October 2021

Be Concerned

1100 Pike St., Covington, KY 41011
859-291-6789 beconcerned.org

23rd annual golf outing: best ever!

Financially. Socially. Meteorogically. Athletically.

Any way you slice it, Be Concerned's 23rd annual Golf Outing was a hit. Achieving on so many levels added up to the most successful event in the 23 years it has been held.

The outing set records for:

Gross revenue, more than $137,000.

Net revenue, more than $106,000.

Number of sponsors, 107.

Value of sponsorships, more than $75,000.

Golfers, with 29 teams on Thursday, Sept. 9 and 33 on Friday, Sept. 10th, totaling 246.

"Unbelievable, phenomenal, " said Mike Lenihan, who chaired the outing for the 9th consecutive year.

"Every year we say it can't get better and it does. "

He was particularly gratified for the increase in sponsors and golfers.

The number of sponsors reached triple digits for the first time ever, with 10 more than in 2020.

"To reach 100 was mind-boggling," Lenihan said. "We keep finding sponsors who believe in *what* we're doing and *how* we are doing it, and they write that check."

Many of the sponsors, as in years past, had connections to the Be Concerned Board or staff.

This year was the first time that both days of the outing met host Twin Oaks' minimum threshold for closing the course to outside play -- 25 foursomes. "In just three years, Thursday has grown nearly as large as Friday,' Lenihan exulted.

Mike Lenihan, who aced No. 17 a few hours later, putts on No. 6 on the second day of the outing.

That makes the two-day format a no-brainer for 2022, he said.

Be Concerned Executive Director Andy Brunsman said such a positive result was a testimonial to the generosity of the Northern Kentucky community.

"It's overwhelming," he said. "The support of the community is what has made and continues to make our agency a very special place."

The weather was -- again -- a huge

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Chastity Bridewell shops in the Be Concerned lobby while she waits for her pantry food order to be filled.

Lobby makeover means more food for shoppers

While Chastity Bridewell waited for her food orders to be filled at Be Concerned 's Covington location, she used to spend her time visiting with other shoppers or catching up on her phone.

But more often than not these days, the Covington resident is actually shopping during those intervals from a new food supply that has sprouted in the building lobby.

"Milk, eggs, chips, dips, Chinese food -- you're going to find something you like there," said Chastity, who's depended on Be Concerned for food for more than two decades.

Most of the food for the lobby is donated by Kroger from Fulfillment Centers in Union and Florence. Included have been gluten-free, organic and vegetable-based snacks. On a Wednesday morning last month, for example, cauliflower and Brussel sprouts puffs shared a shelf with butter nut squash pretzels.

"So, it's not only more food, it's helping our people eat healthier," said Be Concerned Executive Director Andy Brunsman.

A donated refrigerator in the lobby holds milk, eggs, prepared meals and

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Lobby shopping next big thing at Be Concerned Covington

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other items.

COVID-19 provided an impetus for transforming the lobby into an annex of the food room. When the pandemic was declared in March of 2020, Be Concerned closed its buildings and switched to a drive-through model so food could be safely dispensed on parking lots to shoppers in their cars.

The lobby in Covington reopened in late summer of 2020, but with reduced seating to accommodate social distancing. Into the space where chairs once sat went shelves.

Some of the food now in the lobby was relocated from the pantry itself. The entire snack section was moved, for example. That created badly needed extra pantry space for pasta and cereal, items that used to require nearly daily restocking.

Acquisition of a 20-foot box truck, donated by Humana, and a power-pallet jack, donated by the Horizon Community Funds of Northern Kentucky, positioned Be Concerned to make the most of the surge of food from the Kroger Fulfilment Centers.

Using the truck and the jack, Warehouse Director Josh Stone picks up multiple pallets of food from the centers three mornings a week. And 3 volunteers have become lobby-stocking specialists to get donated product out quickly in the lobby. "Donors want to see their food going home quickly with people who really need it," Brunsman said.

Food from the fulfillment centers can amount to 7,000-9,000 lbs. a week, Stone said. Much of it is miscellaneous items, and those now go straight to the lobby, freeing up space in the pantry proper.

Lobby shopping goes on during pantry sessions four days a week, and weekdays from 1 to 3 for walk-in customers. Walk-ins outside those hours generally are accommodated, Brunsman said.

> ***"Donors want to see their food going home quickly with people who really need it."***
>
> ***- Andy Brunsman***

"We're giving people more access to food with minimal questions asked," he said.

Participation in Be Concerned's pantries is on the rise again now that most pandemic relief programs have run their course. But Brunsman said that shouldn't reduce the amount of food customers have access to. "As long as our relationship with Kroger remains firm, I don't expect a change in what we're able to do," he said.

Judy Schletker stocks shelves with snack chips in the lobby of Be Concerned's Covington pantry.

Schletker 'quarter' volunteer

Josh Stone considers Judy Schletker a super stocker.

"She can clear out a mixed pallet (of donated goods) in 30 minutes," said Stone, warehouse director at Be Concerned Covington

Not to mention that Judy is reliable, available and a pleasure to work with.

"Whenever I need someone to step up, she's the one to call," Stone said.

So Judy's selection as Volunteer of the Quarter for the third quarter of 2021 was a popular one.

She began helping at Be Concerned early in 2021, nearly a year after retiring from four decades in nursing. "I'd gotten paid for 42 years, I thought it was time to give back," said the Villa Hills resident.

She went on-line to check out nonprofits and found Be Concerned. "I read your mission statement and liked it," Judy said.

Judy

Now she is one of 3 volunteers who restock shelves in the Covington pantry each week with the tons of food that Stone picks up from Kroger's Fulfillment Center in Florence. (See story, left)

"While I'm out on my routes, she helps the other volunteers know where to put things and make the lobby look great," he said.

Judy said she likes people she's met at Be Concerned, including those being helped. "They appreciate you all, you can see that in their eyes," she said.

John Jenkins straightens clothing in the thrift store at Be Concerned Erlanger beneath some of the 85 new LED lights installed at the site with a $3,611 grant from the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels.

2021 Christmas Store to be much like 2020's

Be Concerned's 2021 Christmas Store will probably be smaller than the 2020 holiday program, but still have many similarities to it.

"We set a record last year by helping 1,600 families," said Executive Director Andy Brunsman. "This year, I'll be happy if we serve 1,000."

That's because many of the families who participated in 2020 have recovered from the pandemic and are self-sustaining again, he said,.

The emphasis in this year's program will again be gifts for kids aged 0-18 of families in agency programs.

All households will receive food, cleaning supplies and hygiene products.

The Store will run from Dec. 1 through Dec. 23 daily except for weekends. Betty's Treasurers, the Covington thrift store, will be open during the Christmas program, for the first time ever.

Be Concerned is seeking groups or families willing to do drives for the Christmas Store. Drives can be for food, toys, hygiene products or cleaning supplies.

To sign up or for more information about drives, contact Lynda Crossan at (859) 291-1340 or lynda.crossan@beconcerned.org.

23rd annual outing? It was all good!

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plus for the outing

Oppressive heat and humidity earlier in the week gave way to cooler temps and a lower dew point by the time play started on Thursday.

Mornings that began in the high 50s made the Twin Oaks lunch of soup and barbecue welcome fare for golfers and volunteers.

"We have been so fortunate and so blessed with the outing weather," Lenihan said.

There was the usual smattering of double digit, under-par team scores, but Lenihan himself recorded the shot of the outing when he holed his drive on the 133-yard 17th.

"I thought I hit it good, but we were looking into the sun, so I couldn't really see where it landed," he said.

When he and his playing partners reached the green, his ball wasn't on it. "I thought I had nuked it," he said.

But as he walked by the hole, he looked in and discovered the ball. The ace, his second, came 20 years after his first.

Lucy Cecil, who played on the top women's team in the outing, hits from the No. 5 fairway on the outing's Day 2.

Lenihan said the goal for his 10th outing at the helm next year will be simple: to better this year's result.

"So we want to have 36 teams on each day, " he said.

"If we had 100 sponsors this year, we want 120 next year. And if we cleared $106,000 this year, we want to clear $110,00 -$115,000 next year."

Thanks to our additional Golf Outing donors

Amy Boland
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Fred Greenwood, left, with Andy Brunsman, received the 2021 Heart of Be Concerned Award.

Thanks to our 2021 Silent Auction donors!

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Coming in November...

BETTY'S TREASURES

Open on the first Saturday of each month Noon to 3.

Tell all your friends!

Bethany Lutheran filling in gaps at Erlanger pantry

One Sunday a month, worshippers at Bethany Lutheran Church in Erlanger participate in a special collection.

But it's goods, not money, that are gathered, and they are to benefit people who in most cases have never set food in the church.

Paper products, after-school snacks for kids and diapers all were donated this summer to Be Concerned's Erlanger location, which distributed them to the nearly 300 families currently in the agency's pantry there.

What the church collects depends on Be Concerned's needs at the moment.

"It's a neat opportunity for us to feel like part of the community and be in service to the Lord," said Pastor Mark Etter.

Although his congregation is small, it has a tradition of community outreach, Etter said.

When the church decided it wanted to get into a food program, member Susan Klinedinst suggested Be Concerned Erlanger, where she had volunteered when United Ministries ran a program there.

Response from his congregation has been very good, filling a van each month, Etter said.

Erlanger Site Director Dave Laake said Bethany "understands the challenges we face and are happy to help us serve the community that they are part of."

Bethany hopes to continue the partnership for the next couple of years, Etter said.

Susan Klinedinst, left, and Suzanne Steele carry diapers donated by Bethany Lutheran Church into the Erlanger pantry last month.

Be Concerned
The People's Pantry
1100 Pike St.
Covington, KY 41011

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