The department is also preparing for their 60th anniversary celebration. They are searching for retired members and old pictures for the celebration in September. If you have any pictures you would like to contribute to the planned slide show please send copies of the pictures to Tammy Heishman, Sellersburg Volunteer Fire Department, 426 E. Utica Street, Sellersburg, IN 47172 or P.O. Box 82, Sellersburg, IN 47172.