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News

Convoy of Hope -- set for this weekend -- to feature more medical offerings

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By Betsy Scott

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The Lake County Fairgrounds is the place to be Saturday for those who want to volunteer for or benefit from the Northeast Ohio Convoy of Hope community outreach.

The event runs from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and involves numerous churches, agencies, businesses, medical service providers and about 1,500 volunteers joining forces to help thousands of people in need.

As in previous years, free groceries, haircuts, family portraits, pet food and supplies, clothing, Kids Zone games and inflatables, and a hot meal will be provided.

Medical care is expanding with the help of nonprofit MedWorks — 15 doctors, 20 nurses and six social workers volunteering to provide exams and other assistance. Specialists in the following areas will be on hand: ears, nose and throat; urology; obstetrics/gynecology; pediatrics; rheumatology (arthritis); infectious diseases like bacteria, parasites and fungal infection; surgery and internal medicine.

"We are excited about the opportunity to reach out to Lake County," MedWorks' representative Carrie Clark said, adding that pharmacy services may be added next time.

Social workers will help link guests with a health care provider for treatment.

Dental services, such as adult dental extractions and child dental sealants/fluoride treatment, will be done on a first-come, first-served basis.

In addition, the Lake County General Health District and other COH partners will provide preventive health screenings for blood pressure, blood sugar, body mass index and more. The National Breast Cancer Foundation will set up a women's resource tent for related screenings.

Another goal is to give out 2,000 pairs of new shoes.

"We are hoping for at least 500 more pair of new athletic shoes," said lead event coordinator Jeff Sivyer, pastor of The Grove Church in Painesville.

Shoes can be dropped off at any Lake County YMCA branch and Christ Community Church in Painesville. The greatest need is for new athletic women's shoes, size 7 and up, and new athletic men's shoes, size 8 or larger. Children's shoes

also are being accepted as well as cash donations to buy new shoes and socks.

Free transportation will be available at the following locations: Argonne Arms, Morse Avenue, Harvey High School, Kensington Apartments, Brentwood Apartments, St. Mary's, Painesville Rec Park and Salvation Army. Watch for the Convoy of Hope Bus signs, some near Laketran stops.

Sivyer reiterated that volunteers must attend the rally at 7 p.m. Friday at Harvey High School in Painesville to participate in the outreach.

"We will be pre-recruiting and filling all the volunteer positions that night to promote a more orderly Saturday morning," he said. "They will receive their new Convoy shirt, which will be required in order for them to serve the next day."

Convoy of Hope has distributed more than 40 million pounds of food, water and supplies to over 10 million guests in 70 countries and has responded to disasters in Japan, Haiti, Alabama and Missouri.

For more information on medical services, contact Ron Graham at 440-350-2358 or rgraham@lcghd.org. For more general information, visit www.neohconvoyofhope.org or call 877-651-3001.

URL: <http://www.news-herald.com/articles/2012/06/18/news/nh5601840.prt>

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