

Helping Hands

Winter 2012

Providing Christian ministry of refuge, hope and encouragement to those in need

Dad finds help, hope at The Refuge

"Little by little I'm starting to feel different."

Hope is an amazing thing. It can be the driving force that helps us to face each day and its challenges. With the help of the staff at The Refuge, "Thomas" learned what hope is and what it could mean for him and his son, "A.J."

Thomas is a single father who stayed at The Refuge with his 3-year-old son. He was facing many challenges and needed to find a place for himself and A.J. or face being separated. This is his story, in his own words.

My dad was an alcoholic and left us when I was 12. After that, in the years that followed, my family became real unstable and I turned to a drug addiction. Actually, I turned to anything that made me feel good at the time and gave me a thrill. I was in and out of prison since I was 18, and was in lock-up before that.

For a long time, the hardest part of being in prison was being deprived of "fun." I think the turning point came for me when I had my first visit with my newborn son in a prison meeting room, and for the first time it really hit me that life is about so much more than me. I had been living an absolutely selfish life up to that point.

(When I was released from jail) if I didn't find shelter for me and my son, he would have gone into foster care and I would have gone back to jail or rehab. I called The Refuge and kept calling until they had an opening. **(Hope, continued on pg. 2)**



A little holiday reminder - Christmas Appeal and Christmas Card Project



The holiday season is so very busy, that we wanted to remind you of our Christmas Appeal and Christmas Card Project to extend some encouragement and cheer to the homeless families, individuals and Veterans we are working directly with this winter. If you have not already done so, please send your donation in support of our ministries, along with the Christmas card as soon as possible. There is still time to pass along these holiday greetings to our clients. Include an uplifting message and remember to sign only your first name(s). If you did not receive the mailing and would like to be included, please call our office at (814) 456-8073.

Board of Directors

Gail Fees
President

Susan Travis
Secretary

James Garlick
Treasurer

Bill Baxter
Viki Bloomer
Julie Davis
Ken Davis

Ann DiTullio
Nancy Dusckas
Ann Marie Ernst
Rev. Robert Lewis
Rev. Keith McGarvey
Melissa Miller
Rev. Rich Pearson
Jim Renshaw
Nels Sandberg
Rev. Ray Speakman
Jarad Willats
Rev. Michelle Wobrak
Harold Yannayon

Janet Douthett
Member Emeritus

Rev. Joseph W. Patterson III
District Superintendent

EUMA Contacts:

Cheryl Davis
Executive Director, 456-8073

Karen Trask
Chaplain, 456-8073

Connie Miller
Refuge Supervisor, 454-6088

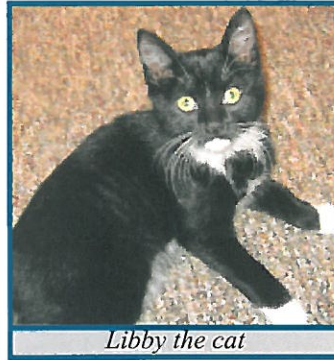
Ken Miles
Liberty House Supervisor, 874-3687

Nicole Thompson
Outreach Supervisor, 456-5670

Victoria Weber
Rainbow Connection Mgr., 453-4080

Kate Hiles
Development Director, 456-8073

Meet Libby!



Libby the cat

Meet the newest resident of Liberty House! Libby, a 12-week-old black and white kitten, has taken on the role of house cat at Liberty House, our transitional shelter for homeless Veteran men. As house cat, Libby's task is to provide unconditional love to all the house residents. It's a job to which she has quickly adapted.

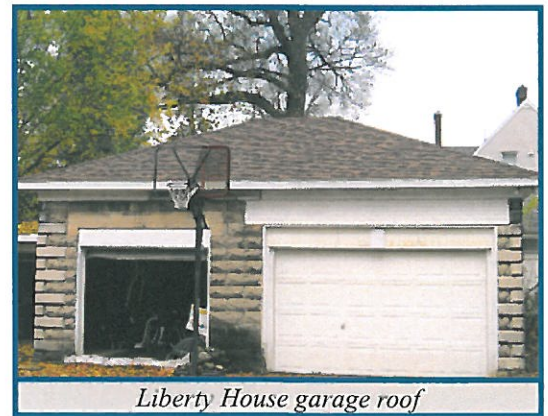
"Every one of our clients seek Libby out for an ear scratch and attention before they leave the house each day for their jobs, volunteering or appointments," said Ken Miles, Liberty House Program Supervisor. "She is a very

welcomed addition to the house."

Roof Repairs Realized

Many of you have served as volunteers by helping with the physical needs of our four ministry buildings.

One such significant volunteer project was the replacement of our garage roof at Liberty House by the Glenwood United Methodist congregation. They provided about 150 hours of volunteer time and over \$2,000 in materials to address our dilapidated garage roof. The project took a weekend to complete and will provide our Liberty House residents the opportunity to utilize the garage as an exercise gym. Thank you, Glenwood!



Liberty House garage roof

(Hope, continued from pg. 1)

(Coming to The Refuge) has kept me and my son together. I didn't have to worry about that, so I could focus on moving forward with getting a job and finishing school. It means a lot to know that your son has a place to sleep, there's food and help with clothes and stuff. I wasn't worrying so much. I was able to get a part-time job since I came here. The people at The Refuge really care about you, they listen to you, they pray with you. They help you find the resources that can help you move ahead.

Being at The Refuge has given me the chance to be in the position to stay on the right path. If we hadn't come here, there would have been no foundation for me to stand on. I'm starting to see that in this life there are people who care, and who believe that you can change.

Although Thomas still has challenges to face, he can now envision a brighter future. He hopes to finish trade school, become an electrician and "be the best dad he can be."

His story is one of many made possible by you, our supporters, who enable us to provide these vital services to those in need. Thank you for sharing in our mission!

Record Year for Ride



photo courtesy of Rich Pearson Photography

Wow! It was a record year for the 13th Annual Ride for The Refuge! We greatly appreciate all who supported this event and helped make it such a tremendous success. This year, you helped:

- set a new record for total amount raised - \$18,300!
- set a new record for participants - a total of 330 riders!

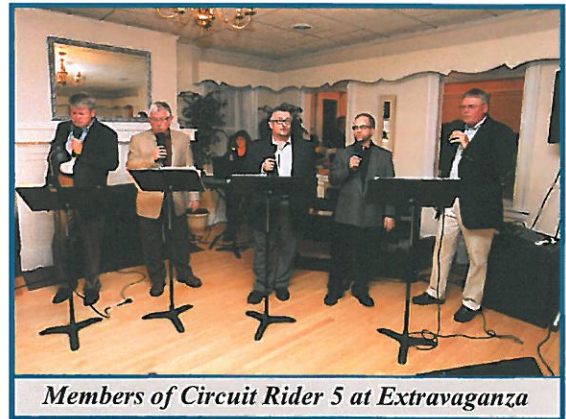
The funds raised through this event provided more than one month of ministry at The Refuge, EUMA's emergency shelter for homeless families with children. We would also like to thank our event sponsors for their gracious support:

- Presque Isle Cycling Club
- Orthopaedic & Sport Medicine of Erie, PC
- CYS Club
- Erie Insurance
- Art's Bakery
- Lake Country Bike
- Loesel-Schaaf Insurance Agency, Inc.
- McGill, Power, Bell & Associates
- Dusckas Funeral Home
- Glenwood United Methodist Church
- Conneautville: Valley United Methodist Church

Third Annual Fall Extravaganza

In early November, friends and supporters of our mission at EUMA joined us for the Third Annual Fall Extravaganza to enjoy an evening of uplifting music by Circuit Rider 5, a marvelous silent auction and fellowship with one another. With their support, along with the efforts of the Extravaganza Committee, \$5,400 was raised for our programs serving the homeless community!

We wish to thank Julie Davis and her committee for a job well-done; to Circuit Rider 5 for donating their talents in support of the event; to the businesses and individuals who donated gifts for the auction; and to all who attended or donated. Thank you!



Members of Circuit Rider 5 at Extravaganza

Update on Us

We mentioned in the last newsletter that you would be seeing a new website and logo for our agency. While it has taken longer than anticipated, our hope is that you will be seeing something new in the very near future.

Keep a watch out at www.euma-erie.org.

You'll know it when you see it!

Tennessee Backporch in Concert

Save
the
Date!



See
you
There!

Make plans to join us for an uplifting evening of music and song with **Tennessee Backporch**, Erie's premier variety band.

7:00 p.m. on Friday, April 26, 2013

at Asbury United Methodist Church, 4703 West Ridge Road

Watch for more details!



Erie United Methodist Alliance, Inc.
1033 East 26th Street
Erie, PA 16504-2951

Return Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE PAID
ERIE, PA
PERMIT NO. 131

Save a tree and our budget! Get newsletters electronically. To sign up, e-mail info@euma-erie.org.

Ministries

EUMA Office

814-456-8073

The Refuge

*Emergency homeless shelter
for families*

1027 E. 26th St. Erie, PA 16504

814-454-6088

Hope House

*Long-range housing with life-skills
training for families*

1033 E. 26th St. Erie, PA 16504

814-456-8073

Liberty House

*Long-range housing with life-skills
training for Veterans*

550 W. 7th St. Erie, PA 16502

814-874-3687

Project Hope Outreach

On-the-street ministry

1033 E. 26th St. Erie, PA 16504

814-456-5670

Rainbow Connection

*Thrift store providing necessities
to those in need*

and financial support to EUMA

1516 Buffalo Rd. Erie, PA 16510

814-453-4080


Christmas Wishes for our Families

This Christmas, The Refuge and Hope House will provide safe shelter and services to homeless families - as well as host Christmas morning. Many of you are already joining together to make it a wonderful holiday for the homeless families we serve.

Last year, we introduced a new holiday program that enables our parents to shop for their own children. We asked for gift cards that blessed the parents with the "experience" of providing for their children's Christmas wishes. It was such a great success, and the parents truly felt blessed to be a part of the process, that we are doing the same thing this year.

You can purchase gift cards (\$20 - \$25 increments, preferably from Wal-Mart due to its proximity to The Refuge and Hope House) that we can distribute to our adult clients, enabling them to choose specific gifts for their children.

Questions about the Christmas program can be directed to the staff at The Refuge at 814-454-6088. Thank you.



*One step at a time,
walking with those
who are homeless and in need*

2012 Annual Report
for the
Erie United Methodist Alliance

EUMA Annual Report

Enclosed in this newsletter is a copy of our Annual Report for 2011-2012. This is a report to our supporters of what we have accomplished together. We hope that you are blessed to know what an impact you have on our community through your partnership in our ministry.