



MOUNT CLEMENS

Mount Clemens charity receives donation to help local entities

By Julie Snyder 

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MOUNT CLEMENS — A Mount Clemens-based charitable organization is thanking its ties with a national office supply company for helping it support numerous Macomb County organizations, as well as one in Oakland County.

Tom Cleaver, founder of the We Are Here Foundation, said his nonprofit group and Staples teamed up recently to donate more than \$350,000 worth of office furniture and office supplies to the Macomb County Sheriff's Office, the Detroit Arsenal of Democracy, Lake Shore Public Schools, South Lake High School, the St. Clair Shores Department of Public Works, and the Troy School District in Oakland County.

“We’ve been getting these donations from Staples twice a year for the past four years, and we have been able to give them to the local districts,” said Cleaver. “They’re (Staples) the real heroes, not us. We just helped them facilitate the drop-off of the donated items.”

Two Men and a Truck's Macomb County franchise donated the use of its vehicles and personnel to move more than 22 truckloads from the Staples warehouse to the chosen recipients. Items included chairs, tables, desks and filing cabinets. Additionally, five truckloads of office chairs and furniture have been donated to the Sheriff's Office.

Kevin Killeen, furniture operations supervisor for Staples, said they had moved from their former location in Southfield to a smaller location in Sterling Heights, and the extra supply couldn't be relocated or even fit into the new space. He said some of the items were even returns that couldn't go back to the supplier.

“Every Staples has an approved charity that they work with, and the We Are Here Foundation is our chosen charity,” said Killeen. “We have been working with Tom and his foundation for some time. We’re glad the foundation was able to find homes for these pieces of furniture and supplies. Any way at all we can help a school that needs to upgrade their supplies, we want to do that.”

The We Are Here Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, environmental cleanup and public education assistance group that has removed more than 6.5 million pounds of debris from the Lake St. Clair shoreline since 1995. This is accomplished with the help of volunteers through annual Nautical Coast Cleanup events in Macomb County.

Cleaver said that for the past 20 years, the foundation has created cleaner and healthier waterways in southeastern Michigan by refurbishing donated used boats, and then forwarding the profits to clean the lake shoreline while at the same time educating kids.

“All boat donations are tax deductible,” said Cleaver. “And we’re always accepting donations.”

Staples Inc. annually commits to environmental sustainability and community outreach, and has for the past three years given more than \$500,000 to southeastern Michigan schools, Killeen said.

To donate a boat to the We Are Here Foundation, call (586) 463-9400.