



**United Way
of Bradley County**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Allen Mincey, Communications
(423) 472-9876 (office)
(423) 339-1110 (fax)
Email: allen.mincey@unitedway.org

Crass, Conns and Cookes head 2009 United Way campaign

United Way of Bradley County Board Chair Stephen Crass announces that Dr. Paul and Darlia Conn and Dan and Janey Cooke have agreed to serve as co-chairs for the United Way's 2009 campaign.

This is the first time that United Way of Bradley County has had two sets of campaign co-chairs.

"We are very honored to have the Conns and Cookes helping us with our United Way campaign this year," said Crass. "They have each been very supportive of the United Way of Bradley County over the years, and have said they are very excited to be involved this year as campaign co-chairs."

Both couples have served as co-chairs of the United Way of Bradley County Pillars Club, and are members of that club. As campaign co-chairs, they are each members of the United Way Board of Directors and Executive Committee.

"They have been lining up division chairs who I know share their same enthusiasm they have for United Way, and are ready for the friendly competition that we have as part of the campaign," Crass said. "However, there is a little bit of a twist to this year's campaign team competition. One might suspect that it will be the team of division chairs headed by the Conns versus a team of division chairs headed by the Cookes.

"Instead, one team will be headed by Darlia Conn and Janey Cooke, while the other will be led by Paul Conn and Dan Cooke," he continued. "So, it will be the women versus the men this campaign, and it has already led to some interesting banter between the four co-chairs."

Each set of campaign co-chairs will be leading teams of nine divisions, ranging from large firms to commercial businesses to government and education, doctors and lawyers, other professionals and retirees.

"I think it will be a fun campaign, but I also know that each campaign co-chair will be working diligently to help raise as much in donations as we can not to win the friendly competition, but because they know how much assistance each of the United Way's agencies, programs and services need this coming year," Crass said.

Crass, Editor and Publisher of the Cleveland Daily Banner, has served as a Campaign Chair in the past, and he said he feels confident that this year's campaign co-chairs will lead United Way in reaching and hopefully exceeding the campaign goal. That goal has been set at \$2,250,000.

He is a member of the United Way's Board of Directors and Executive Committee. He has served as a Campaign Co-Chair, and has co-chaired the Blue Ribbon Committee. He and his wife Deborah are members of the Pillars Club.

He has served as a Fund Distribution Panel Chairman on three different occasions, chairing the panel for Signal Center in 2003 and 2004, and in 2005, he chaired the panel for the American Red Cross's Hiwassee Chapter.

In the community, Crass has served on the Cleveland-Bradley Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, including vice chairman in 2004 and 2005. He is a member of the Kiwanis International President's Advisory Council and is a Kiwanis diamond level George F. Hixson Fellow and recipient of the Kiwanis Tablet of Honor. He is a past member of the Cleveland Kiwanis Club Board of Directors.

He is on the Board of Directors for Cleveland 100 and Junior Achievement of the Ocoee Region, was twice Honorary Chairman for the Cystic Fibrosis Great Strides Walk , and is a member of the Bradley County Juvenile Drug Court Advisory Committee. He is also a member of the Col. Benjamin Cleveland Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Dr. Paul Conn is President of Lee University, a post he has held since 1986. Prior to becoming President, Conn served on the Lee faculty for 15 years. He also serves as a Commissioner of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, is an elected member of the Tennessee Foundation of Independent Colleges, treasurer of the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities and serves on the national Board of Directors of the Coalition for Christian College and Universities.

He has been very instrumental in United Way campaigns at Lee University. In addition to his scholarly publications, Conn has enjoyed a second career as a free-lance writer. He has authored or co-authored 20 popular books, sharing by-lines with such personalities as Johnny Cash, pro football star Terry Bradshaw, businessmen Jack Eckerd and Richard DeVos, and many others.

Darlia Conn is an adjunct faculty member and staff accompanist in the Lee University School of Music. She received a Licentiate degree from the Trinity College of London following early training in South Africa and Zimbabwe. Her BA degree is in Piano performance from Lee University, and MM in Accompanying and Coaching is from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Her interests in the community have centered on music, and she has been a member of the Cleveland Symphony Guild since 1985. Presently Darlia works with her husband to schedule and select artists for the Presidential Concert Series at Lee each year.

Dan Cooke is President of Cooke's Food Stores Inc., and Chief Partner with CSC Investments (franchisee of Panera Bread Company). He is a former member of the Vestry at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, is a has served as a member of the Board of Directors for the Bradley Healthcare Foundation and presently serves on the Board of Directors of the Chattanooga Better Business Bureau.

He has also served as a Board member of the Tennessee Grocers' Association, and as a Board member of the Cleveland-Bradley Chamber of Commerce. He is a recipient of the Chamber's Mel Bedwell Small Business Award and the Chamber's M.C. Headrick Free Enterprise Award (co-recipient with his sister, Becky Smith).

Janey Cooke has served as a solicitor and Division Chairman for United Way of Bradley County campaigns, and also has served on several United Way Fund Distribution Panels. She has served on the Cleveland Public Library Foundation's Board of Directors, and is a former member of the Cleveland Civitan Club and Board member for the local Habitat for Humanity chapter.

She served as a Board member of the Cleveland-Bradley Chamber of Commerce. Cooke is a Board Member for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Cleveland, and chairs the "Empowering Women" event to benefit the club this year. She has been involved with the Baylor School Parent Advisory Board, the Museum Center at Five Points and Special Olympics. Cooke is a former volunteer for the Cleveland Kids on the Block, a United Way agency.

--- ### --