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MONDAY'S MAN

Serving communities near and far

BECCA OWSLEY The News-Enterprise Mar 11, 2018 Updated 9 hrs ago



Chad Sarver is general manager of Altec's plant in Elizabethtown, where he has worked for 19 years.

NEAL CARDIN/The News-Enterprise

Small-town values and a heart for missions drive Elizabethtown Altec General Manager Chad Sarver.

Other than his first two years of life in Las Vegas, Sarver has lived in Hardin County most of his life. His father was in the U.S. Air Force and the family moved back to the area when Sarver was 2.

Sarver, who now lives in White Mills, grew up in the Stephensburg area and was a part of the first graduating class of Central Hardin High School in 1991.

After high school, Sarver worked on a core drilling rig for a few years. Then he decided to go to college, starting at ECTC and finishing at the University of Kentucky with a degree in corporate communications and marketing.

He's worked 19 years with Altec, starting as the production supervisor of the night shift to eventually become general manager at the Elizabethtown site.

One of his greatest joys is giving back to his community and communities far away.

In 2006, he went on the first of his seven foreign mission trips to Honduras and Nicaragua.

"I fell in love with the people of Honduras and their hospitality," Sarver said.

By that point in his life, he also had become an ordained minister and preached at Eastview Baptist Church for a year and a half while also working at Altec.

Even though he worships at Freedom's Way Church in Franklin Crossroads, Sarver goes on mission trips with Valley Creek Baptist Church through an organization called Baptist Medical Dental Institute. It's a medical mission and he is one of the ministers on the team who preaches while others perform the medical work, he said.

"Having been with Chad on several mission trips, it is obvious to me that he has a great love for all people and a true servant's heart," said the Rev. Scott Kerr, Valley Creek's pastor. "He will do anything to help others and show the love of God."

Kerr also attends a Friday morning men's group with Sarver.

"Through that I have seen his desire to continue to grow as a person," Kerr said. "He also is a man with much wisdom that he shares with great humility."

Sarver said he believes everyone is made for a specific purpose. It's something he said he learned even more by going on mission trips.

"I think when I got down there, I didn't have the noise that goes on in the United States," he said.

The places he's visited are low-profile and not as busy as back home, he said. There, he said he can sit down with people and talk about life.

“The little thing you can do there makes huge impacts,” he said, adding that’s something you realize going to these places where there is joy in little things.

Mission work prompted a side hobby of woodworking and a business called The Word ‘N Wood.

“The intent of the business was to take a hobby that I thoroughly enjoy, woodworking, and take that to support foreign and local missions,” he said.

In his work, he makes many Christian, college sports and custom wood signs in his home workshop. Sarver doesn’t want it to become a full-time job because he has that at Altec, but it is a way to support mission work, with 50 percent of the proceeds going to missions.

He’s lived in a small community most of his life and learned that family and support are critical. In a rural area, he said you rely on neighbors and take care of one another.

“They truly are there to support you,” he said. “That camaraderie that you see in the smaller communities may be why I love missions so much because it’s the same kind of concept — getting back to the simple basis of life.”

Locally, Sarver is involved with the United Way of Central Kentucky.

Megan Stith, president and CEO of the organization, said Sarver is an example of a servant leader.

“He’s not afraid to challenge others or ask tough questions, but is also dedicated to finding win-win solutions,” she said. “Chad has fully immersed himself in United Way’s work and gives countless volunteer hours to set an example that engages others.”

His “strategic insight” combined with an “inspiring attitude” have helped produce “record levels” of impact at the United Way, she said.

Sarver is campaign chairman for the United Way drive and an active board member. He’s also on the community investment team, which makes decisions about distributing money to organizations.

In all he does, he has a main goal.

“I want people to know there’s a greater calling in life,” he said.

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