

# Wesley's Bear Ladies give boy reason to smile

Noah Bennett went to Doylestown Hospital when he was 3 years old.

He had croup and received a Good Bear from the Bear Ladies at Wesley Enhanced Living Doylestown. It became his constant companion and best pal.

About a year ago, the Bennett family relocated to Maryland, and the bear was lost in the move. Noah, now 8, was very attached to the bear and has been sad since it disappeared.

Over the holidays, when the family was visiting relatives in Doylestown, mom Rose called the hospital and asked about the origin of the bear. She then contacted Wesley in Doylestown to arrange a visit



Noah and Lila Bennett and their mother, Rose, visit with the Bear Ladies of Wesley Enhanced Living Doylestown: Polly Wright, Jean Seidle, Ruth West and Doris Myers.

from Noah and his little sister, Lila, on Jan. 8. They visited with the Bear Ladies, saw the bears

being made and chose a bear to take home. Noah was very happy.

# Doylestown choir seeking new members

Choir 4 Nothin', a nonprofit community choir, based in Doylestown, invites anyone who enjoys singing to join the group.

No auditions are necessary; those who are interested are invited to come to one of the practices and see if this choir is for them.

The mission of Choir 4 Nothin' is to advocate an appreciation for a diverse range of choral music, including, but not limited to, contemporary music (pop, soul, cinema/Broadway), jazz and classical, as well as educate by learning and performing great choral works, by tackling difficult music in its original form and language. However, the choir is really about having fun.

Contact the choir via e-mail at choir4nothin@gmail.com, and/or come out to practice. Practice is held from 4 to 6 p.m. Sundays at Rolling Hills United Methodist Church on Route 611 in Pipersville.



Members of the Choir 4 Nothin' singing at the Montgomery Mall in December.

Choir 4 Nothin' was founded in the spring of 2012 as a subgroup of Music 4 Nothin', the nonprofit organization that maintains two other subgroups: Jazz 4 Nothin' (Doylestown), which is seeking new rehearsal space, and The 4 Nothin' Symphony (Perkasie).

## On the Spiritual Side

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# Peacemeal offers food and fellowship to those impacted by HIV/AIDS

Andrea Strout

It was 1994 when Trinity Episcopal Church parishioner Emily Wolf first had the idea to prepare a meal at her Solebury church for people with HIV/AIDS and their loved ones.

Misinformation about the disease was still rampant in those days, and a yearlong educational effort was needed before the first Peacemeal was served in November 1995.

Many years and contributors later – for Peacemeal is nothing if not a collaborative effort – the once-a-month event lives on. As does the need for it, despite the medical and societal advances that have enabled people with HIV/AIDS to live long and fulfilling lives.

"It's like (being with) family," said one guest, who travels from Philadelphia with friends and rarely misses a dinner, held the third Sunday of each month in Trinity's McArthur Hall.

"Nice people, good food," another regular said, summing up Peacemeal's draw. On a recent, bitterly cold Sunday, she and 36 others were digging into roast pork, stuffing, potatoes, cooked peaches and a Peacemeal staple, corn pudding, while they chatted about friends, families and health concerns.

Many drive long distances, or carpool with other regulars, for just such fellowship, which often includes local entertainment – a specialty of Trinity parishioner Wendy Woodcock Holland, who ran Peacemeal and was its beloved mistress of ceremonies until her death from cancer in 2009. The one thing missing from the dinner, apparently by design, is any overt reference to religion.



Peacemeal volunteers prepare dinner in the Trinity (Solebury) Episcopal Church kitchen.

"Peacemeal has no denomination, except that we're doing this through the Episcopal Church," said Paul Licitra, a St. Philip's New Hope parishioner and former chef-proprietor of Tuscany restaurant in New Hope. "It's simply a need in the community that we're filling," he added about the meal he oversees, as Bill and Ann Olson, Jane King and other St. Philip's volunteers stirred pots and ladled out food.

Robust local support has helped keep Peacemeal going at critical junctures, Licitra said. Supporters have included businesses (Havana's, Max & Me, The Pod Shop and Rite-Aid), organizations (FACT-Fighting AIDS Continuously Together) and generous individuals, who have contributed everything from funds to frozen turkeys; but Episcopal churches have been its mainstay.

In addition to Trinity Solebury (which coordinates and hosts the event under the direction of Jerry and Debbie Hische), St. Philip's

regularly supplies menu-planning and elbow grease, and Trinity Buckingham provides festive decorations and hosts the dinner in its air-conditioned parish hall during the hot summer months.

As at every Peacemeal, a recent dinner began with guests and volunteers holding hands in a circle as they voiced concerns, shared good news and remembered loved ones. Remembering friends who have died or moved to more forgiving climates is an especially poignant part of Peacemeal, which has seen attendance contract from as many as 150 at a single dinner to 15 to 40 today. "We need to get the word out," Trinity parishioner David Benner said, to nodes.

Yet the continuing need for this ministry – as AIDS recedes from public consciousness but remains without a cure – is plain. It can be seen in the efforts of Peacemeal's guests to make the trek to Solebury; in the dedication of its volunteers; and in the earnest talk

of Dave G. and other regulars about the "stigma around AIDS" and the need to bring HIV-positive and -negative people together at events such as Peacemeal.

Around 6 p.m. at a recent Peacemeal, as the dessert dishes were cleared and people wrapped-up food to take home, the first guests took their leave, heading back out into the cold for Feasterville and Philadelphia, Doylestown and Bensalem. For too many who attended, it would be another month before they could talk openly over a good meal about the challenges and unexpected grace notes of "living

positive."

To Bill Olson, it's an opportunity he and other Peacemeal volunteers are only too happy to provide. "The more people we can help in this way," he said, "the better."

The next Peacemeal will take place at 4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 16, at Trinity Episcopal Church, 6587 Upper York Road in Solebury. All are welcome.

For information about how to participate in Peacemeal – as a guest, volunteer, entertainer or donor – contact Jerry or Debbie Hische at 267-544-0117 or at peacemealtec@gmail.com.

## Talent and Karaoke Night set

Salem United Church of Christ, 186 E. Court St., Doylestown, hosts Talent and Karaoke Night at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 22. Talents of all kinds, including music, jokes, vocals, dance and

storytelling are welcome. Baked goods will be offered for sale and auction.

All are welcome to attend. There is no admission charge. Call 215-348-9860.

## Worship Directory

SALEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday, February 16, 2014

The Rev. Dr. Tyson Frey, Sr., Pastor

9:30 am Worship / Sunday School

10:30 am Fellowship and Refreshments

Nursery Service Available

Faith@5 - Engaging Contemporary Worship Saturday at 5 pm

186 E. Court St., Doylestown • www.DoylestownSalemUCC.org

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## Getting their German on

German polka dancers entertain Jan. 18, as St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Spinnerstown, the oldest Lutheran Church in Bucks County, celebrates its heritage with a German Night, which drew more than 100 members, family and friends. The night also featured songs and a prayer in German, a skit in Pennsylvania German dialect, boom-bah and accordion performances, and a pot-luck dinner with German fare that included more than two dozen entrees and an equal number of desserts. The event was organized by Mildred Westgate, center, of Quakertown, who made the costumes for the German Polka dancers, from left: Nina and Dick Helm of Green Lane; Mary and Bill Slotter of East Greenville; and George and Peggy Hudock of Quakertown.

## Advice & Advocacy for the Older Adult

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