

In The Region

Community Involvement at its Best

Bishop's Charitable Assistance Fund Donates to Opportunity Networks

AMHERST - Opportunity Networks, a non profit organization serving residents from the Southern New Hampshire area who live with acquired and developmental disabilities, recently received a \$5,000 grant for its "Food Distribution Program" from the Bishop's Charitable Assistance Fund.

Formed as a non profit organization 30 years ago, Opportunity Networks is a 501(c)(3) charity which provides meaningful employment, job training and support, to adults living with acquired and developmental disabilities in the Southern New Hampshire community. Their mission is to develop an enhanced quality of life for each individual enrolled in the program. They also provide life skills, wellness programs, and social opportunities for their clients, including volunteering in their local community.

"Community involvement by our clients is one of the most important aspects of the success of our day program," said Executive Director of Opportunity Networks, Rocky Morelli. "Our clients want to be a part of the bigger community in Southern New Hampshire. It is important for them to view themselves as being a vital part of their communities."

One of the most important community volunteer roles the clients at Opportunity Networks have played in recent years has been in the area of food distribution to the poor and disadvantaged, through their "Food Distribution Program." Three times each week, the staff and clients collect donated food from local farm stands such as Lull Farm, food donation centers, and local churches. They then transport these perishable and non-perishable food items to local food pantries, such as the SHARE Outreach program in Milford and the Tolle Street Mission in Nashua. It is from these lo-



(L to R): Bishop's Charitable Assistance Fund Chairman of the Board Walter Gallo presents a check for \$5,000 to Opportunity Networks' Executive Director Rocky Morelli for their "Food Distribution Program." Also pictured: Back row: Lull Farm Owner Dave Orde, and Opportunity Networks' volunteers Robert Woodcock and Grant Bureau.

cations that hundreds of less fortunate families and individuals in the Southern New Hampshire community are able to come and receive much needed food items.

Due to tight budgetary constraints at Opportunity Networks, the continuation of this very worthwhile program was at risk of cancellation until the Bishop's Charitable Assistance Fund awarded them the grant money to continue this program.

In commenting on his heartfelt gratitude to the Bishop's Charitable Assistance Fund, Morelli added, "With the ability to continue this program, this grant benefits not only our clients, but also as a result, the many underprivileged citizens who rely on the food pantries in the Southern New Hampshire area. We have a saying at Opportunity Net-

works: 'By working together, we build a stronger community.' This certainly is appropriate in this case, and for that, we are grateful."

For more information on Opportunity Networks, visit www.opportunitynetworks.org or call 883-4402.

The Bishop's Charitable Assistance Fund supports tax-exempt organizations that improve the quality of life and provide basic essentials for individuals and families living in New Hampshire. Their focus is especially on the poor and disadvantaged living in our community.

The Fund is operated by a volunteer lay board of directors who make recommendations to the Bishop of Manchester for grants to any organization whose mission is consistent with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

Boys & Girls Club Recognizes Supporters

MILFORD - Several supporters were recognized for their contributions to the Boys & Girls Club of Souhegan Valley at its annual meeting on November 17th, 2011. Carol Gray, Mike McKnight, and Dan Finan received awards and recognition for their dedication as volunteers. Eight people were recognized with National Service to Youth Awards from Boys & Girls Clubs of America for dedicating a combined 65 years to helping kids "BE GREAT" including: employees Cory Sullivan, Ryan LeDoux and Robin deHaven for 5 year of service and board members Allise deSmet and John Siemienowicz for 5 years of service, George Mandragouras for 10 years of service, and Rich Lowney and Steve Desmarais for 15 years of service. In addition, the Boys & Girls Club of Souhegan Valley presented its annual Civic Award to Alene Candles for its support and commitment to the youth in the community.



Susan Taylor, Executive Director, and Allise de Smet, Board President, present Civic Award to Paul Amato, accepting on behalf of Alene Candles

A nonprofit organization, the Boys & Girls Club of Souhegan Valley strives to create opportunities that enhance the quality of life for youth of all backgrounds, with special concern for those that need us most. To support our mission to

help kids "be great", the BGCSV offers daily access to a broad range of programs designed to help kids succeed academically, adopt healthy lifestyles, and develop good character and citizenship. Visit www.svb-gc.org for more information.

Thomas Adams Donates Valuable Collection of Original Photos to New Hampshire Institute of Art

MANCHESTER - New Hampshire Institute of Art students, faculty, and visitors will now be able to view and study original photos produced by top artists over the past several decades as a result of a major gift the Institute has received from collector Thomas Adams. The gift by Adams, a Concord New Hampshire resident and photographer himself, has been appraised at \$376,000. It includes nearly 300 photos from artists such as Annie Leibovitz, George Daniell, Ralph Gibson, Todd Webb, and Rolf Koppel.

The gift was announced on December 8 at a reception that featured the unveiling of the Adams Center for Photographic Research

and Study. The new center, located in Fuller Hall, will be used for instruction, video presentations and the study of Adams' donated prints. It is attached to a specially designed climate controlled room where the photos will be stored with other valuable collections owned by the Institute. A sample of the collection is currently on exhibit at the center. "Photographs are meant to be accessible, viewed and studied. One primary focus at the Institute of Art is to use materials such as original photos as part of the learning experience. I believe this is essential

and at the core of why I am donating this collection to the Institute," Adams said. "It fits here better than in a museum."

The photos span seven decades and include several iconic images such as Annie Leibovitz capturing dancers Mikhail Baryshnikov and Linda Dowell, Todd Webb's "Georgia O'Keefe in the Twilight Canyon," and George Daniell's 1955 image of Sophia Loren in Rome. They were exhibited for the first time at the Institute in October 2010 and were extremely well received.

Frisella Fine Art Studio Celebrates 5 Year Anniversary with Home for the Holidays Show

Artist Robin Frisella of Manchester, NH is celebrating her fifth year at Frisella Fine Art Studio in Candia, NH. The work of award winning artists Robin Frisella, Doreen Boissonneault, Dick Fischer, Debby Frisella, and Stephen Previte will be on display November 26 - January 15, 2012.

Studio hours are Wednesday - Saturday 11am - 5pm or by appointment. Frisella Fine Art Studio is Robin's working studio and gallery. She designed this 1,000 sq ft space to maximize functionality. This flexible space easily converts to a classroom where Frisella host workshops and ongoing pas-



"Sunflowers & Apples" by Robin Frisella psa

tel classes. For more info or to see a sampling of their outstanding works visit www.robinfrisella.com.

Calling All Cooks - Make A Great Chowder or A Mean Chili? Prove It!

AMHERST - The Souhegan Valley Chamber of Commerce in partnership with Opportunity Networks will hold the first annual Souhegan Valley Chili Chowder Cookoff on Sunday, January 29 from 1-6 PM at the Amherst BusinessCenter on Route 101A in Amherst, NH. Home cooking enthusiasts will compete beside the region's finest restaurant chefs for the best chili and chowders in several categories to judged by pros in the food industry. Attendees will be able to taste all and vote on their favorites to win the "People's Choice" awards. Winners in each category will receive cash prizes, as well as bragging rights and free entry into next year's cook off to defend their title!

Participants should be prepared to provide small samples for approximately 300 as well as a means to keep food hot, such as a crock pot or steam table. All paper products will be provided. Participants will

be supplied with electricity, a table and chair. Entry fee is \$25 for commercial chefs or restaurants, \$15 for amateurs.

The Souhegan Valley Chili Chowder Cook Off benefits the Chamber and Opportunity Networks, a non profit organization that provides meaningful employment and training to adults living with developmental and acquired disabilities in the Southern New Hampshire community. Opportunity Networks' provides life skills and social opportunities for clients who range in age from 21 to well into their 60s. Clients of Opportunity Networks work and volunteer for a broad range of local businesses and organizations.

Tickets may be purchased online at www.souhegan.net or at the door, \$10 adults and \$5 children under 12. For more information, contact the Souhegan Valley Chamber of Commerce at 673-4360.

Nashua Theatre Guild Presents "Driving Miss Daisy" in January

As part of its 51st season, Nashua Theatre Guild is proud to present Alfred Uhry's Pulitzer Prize winning play, Driving Miss Daisy. From its Off-Broadway production in 1987 to the success of the Oscar-winning film version (four Academy Awards, including Best Picture), Driving Miss Daisy, is a timeless, searing, funny, and ultimately hopeful meditation on race relations in America, told through the complex relationship between two of popular culture's most enduring characters.

The play concerns Daisy Werthan, "a widowed, 72-year-old Jewish woman living in mid-century Atlanta, deemed too old to drive. Her son hires Hoke Colburn, an African American man, to serve as her chauffeur. What begins as a trou-

bled and hostile pairing, soon blossoms into a profound, life-altering friendship that transcends all the societal boundaries placed between them.

NTG's production features New England stage veterans Barbara Webb, Mike Wood and Chris Leon portraying these complex and iconic characters. Directed by William C. McGregor, this compelling piece is certain to be as moving as it is memorable.

Performances run January 26th, 27th and 28th at 8pm with 2pm matinee's on January 28th and 29th, 2012. NTG's low ticket prices (\$15/\$12) are available by calling (603) 320-2530 or online at www.NashuaTheatreGuild.org. Group discounts apply.

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