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United Way makes '09 changes

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Outgoing Chairwoman Judy Moss passes the gavel to 2009 board Chairman Mark Eades at Tuesday's United Way meeting. (Dave Boyd / Johnson City Press)

The Johnson City Area United Way has elected a new slate of board officers for 2009, tagged a chairman for this year's fall fundraising campaign and adopted a new name for the agency.

Gathered Tuesday evening for its annual Membership Meeting, the United Way installed Mark Eades as its 2009 board chairman and Ed Herbert as chairman of this year's United Way campaign.

In his first remarks to the membership as board chairman, Eades announced that the agency will begin work this year as the United Way of Washington County, TN, Inc.

Eades thanked outgoing board chairwoman Judy Moss and 2008 Campaign Chairman Scott Folsom for their leadership through the past year of economic challenge, saying "I know God puts capable people in impossible situations."

Folsom, who led the 2008 campaign team to raise nearly \$1.9 million in contributions for 16 area service agencies, thanked the board, the 2008 campaign team, and each of the service agencies for giving him the opportunity and for the "wonderful experience" of watching them work.

"Ultimately, we had a greater uphill climb than anyone expected," Folsom said.

While the 2008 campaign did not meet its \$2.075 million goal, Folsom noted it had raised \$1,895,388. He emphasized the outgoing board members recently voted to use United Way reserves and any savings to maintain the full level of funding allocated to service agencies last year.

"That was a great gift," Folsom said.

Folsom predicted "the economic challenge and funding challenge on the agencies will be even greater this year," and promised Herbert the commitment of the entire United Way membership as he leads another year of fundraising for the agencies' work.

Herbert was unable to attend Tuesday's meeting but shared his thoughts on the campaign year ahead and "the power of one person" through his wife, Teresa.

Reading her husband's comments, Teresa Herbert told the United Way members, "this year will not be easy for the agencies" as they work to meet a greater need among a greater number of people.

"It will all begin with one person giving of themselves and their dollars," she said. "With everyone engaged, we can overcome the obstacles facing us today."

Moss thanked the area companies and individuals who support the annual

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United Way drive for their community-mindedness, especially those who contributed last year despite the economic downturn.

"This is a celebration," Moss said. "Right now we have not surpassed our goal but that may change. ... When we started, our goal seemed realistic. But things happened.

"I don't want anyone to think we weren't successful (when) we had people whose assets shrunk and folks kept giving and folks kept working.

"What an honor for you to allow me to be chairman of such a wonderful organization. Thanks for a wonderful year to each and every one."

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