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TOP STORY

Local celebrities paint bowls for hunger fundraiser

By JACKSON FRENCH jfrench@bgdailynews.com 20 hrs ago



Big Red watches as Lindsey Cook of Louisville draws a picture Big Red picked out on a bowl on Tuesday, February 6, 2018, at St. James United Methodist Church. (Austin Anthony/photo@bgdailynews.com)

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A handful of local celebrities came together Tuesday to support a yearly fundraiser dedicated to combating hunger.

Bowling Green Independent School District Superintendent Gary Fields, Warren County Public Schools Superintendent Rob Clayton and Wendell Strode, executive director of the National Corvette Museum, were among the local personalities who visited St. James United Methodist Church to paint clay bowls

that will be auctioned during the sixth annual Empty Bowls on March 8.

Chris Patterson, the church's minister, said the church first held a Celebrity Bowls painting event before last year's Empty Bowls in hopes of gathering more money to help local food banks.

"It was just an idea that we felt like could raise some additional funds," he said. "These are individuals that are well known in the community and we had a strong sense people would like to put that bowl up in a place where other people could get (it)."

Last year's Empty Bowls raised \$26,000, roughly \$800 of which came from people bidding on bowls painted by local celebrities, Patterson said.

"We thought if we raised 50 bucks we would be excited and we raised, like I said, closing in on \$1,000," he said.

The Daily News previously reported that all proceeds from Empty Bowls this year will go to HOTEL INC's Mana Mart and University Street Church of Christ's Life Care Ministry, two food banks based in Bowling Green.

Though Western Kentucky University President Timothy Caboni was originally anticipated to paint a bowl for the fundraiser, his wife, Kacy Caboni, who is director of principal gifts and special initiatives in WKU's Division of Development and Alumni Relations, appeared in his place.

Kacy Caboni, who painted a bowl with an image of Big Red and covered much of the rest of the bowl with red polka dots, said she enjoyed the role she was able to play in the Empty Bowls fundraiser.

"It's a fun way to help with a serious need and it gets the whole community involved," she said.

At Empty Bowls in March, participants will choose one of more than 1,000 bowls contributed by community members before they eat. Participants take the bowls home as a reminder of pervasive hunger in the community.

County Attorney Amy Milliken adorned a clay bowl with an American flag and messages like "Support Our Troops."

"I really think that every day we should remember the men and women who are putting their lives on the line for us," she said. "This is my small way of honoring them."

Milliken, who also painted a bowl at last year's Celebrity Bowl, said the purpose of the event drew her back when St. James extended an invitation for her to participate again this year.



“It is certainly a worthwhile project,” she said. “The amount of homeless in our area is really astonishing.”

Milliken said that, though she doesn’t have much experience with paint, she appreciated the chance to help with Empty Bowls.

“We’re certainly not artists,” she said. “we’re out of our comfort zone, but it’s satisfying at the same time.”

In addition, state Sen. Mike Wilson, R-Bowling Green and Tony Rose, morning personality for D93 WDNS-FM, provided bowls to be auctioned, though they weren’t at the event to paint with the other local celebrities.

Patterson said the goal for this year’s Empty Bowls is to raise \$30,000. The event has managed to exceed its goal in the past because of the community’s passionate involvement, he said.

“People of southcentral Kentucky care about their neighbors,” he said. The goal is not to satisfy hunger for a moment, but to eradicate it permanently, he said. “That’s our hope. That’s our goal and that’s what people want. They want to help.”

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