

DAY OF CARING 2026

Quarterly Newsletter

Hello United Way of Cayuga County Supporters!

It is hard to believe that the annual Day of Caring & Countywide Personal Care Drive is just around the corner! We want to take a moment to thank our 371 volunteers who tackled projects at 19 sites in Fair Haven, Montezuma, Auburn, Union Springs, Aurora, and Poplar Ridge last year. Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Personal Care Drive that collected 3,200 hygiene items that our friends at CAP Cayuga / Seneca distributed to all Cayuga County food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters last fall.

Plans are underway for the 2026 Day of Caring! Save the date and join us...

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6TH

As this event continues to grow, we are excited to share some new elements, starting with a **second breakfast rally in County South!** Over the past two years we have sent teams of 15 - 30 volunteers to multiple sites in Union Springs and Aurora and we felt it was time to set up a rally closer to these projects.

Project and volunteer registration will both be managed through our new platform: Volunteer Cayuga! To use this platform, you will need to

create an account. For project sites, you will need to create an individual account before you create your organization's account. Excited to get started? Visit volunteercayuga.com and create your account. You are invited to join Program Coordinator, Sarah Sayles, at an upcoming webinar for step-by-step instructions. Details and registration QR code on page 2.

Youth Drawing Contest for the Day of Caring t-shirt design is open now until 4:00pm on Friday, April 17. We need your help to spread the word--- our goal is to have submissions from every region of Cayuga County! Contest details and timeline on page 3.

Together, we can create positive change!



Volunteers from Cayuga Lake National Bank and Unity House at Frontenac Museum & Historical Society in Union Springs, 2025

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DAY OF CARING TIMELINE

Thur. March 26 | 12pm - 1pm
Volunteer Cayuga Webinar

Thur. April 16 | 12pm - 1pm
Volunteer Cayuga Webinar

Mon. May 11 | 10am
Project & Volunteer Registration opens

Fri. May 15 | 10am
Day of Caring Newsletter-- will include webinar information to create your DOC project on Volunteer Cayuga

TBD May - June | TBD
Day of Caring Project and Volunteer registration webinars

Fri. June 26 | 3pm
Sponsorships registration and payment due

Thur. July 2 | 12pm
Last opportunity for volunteer registration to receive a free t-shirt; registered Team Captains must submit sizes

Fri. July 10 | 3pm
Project Registration closes

Fri. July 22 | 3pm
Volunteer Registration closes

Mon. July 27 | All Day
Project & Volunteer Pairing distribution

August 3 - August 5 | 10am - 3pm
Volunteers & Team Captains pick up t-shirts and snack bags from United Way office at 2 State Street, Suite 2, Auburn

Thur. August 6 | 8am - 8:45am
Breakfast Rallies in Auburn at State Street Plaza and Union Springs (TBD)

Thur. August 6 | 9am - 3pm
Day of Caring projects, multiple locations

Thur. August 6 | 10am - 3pm
Day of Caring Blood Drive at Cayuga Community College

Volunteer Cayuga Contact:

Sarah Sayles | 315.253.9741
ssayles@unitedwayofcayugacounty.org

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VOLUNTEER CAYUGA & DAY OF CARING

The United Way launched Volunteer Cayuga, an online hub where nonprofits and community spaces (libraries, parks, etc.) can post volunteer needs as well as volunteers who can sign up for the opportunities that fit their skills, schedule, and philanthropic passion!

This online hub is where we will house all the volunteer and project registrations for the Day of Caring.

- Project and volunteer registrations will still come to the United Way staff, projects listed on website
- United Way staff will pair projects and volunteers, emails will be sent on **Monday, July 27**
- Volunteers **are required to submit their Waiver & Media Release forms** prior to the event

To register as either a project site or a volunteer, you will need to create an account on volunteercayuga.com. You can visit the site and follow the User Guide or you can register for an upcoming webinar with our Program Coordinator, Sarah Sayles for a step-by-step demonstration.

In order to create an account for an organization, you will need a personal account first-- similar to running your business's Facebook page.



Auburn Community Hospital Volunteers & United Way staff at American Red Cross Blood Drive at Cayuga Community College in Auburn, 2025

VOLUNTEER CAYUGA WEBINAR REGISTRATION

Register for either the March 26 or April 16 webinar by scanning the QR code for guided, step-by-step instructions on how to set up your personal account and business account.





Volunteers and Site Coordinators wearing t-shirts at Breakfast Rally in Auburn, 2025

YOUTH DRAWING CONTEST

Calling all Youth Artists! Designs can be submitted either individually by parents / guardians or as part of a group from a school, library, or community center by 4pm on Friday, April 17.

Community voting at various sites across Cayuga County and online from May 1 - May 10, winner announced on May 15!

Winning design featured on the front of the t-shirt. Portions or a small version of runner-up and second runner-up designs will be featured on the back of the shirts.

Winner and both runners-up will receive a t-shirt, gift card, and art supplies for their designs.

Prizes will be awarded at the Day of Caring Breakfast Rallies and Youth Artists' families are welcome to join. The Breakfast Rally is attended by Day of Caring volunteers, project site coordinators, event sponsors, and dignitaries to celebrate community and volunteerism in Cayuga County.

Youth Drawing Contest Submission Requirements:

- Youth must be 10 years of age – High School Senior
- Youth must either live or attend school in Cayuga County
- Must be line drawings, hand drawn works preferred
- Secular submission only, no Earth Day
- Must submit drawing with completed contest form by Friday, April 17 at 4pm

*Youth Drawing
Contest form!*



YOUTH DRAWING CONTEST TIMELINE

Thur. February 26 | 12pm
Drawing Contest announced

Mon. March 2 | All Day
Drawing Contest submissions opens

Wed. March 18 | 6pm
Cayuga Connections premieres on ARMA stations (Spectrum 31, FiOs 12 & 98) with special segment on Day of Caring Drawing Contest

Fri. April 17 | 4pm
Design Contest submissions closed

April 20 - April 21 | All Day
Staff narrow down designs for United Way Board of Directors to vote on 2026 Finalists

Wed. April 22 | All Day
United Way Board of Directors vote for 2026 Finalists for the Community Vote

Wed. April 22 | 3pm
Presenting Day of Caring sponsorship registration form and payment due to include logo on voting panels and digital posts

May 1 - May 10 | All Day
Community Vote opens at locations across Cayuga County and electronic voting on United Way's social media pages and email poll through Constant Contact

May 11 - May 14 | All Day
Votes tallied and outreach to winner, runner-up, and second runner-up

Fri. May 15 | TBD
Facebook Live to announce winner, runner-up, and second runner-up

May 18 - July 3 | Closes at 3pm on last day
Purchase extra Day of Caring t-shirts

Thur. August 6 | 8am - 8:45am
Presentation of prizes to winner, runner-up, and second runner-up at Breakfast Rallies in Auburn at State Street Plaza and Union Springs (TBD)

Drawing Contest & Primary Event Contact:
Julisa Stone-Szpaicher | 315.253.9741
jstone@unitedwayofcayugacounty.org

COUNTYWIDE PERSONAL CARE DRIVE

Introducing Adopt-A-Box for the Countywide Personal Care Drive! Each year businesses and social groups across Cayuga County collect hygiene items for the drive. Part of that effort includes 10 Community Drop-Off sites and Ambassadors are needed for Adopt-A-Box to help maintain and promote the box, let the United Way know if a mid-season pick-up is needed, and set up / tear down the Voting Station for the Youth Drawing Contest. More information and Adopt-A-Box form to be featured in the May issue!



PCD Community Drop-Off site at Kinney Drugs in Weedsport, 2025

DAY OF CARING NEWSLETTERS

Friday, May 15, 2026 | Thursday, August 13, 2026 | Thursday, November 12, 2026 | Thursday, February 11, 2027

Do not want to receive this quarterly newsletter?

Contact Shelly Norton to be removed by calling 315.253.9741 or send an email to snorton@unitedwayofcayugacounty.org

SPONSORSHIPS NEEDED!

Sponsorships are a great way for your business to be recognized as a community supporter. All sponsors are listed on our Day of Caring t-shirt and recognized at Breakfast Rallies. Presenting sponsors are exclusive and they're invited to join us for an episode of Cayuga Connections.

Sponsor levels range from \$100 to \$3,000 so your organization can select the opportunity that best fits your needs and budget.

Sponsorship registration and payment **due by June 26, 2026***

Benefits



*DOC Presenting Sponsor form and payment due by April 22 for logo inclusion on Drawing Contest voting stations

SEEKING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Are you a go-getter? Planner? Love all of Cayuga County? We may have a volunteer role for you!

- Monthly one-hour, virtual meetings
- Support outreach efforts for project and volunteer registration
- Recruit Adopt-A-Box Ambassadors for Personal Care Drive
- Plan, coordinate, and host Day of Caring Breakfast Rallies
- Distribution of signs, snacks, shirts, and more
- Promote events across Cayuga County and social media
- Empowering the community to come together

Interested in learning more? Contact Julisa Stone-Szpaicher at jstone@unitedwayofcayugacounty.org or call 315.253.9741 x114.

Striving for countywide representation from Sterling to Genoa, to Moravia and everywhere in between.

UNITED WAY STAFF

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