

THE OPEN LINK

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **Healthy Steps for Older Adults** at The Center, Feb. 16 and 23; 1 p.m.; **FREE**.
- **Arthritis and Energy Seminar** with Good Shepherd Rehab at The Center, March 16, 1-2 p.m. **FREE**.
- **Retirement—Making Money** Last with Financial Advisor Bonnie L. Thompson at The Center, March 22, 1-2 p.m. **FREE**.

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THE OPEN LINK



VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

WINTER 2016-17 NEWSLETTER

Holiday Programs “A Blessing” Say Families

A newer, more dependable vehicle, new shoes, just a little bit of extra income to allow her to breathe – these are the things on Erica’s Christmas list.

As a single mom of four children, she works full-time to provide for her kids. But every paycheck goes into the absolute necessities like rent on an apartment big enough for their family of five, groceries, utilities and the like.

There is literally nothing left over after the bills are paid.

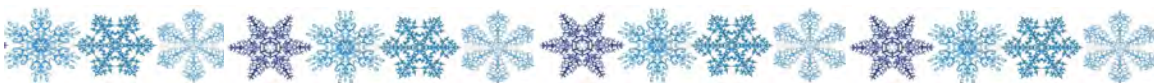
“It honestly makes me upset to know that I myself can’t provide this for them,” she said with a sigh. “I work hard. But programs like Adopt-A-Family have helped my family tremendously. It helps my children be able to have something to open on Christmas morning because I don’t have the

extra funds to make that happen for them.”

Erica and her kids, ranging from elementary to middle-school age, now have something to look forward to, she said. The kids’ wishes were granted by a family who wanted to make their holiday a little brighter.

“It gives them and I the

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Sue Schmoyer, a volunteer in the Christmas Room, helps restock the shelves with craft items on a busy December morning. More than 600 children in the Upper Perkiomen Valley will receive Christmas gifts through The Open Link’s holiday programs this year. Thanks to our donors for making it possible!

Message From the Executive Director



Stuart Bush, Ph.D.

Miracles Really Do Happen at The Open Link!

It's a miracle.

Every year as the holidays roll around, your generosity to your neighbors in the valley is truly a miracle.

There are your *tangible* gifts.

There are the 40 gallon bags filled with gifts purchased by local families, individuals and groups for their "adopted" families who are less fortunate. There are the stockings filled by local employees.

There are the gifts that arrive one, two, ten at a time from you and your neighbors.

Your gifts line the halls, and fill our offices, our classroom, our kitchen and our food pantry. It's hard to move around at times – a great problem to have!

And there are the many *intangible* gifts made possible by your financial support.

The gift of enough to

eat. Annually we serve 1,200 children, seniors and adults through our choice food pantry. As one single mom, caring for three young children, said during her pantry visit, "I'm making it through because The Open Link is here for me. Places like The Open Link offer hope, not just help."

The gift of possibility. In northern Montgomery County ~15% of our chil-

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Thank You!

We wanted to let you in on the good news...



We enjoyed a successful Penney Auction Nov. 4 that raised \$10,000 for The Open Link's programs and services. Your generosity on Giving Tuesday Nov. 29 also helped us stock The Center kitchen with essentials like pots, pans, baking sheets, plates and utensils! We appreciate our donors!

Super Sponsor Spotlight: Titanium Finishing

In a 25,000-sq.-ft. facility, nestled adjacent to The Grand Theater in East Greenville, Titanium Finishing Company is doing amazing things.

And when we say amazing, we're talking historic. The metal finishing business, a third-generation family endeavor, has finished the cases that hold the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights for the National Archives in Washington DC.

The company has also worked on a wrench for NASA that fixed the Hubble Space Telescope the first time it needed repair. It routinely completes the titanium periscope housing for submarines and does millions of medical implants each year, including expandable ribs made from titanium for pediatric heart transplant patients.

You can also see its work in Normandy, France at the Juno Beach World War II memorial or at the Max Pro-tech Art Gallery in New York City.

Melanie Cunningham, president of the company, and her husband Tim, head the business founded by Melanie's father, Melvin Faul. Titanium Finishing has been around since 1970 when Faul first invented an anodization process for titanium.



Melanie Cunningham, Titanium's president, and Melinda Eccleston, Titanium executive vice president and CFO, at last month's Penny Auction to benefit The Open Link.

The company now does four different finishing processes and combinations thereof at its Main Street facility.

"It naturally color codes a lot of things and it gives it some functionality," Melanie said of their work. "Titanium is strong but it's soft so when you go to put it together with something else it tends to create microscopic little balls of titanium. One of the processes that we do gets rid of that. It makes it usable in a lot more designs than it would normally be because of its softness."

Aside from its dedication

to its work and customers, Titanium is also dedicated to helping those in need in its own community.

"I donate to plenty of things but I like that The Open Link is local and I can see it work," Melanie said. "We're always trying to do what we can for the organization."

Tim and Melanie Cunningham have personally been involved in many of The Open Link's endeavors over the years. They sponsor TOL annually, participate in the Adopt-A-Family program at Christmas, give towards different endeavors like the

"I like that The Open Link is local and I can see it work."

~ Melanie Cunningham

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Valued Volunteer: John Jensen

For John Jensen, the memories of those trips in an 80s-era wood-paneled station wagon stuck with him. The smell of the food; his grandmother's mannerisms.

He frequently tagged along with her when she delivered hot meals to seniors through a Meals on Wheels program. He was 5 or 6 years old at the time, he estimated, and was full of questions.

The answer to many of his questions, pertaining to what they were doing and why, was simple, his grandmother said. It was charity.

"My grandmother really pushed home the point of charity," he explained. "It's important to give back. You have to have something greater than yourself, outside yourself. Otherwise you're on a moral slippery slope."

And now, as the father of

adult children and an 8-year-old girl, he's finding himself coming full circle. He has become a third-generation Meals on Meals volunteer.



Like his grandmother and mother before him, John said he wanted to get back to giving back to his community. And, as a technology consultant with a fairly flexible schedule, he found he had the time in the middle of the day.

While he also volunteers through his church, East Swamp Mennonite in Quakertown, and

sponsors children in need through the church, he fondly remembered those trips, knocking on people's doors with food and a smile.

Now he's the driver, although he's traded in the station wagon for something a little less dated.

"Everyone is very appreciative, which you tend to find that in the older generation," he said of volunteering. Some people are talkative but you have to strike that balance between the conversation and getting the other meals out

to people while they're still hot.

"Everyone was very nice and they seem like they could use a hand. I'm looking forward to doing it each week."

For more information on volunteering for any of The Open Link's programs, please contact Evet Hexamer at 215.679.6550 or email volunteers@theopenlink.org.



Help us go green in the new year! If you or someone you know enjoys our newsletter, please help us save on costs by subscribing digitally at www.theopenlink.org. Thank you!

Save the date
2017
BRUNCH AND SILENT AUCTION

Sunday, April 23, 2017



**Gatsby's at
 The SunnyBrook Ballroom**

50 North Sunnybrook Road

Pottstown, PA

12:00 - 3:00 PM

Brunch served at 12:30 pm



Remember to Save the Date for this year's Brunch and Silent Auction.

Last year was an exciting event, with food, fun and competitive bidding which raised more than \$30,000! We look forward to another entertaining afternoon, and we hope you'll be able to join us!

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dren do not get their high school diploma before leaving school. That's why The Open Link offers free prep classes and low cost testing for High School Equivalency (HSE) also known as GED.

As one student said, "Thanks to The Open Link for believing in me and also helping me achieve a goal

that I didn't think was possible."

The gift of independence. Every day our Meals on Wheels drivers deliver nutritious meals (more than 20,000 each year) and provide a listening ear to homebound seniors, helping them stay healthy and in their homes.

"I look forward to my Meals on Wheels visits! They give you food

that's good and good for you. They're like family to me." ~Jean

The gift of joy! Each year ~600 needy children in UPV have a happy holiday through our holiday programs. Last week, I watched as one mother turned the corner into our gift room. When she saw the tables filled with gifts she broke into tears of joy.

"It's a miracle!"

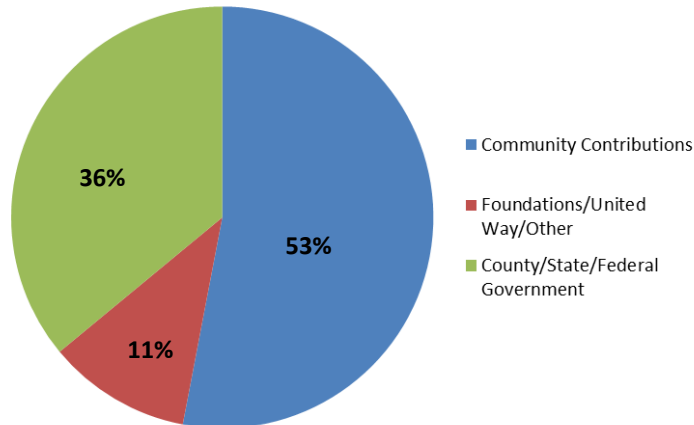
Join Us in February for Heart Health Awareness Month

The Center, 517 Jefferson Street, East Greenville, will be hosting lectures, giveaways, screenings and more in February aimed at keeping seniors' hearts healthy. Call 215.679.6550 for more information. Mark your calendars to join the effort!

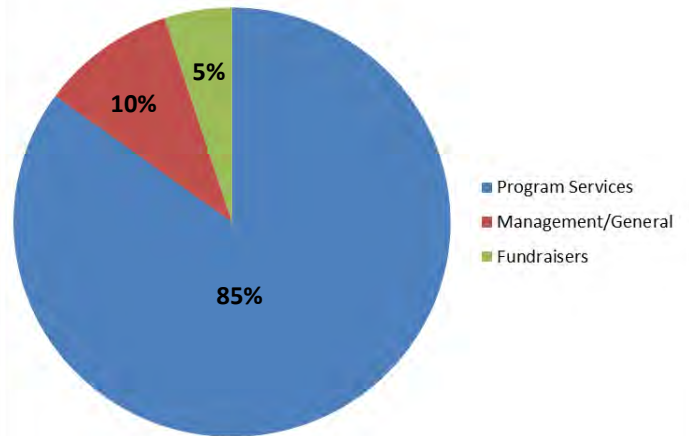


2016 Year in Review

Income



Expenses



Many Thanks to The Open Link's 2016 Community Sponsors:

Diamond

Stauffer Glove & Safety

Platinum

Gillespie Electric, Inc.

Titanium Finishing Company

Upper Perk Chiropractic Center

Gold

Blommer Chocolate Company

Kulp Financial Services

New Goshenhoppen United Church of Christ

Perkiomen Animal Hospital

QNB

Univest—Banking, Insurance, Investments

Silver

Falk Funeral Homes & Crematory

Family Caregivers Network

Fife and Drum Tree Farm, Inc.

Gordon H. Bayer, Inc.

Lechner & Stauffer

Palm Schwenkfelder Church

Perkiomen Valley Woman's Club

St. Luke's Quakertown Campus

Upper Perkiomen Community Church

Upper Perkiomen Valley Lions Club

Bronze

Calvary Church

Entrance Systems, Inc.

Quad/Graphics

Unami Friends Meeting

Green Lane-Marlborough Lions Club

Upper Perkiomen Kiwanis

Copper

Creative Health Services, Inc.

G. L. Godshall Plumbing, Inc.

Perkiomen Tours

R.J. Sell Excavating, Inc.

Town and Country Newspaper

Tri County Area Federal Credit Union

U.S. Tape Company, Inc.

We're Grateful for Our 2016 Giving Society Donors:

The Family Society

Tim & Melanie Cunningham
Gene Dolloff
Matthew & Melinda Eccleston
Leon & Kaylyn Edelman
Priscilla Kistler
Walter & Lillian Master
James & Donna Montich
Thomas & Valerie Seerveld

Edgar & Blake Stauffer
Jeff & Luanne Stauffer
W. Randall & Joi Stauffer
Tim & Gwen White

The Neighbors Society

Barbara Bieler
Stuart Bush & Mary Scott
Robert & Elizabeth Croll

Ingrid Dressler
Randall Rohl
David & Jessica Smith
Bob & Christine Vogel
Jean Wentzel

The Hometown Society

Dr. Douglas Atno
Carl & Marion Bardman

John Betz
Dorothy Bleam
Jeff Bloomer
Joan Brunner
David & Lisa Burkhart
William & Wanda Capelli
Jon & Joann Chandler
Robert & Sylvia Cichocki
James & Susan Coffey
Carole Ann Depew

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Christmas spirit that would be lost without this kind of program. Christmas isn't all about the presents, but I'm truly blessed to know such people who've given us love and generosity during the hard times. Everyone who makes this possible are our true angels."

Like Erica, Jamie didn't plan on needing help this Christmas. She was a married mother of two children until her husband of 20 years left her with a simple goodbye a month ago.

When she walked into the Christmas Room last week, she slowly took in its contents. Looking at the brand new toys

and items for all ages, she got emotional. Suddenly without any income, she wasn't able to buy anything on her own for her daughter or her son.

"I'm always the one trying to help other people," she said. "Now I need help. This is such a blessing and I want to help you guys out in whatever way I can."

"When the kids open these gifts up, it's going to be like the best day of their life. Normally I'm happy if I get a little something for Christmas. Now all that matters is that my kids are happy. My family is going to have a merry Christmas now, thanks to you!"

This year more than 600 kids

will benefit from the generosity of individuals, neighborhood associations, churches, youth groups, schools and other donors, who fill the wish lists of the families in the Adopt-A-Family program and fill the shelves of The Open Link kitchen to overflowing with gifts.

It's a humbling experience to see the families leaving the agency with smiles on their faces, to see them experience happiness and relief. It's something we wish every donor could experience.

And, judging from the gifts leaving the building in the arms of parents from across our community, we think their children will be feeling pretty good this Christmas too.

Hometown Society Donors, continued

Gary & Jane Detweiler
Michael & Jeanette Duka
Elizabeth Endy
Donald & Diane Engle
Linda Engle
Rick Eschbach
Frank & Patricia Fisher
Wayne & Dawn Frank
Russell & Linda Fretz
David & Gail Gerhard
Nancy Greiss-Brogan
John & Juile Hasson
Diane Hazum
Richard & Merris Hoffman
Jim & Marci Jaman
Thomas Kenna
Carol Kress
John & Carol Kuzmission
Michelle & Stefan Laessig
David Landis
Kevin & Bridget Langenback
Christina Lee
Donna & Pat Long
John & Carol McGrath
Edward & Marilyn Mosheim

Kermit Patrick, Jr.
Thomas & Rebekah Putera
Harry & Sue Quinke
Donald & Sarah Reed
Peter & Maribeth Reigner
Rev. Charles & Kathleen Romanowski
Terry & Donna Sands
William & Gladys Sands
Laureen & Sterling Schrauger
Thomas Shewell
Carl & Sheri Slonaker
Kenneth & Pat Small
Donald & Sally Smith
Joan Smith
Stanley & Dorothy Snyder
Richard & Dorothy Specht
Michael & Mary Tannous
Margaret Tocci
Dean & Kim Wampole
Douglas Wallinger
Frank & Edith Weisbecker
Carolyn Weisel
Patricia Yoki

Food Pantry Needs Winter 2017

- Juice (64 oz. preferred)
- Canned Tomatoes
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Canned Kidney, Black and Baked Beans
- Pasta, Pasta Sides and Rice
- Pancake Mix and Syrup
- Soups and Stew
- Macaroni and Cheese

Top Personal Items Needed

- Body Wash
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Deodorant

Donations can be dropped off at The Open Link Main Office, 452 Penn Street in Pennsburg, during regular office hours. For more info, call 215.679.4112.



Main Office

452 Penn St.

Pennsburg, PA. 18073

Phone: 215-679-4112

Fax: 215-679-9795

Email: info@theopenlink.org

The Center

517 Jefferson St.

East Greenville, PA. 18041

Phone: 215-679-6550

www.theopenlink.org

“Opening Doors, Linking Communities, Helping Neighbors Flourish.”

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penny auction and silent auction and Melanie and her daughter, Melinda Eccleston, run the bake sale at the penny auction each fall.

The mother-daughter team also co-chairs The Open Link’s brunch and silent auction each spring and Melinda, a past board member, serves on the development and communications committee for the organization. Melinda has also cooked and served the Monday Community Meal at The Center.

Moreso than all the energy, time and funds they’ve contributed to The Open Link over the past 11 years, Titanium Finishing and the Cunningham family should be known for their heart.

It’s something they say comes from Faul.

“You can always joke about every car my mom and dad had when I was little. It was always filled with combs because that’s what people

would sell in the city,” Melanie said.

“I always remember going to the zoo or the city with him and if there was someone who was homeless, he’d hand them \$100. It [the altruistic spirit] runs in the family. We came by it honestly,” Melinda, Titanium’s executive vice president and CFO, said.

“Historically, my grandfather always donated to TOL. I had a friend in middle school who said she wasn’t getting any Christmas presents at all. My grandfather gave me \$100 and took me to Ames and we bought her nail polish and all different things. I remember she cried, her mom cried. That really stuck with me.”

“We’re so fortunate. We’re a third generation family business, we work really hard to keep ourselves in this business and keep ourselves relevant and I feel incredibly fortunate at my age that I can donate my time and my money and my energy to something else to give back to the community.”

Thank you, Titanium Finishing Company, for your investment in The Open Link and the Upper Perkiomen Valley!

For more information, visit the company’s new website, titaniumfinishing.com, their Facebook page, or call them at 216.679.4181.

