

Tredyffrin & Easttown Care launches holiday drive for local families

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p. 46

We read about families in need a lot these days. Natural disasters, company cut-backs, medical problems, the list of reasons a family can be struggling is long. We immediately think of families facing challenges in California because of the fires, families in the Darfur region of Africa, and those in the homeless shelters of inner-city Philadelphia.

But right here in our local communities - including Tredyffrin, Easttown, Radnor, and the Great Valley area, there are families in need as well. These families may not be as visible, but their stories are just as compelling. Most have jobs and try hard day after day to make ends meet, but it does not take much to temporarily disrupt a tight budget and tumble a family into a financial crisis. So why do these families stay and struggle in this high cost area? Tredyffrin & Easttown Care Board member Sandi Gorman explained, "They stay mostly for the kids, to take advantage of the great schools that offer their kids a chance for a brighter future. Isn't that what all parents want for their kids?"

Tredyffrin & Easttown Care (T&E Care) is a community non-profit group with a mission to help those in need in and around Tredyffrin and Easttown. After local community members offered help to families who relocated to this area after Hurricane Katrina, there was a realization that some families already living right in our own neighborhoods were struggling just like those who left New Orleans. So T&E Care became an official non-profit and has helped those local families who face difficult situations.

"Our hope is that if we can help a family cover the cost of a tank of heating oil, then they can stay warm for the winter. How can a child do homework and come to school well-rested if the house is freezing?" asked Board member Jump Dautrich. "It's such a simple gesture of community spirit, but the impact can really be huge."

Another big problem in this area is transportation. The lack of good public transportation makes it very hard on the surprisingly large number of local families who do not own a car. If a family is lucky enough to own a car, it's often old and constantly in need of costly repairs. Without the repairs, the family can't get to work, their paycheck is reduced, and financial pressures mount. T&E Care Board Chair Denny Willson explained, "T&E Care tries to respond by covering some of these car repairs, so a financial crisis is avoided."

T&E Care relies on the local community for support. Its funding comes from local donations.

How can you get involved? Many ways to help are explained in detail on their website,

www.tecare.org. The main programs include:

- (1) Send T&E Care your email address so when a family has a crisis, T&E Care can include you in the request for help. (Requests for help are always confirmed.)
- (2) T&E Care is currently running its annual holiday drive to support a number of local families who have difficulty especially at the holidays. "Neighbors helping neighbors" can make a particularly large difference through this effort.

(3) T&E Care is starting a new program this year where you can make a donation in the name of a friend or family member, instead of giving that person a traditional gift. The donation to T&E Care will be used to help local families with specific needs.

(4) Do you have something you'd like to get rid of and would like to sell on eBay or Craig's List but don't know how? T&E Care can help by doing the work and receiving the sale proceeds, while you get the tax deduction and a good chance to clean out your stuff!

(5) You can make a tax deductible donation or pledge to T&E Care to meet temporary critical needs of local families.

T&E Care offers great ways to assist our neighbors and strengthen our community. Go to www.tecare.org for more information. For further information, contact: Catherine Lucas, arizona4@Comcast.net.