

# NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Rick Chambers  
269-873-5820  
[rick.chambers@rickchambersassociates.com](mailto:rick.chambers@rickchambersassociates.com)

## **United Way 2014 Campaign Launches With Cardboard Boat Race, \$2 Million Goal**

JACKSON, Michigan [Sept. 5, 2014]—Aladdin Electric outpaddled a fleet of 17 cardboard boats to win the third annual “What Floats Your Cardboard Boat” Race at the Cascades Falls Urban Fishery today. The event kicked off the United Way of Jackson County’s 2014 campaign, which set a goal of \$2 million this year.

“This event is a symbol of what makes Jackson County great: teamwork, commitment and a powerful sense of community, all of which drive the work of United Way as well,” said Terry Mierzwa, executive manager of Customer Experience Insights for Consumers Energy and co-chair of the United Way campaign.

“Through United Way programs and partners, we’re making progress in education, financial stability and health. We can build on that success with the support of Jackson County,” added Cheryl Norey, Community Relations lead for Michigan Automotive Compressor Inc. (MACI) and co-chair of the United Way campaign.

Sixteen companies and organizations participated in this year’s boat race, including Consumers Energy, Jackson County Medical Care Facility (including a boat sponsored by CP Federal Credit Union), Walton Insurance Group, Jackson Area Manufacturers Association, County National Bank, TAC, Western High School, MACI, Jackson County Government, Shop Rat Foundation/IAM Machinists 435, Allegiance Health, Aladdin Electric, American 1 Credit Union, Jackson Chamber of Commerce, Arcadia Home Health Care and Staffing, and United Way of Jackson County. In a near photo finish, Aladdin Electric took the top prize, and Walton Insurance Group finished in second place.

Other winners included Jackson County Medical Care Facility for Judges' Choice, American 1 Credit Union for People's Choice, and Jackson Area Manufacturers Association for Most Spectacular Sinking. About 300 spectators turned out for the event.

Among the dignitaries at the boat race were Scott Dzurka, president of the Michigan Association of United Ways and the event's "commodore"; Michigan State Police Trooper Dan Bowman, who christened the fleet; Scott Clow of Jackson Radio Works, serving as emcee; and Kailynn Mejeur, who starred in the 2014 United Way campaign video. Event judges were Mike McKenna, retired director of Resource Development for United Way; Kelly Sowers, co-owner of Jackson Pack N Ship; and Scott Robbins, director of Jackson County Parks.

Ken Toll, president and CEO of United Way of Jackson County, praised the community for its continued engagement in the work of United Way and urged supporters to reach the campaign's \$2 million goal.

"There's a strong commitment by Jackson County to change conditions in meaningful, measurable ways," Toll said. "That means more kids can succeed in school, more families can become financially stable, and more people can embrace good health. We're counting on the community's support to create even greater change in Jackson County."

### **About United Way of Jackson County**

United Way of Jackson County mobilizes the caring power of the community to provide opportunities for a better life for all Jackson County residents by focusing on helping children succeed in school, making sure families are financially stable, and helping people achieve and maintain good health. On the Web: [www.uwjackson.org](http://www.uwjackson.org). Follow UWJC on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

# # #