

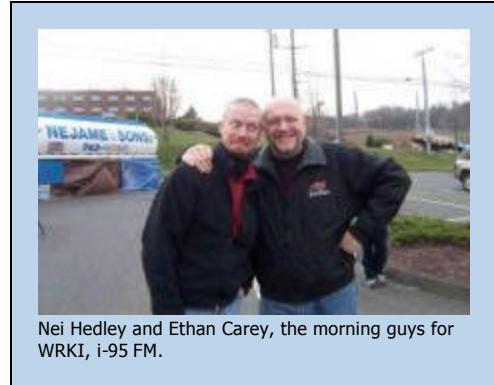
'Guy in the Sky' raises \$175,000 for charity

By Brian Saxton
THE NEWS-TIMES

DANBURY -- Radio disc jockey Neil Hedley, who became the "Guy in the Sky" to raise funds for charity, came back down to Earth with more than \$175,000.

Hedley, 39, who works for WRKI-I 95, spent 24 hours a day for 19 days camping out on top of a giant billboard in Bethel, broadcasting and generating donations for the United Way of Northern Fairfield County.

By the time his campaign ended Dec.15, donors had given more than \$175,000, either in contributions made at the Stony Hill site or in pledges.



Hedley's 19-day campaign last year, atop a billboard on North Street, Danbury, brought in about \$143,000.

"The dollars are substantial and will make a real difference in improving the lives of those in need," said United Way President June Renzulli. "The campaign raised public awareness not only of that need but of the excellent programs that are there to help."

Hedley's campaign this year was supported by volunteers from many of the nonprofit agencies funded by United Way, as well as area businesses and civic groups. The News-Times joined the event as a sponsor.

United Way marketing and communications director Kim Morgan said the money will be added to the funds the agency raises each year for other nonprofit groups. Earlier this year, United Way announced it would distribute \$1.8 million to local health and human service programs for 2006-07.

"It was interesting to see just how many children asked their parents to take them to the site and then gave money," Morgan said.

Some children donated their allowance or holiday money they were given by their parents. A group of students from Hawley Elementary School in Newtown ran a campaign called "Nickels for Neil" and raised \$400.

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