



The Bethlehem Project's "Inn the News"

Bethlehem Project's holiday fundraising successful



Generous donors made the holidays brighter for those in need of housing support again this past season, with Home for the Holidays and the Tree of Hope raising a combined total of \$25,638 to help area residents with housing insecurity.

A range of festive baskets, created by the advisory board, drew a crowd of willing donors to the Cathedral social hall on December 8. Those attending enjoyed light refreshments, fellowship, and a selection of Christmas songs performed by students from Aquinas Academy.

The event brought in \$7,551 in sponsorships and ticket purchases.

The Tree of Hope, which stands as a silent, shining reminder of the need in our community, brought in \$18,597.

As always, The Bethlehem Project's board is extremely thankful to our sponsors-both businesses and individuals- and to our donors for supporting the mission to prevent homelessness in Greensburg and the surrounding communities.



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Bethlehem Project Expands Service Area

Due to increased challenges meeting housing costs in central Westmoreland County, the Bethlehem Project's Board of Advisors has approved an expansion of the housing ministry's service area to include Herminie, Manor, Norvelt, Scottdale and United.

"These five communities were identified by Catholic Charities, which manages intakes and referrals for all requests for assistance from The Bethlehem Project, as areas where people are in need of the help we can provide," said advisory board interim president Jerry Zufelt.

.....Service Area Pg. 2

"Because there was no place for them to stay..." Luke 2:7

HELPING LOCAL SHELTERS

Thanks to your generosity, The Bethlehem Project donated items to the clients at our local shelters for the fourth calendar quarter of 2024.

Shopping for the Union Mission was completed by board member Ray Hoehler and included 15 Zone One bus passes, 10 pill planners, eight pairs of steel-toed boots, 25 packages of cotton swabs, and 35 manicure sets.

Board member Debbie Scarpitti shopped for the Welcome Home shelter which requested shower curtains, 10 packages of diapers, four packages of baby wipes and 10 pairs of slipper socks.

And, assistance to clients of the Blackburn Center was fulfilled by board member Jane Szczygiel. The list included four laundry hampers, a baby stroller, three packages of 18-count hairbrushes, four 4-piece bed pillow sets, and \$94.13 was applied to their Westmoreland Transit account.

At the January meeting, the board approved the shopping for the first quarter of 2025.

The total spent for each shelter was \$750 and all purchased items went directly to assist the clients.

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The communities of Herminie, Manor, Norvelt, Scottdale and United join Bovard, Crabtree, Derry, Forbes Road, Grapeville, Greensburg, Hannastown, Hunker, Jeannette, Latrobe, Ligonier, Luxor, Mount Pleasant, New Alexandria, New Derry, New Stanton, Penn, West Newton and Youngwood in the Bethlehem Project's service area.

To see if you qualify for assistance, contact Catholic Charities at 724-837-1840 for intake and referral.

Longtime Members Depart

The Bethlehem Project Advisory Board thanks two long-term members who are leaving the board.

Suzanne English, who served as president the past four years, leaves the Advisory Board after nearly nine years of service including leadership roles on the fundraising and public relations committees. "I've always felt safe housing is an essential part of providing stability and security, especially for children," Suzanne said. "The Bethlehem Project gave me the opportunity to help our neighbors maintain that sense of security."

Suzanne said the Bethlehem Project's work in the first year of the pandemic, helping 100 families and individuals stay in their homes, "was a significant contribution and remains one of the most meaningful things I have ever helped do."

WHO WE HELP

Patty S.* is a single mom with two, school-age daughters. She recently lost her job due to cutbacks. Unemployed for a few weeks, she fell behind on her rent.

She was able to find new employment and started her job. However, she would not be paid in time to meet her rent's due date. She was now in danger of eviction.

She turned to The Bethlehem Project, which was able to assist her, and with her new job, Patty will once again be self-sufficient.

Patty stated that being unemployed was extremely difficult, and the threat of eviction only added to her stress. She had never had to ask for help before and found it hard. Patty related that she was very grateful for the assistance and appreciated being treated with respect and kindness.

*name has been changed to protect privacy.

DONATIONS RECEIVED

Thank you to the following who donated to our last newsletter:

Amy Adomshick in memory of deceased members of Adomshick and Cassidy families; Dave and RoseAnn Austeri; Andy Benedict; Eric and Hon. Michele Bononi; Ross Butch; Terry and Deborah Chemski; Mr. and Mrs. Leon DeCerb; Ghislaine DiBiasi-Hess; Bob and Carol Diehl.

Suzanne English in memory of Alanna DeRito Gaudiello and in honor of Bob Diehl; Carolyn Falcon; Lois Frantz; Janice Garlock; Camala Grillo; John and Christine Harnicar; John and Lynne Herc; Mr. and Mrs. Richard Jenca; John and Gretchen Kline; Agnes Lapa in memory of George Happ; Patricia Long; Dr. James R. Lynch.

Edward Meadows in memory of Susan Meadows; Joan Miller in honor of Clair Kreider; Mary Monack; Ronald and Jackie Myers; Peggy Ritz; J. Vincent Rizzo; Elizabeth Rua in memory of Joe Lotto and William Rua; Patricia Smiy; Michael and Stephanie Swerc; Michael and Janet Urick; and George and Deborah Voloch.

We also received a donation for the Tree of Hope from Eileen Scheib in memory of the parents and grandparents of Joel and Eileen Sheib.

THANK YOU, SPONSORS:

SILVER LEVEL

Kepple-Graft Funeral Home Inc.

FRIEND

New Image Hair Clinic

BRONZE LEVEL SPONSORS

Anonymous Donors

Mrs. Suzanne English

Hillview Motors

Moore Tire Service

Sendell Motors/Mohler Family Foundation

Smail Auto Group

Bob and Carol Deihl

Ray & June Hoehler

Don and Ann Miles

Pantalone Funeral Home

Seton Hill University

CONGRATS, WINNERS:

1. Farm-to-Table:
Alyssa Kunselman
2. Red & White Wine
Delight: Dave Austeri
3. But First, Coffee: Lee
4. Sip n' Scratch: Bob Errett
5. Let's Get Building:
Dawn Tedrow
6. Handmade with Love:
Suzanne English
7. Buon Appetito:
Rosanne Sandolfini
8. Cathedral as Art:
Chris Turco
9. Waiting for Santa:
Jana King
10. Lots of Reese's:
Richelle Ledgerwood
11. 50/50: winnings were
generously returned to The
Bethlehem Project by
winner.



Bethlehem Project members continue to raise awareness in the community. At left, board member Ray Hoehler and his grandson, Cooper Outly, helped assemble the Tree of Hope in December. Above, board member Gretchen Kline recruited her daughters, Olivia and Paige, to help set up the booth at the annual Hempfield Night Out that showcased community agencies and groups and available resources.

"Because there was no place for them to stay..." Luke 2:7

.....**Members continued from Page 2**

Sheila Murray leaves the board after more than eight years of service. She originally got involved with the Bethlehem Project board to help direct the financial viability of the program.

She then became involved with the material assistance mission of the organization as one of the board’s buyers and a donation coordinator to the women’s shelter in Greensburg. “That is the true spirit of the Bethlehem Project and gave me the most satisfaction; interacting with other volunteers and clients at the shelter,” she said.

.....**New Members Appointed**

And, The Bethlehem Project Advisory Board warmly welcomes two new members.

Stephanie Turin, a graduate of Seton Hill College, worked as a medical social worker helping acute and long-term care patients for 27 years before becoming social work program director at Westmoreland County Community College 11 years ago.

She has been named Professor of the Year twice at the college and once at the state level. She has served on the boards of the Westmoreland County Children’s Bureau, Area Agency on Aging, Faith in Action, Senior Life and on several professional organizations that support social workers.

“I’m looking forward to serving people in need in our community through the Bethlehem Project,” said Stephanie, who has served as a catechist and Eucharistic minister in the parish.

Robin Duff has a 35-year career in the food service industry and is currently working for a nonprofit organization that works with school districts and their nutritional professionals to support children while assisting with their participation in school breakfast and lunch programs

She looks forward to continuing to help our neighbors who need assistance through the Bethlehem Project’s focus on preventing homelessness.

“I want to make a difference in our communities,” Robin said. “I have supported the Bethlehem Project through the activities and raffles at the parish and thought I could do more. I am honored to become part of the advisory board and look forward to this opportunity.”

Bethlehem Project of Blessed Sacrament Cathedral Donation Slip

I/WE wish to donate for:

1 night of emergency lodging: _____ \$60.00

1 month of rental assistance _____ \$700.00 (following COVID this has been permanently increased to \$700)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Optional:

In Memory or In Honor of (please circle): _____

Send acknowledgment to: _____

Address: _____