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South

Volunteers from Interfaith Social Services of Quincy help out Easter Bunny

By Paul E. Kandarian | MARCH 11, 2012



Rebecca and Abigail Wielhouwer of Bridgewater and Logan Doane of Randolph assembled candy-filled eggs for Easter baskets.

VOLUNTEERS HELP EASTER BUNNY: When Easter arrives next month, hundreds of children and families receiving Easter baskets will have volunteers at Interfaith Social Services in Quincy to thank for them.

In late February, those volunteers assembled more than 300 baskets for the children of Interfaith's food pantry clients, said **Rick Doane**, the nonprofit agency's executive director.

"Every year we have such a great time putting these baskets together," Doane said. "The best part is how involved the kids are. To have seven-year-olds and three-year-olds doing something charitable for other kids is very heartwarming. We're grateful for all our Easter Bunny helpers."

Doane said the organization relies heavily on volunteers for most of its work, which includes running a counseling center, a food pantry, a homeless prevention program, and a thrift shop, all of which helped more than 25,000 South Shore residents last year. The Pantry Shelf food program gave out more than 400,000 pounds of food, he said.

Volunteers worked on the Easter baskets since January, he said, collecting candy, toys and other donated items.

"Assembling the Easter baskets brings together friends, family and community members to help less-fortunate families," said **Cristiana Amara** of Quincy, who volunteered through her employer, State Street's Global Operations division, one of several companies that held donation drives and sent volunteers. "What a great sense of satisfaction to take part in a project that will light up a child's face on Easter morning."

Other businesses chipping in were J. Calnan & Associates of Quincy and National Amusements Theaters in Norwood. A mothers' play group from Cohasset gathered small toys for each basket and brought kids in to help put them together, Doane said.

Quincy resident and Calnan volunteer **Annie Ballem** said there's "nothing as fun as planning an event" that will make so many children happy.

"It's amazing what a couple hours volunteering will accomplish," she said.

For more information on Interfaith's programs, and how to volunteer, visit

www.InterfaithSocialServices.org.

STUDENTS TAKE IN LECTURE: A group of social studies students and faculty from Sacred Heart School in Kingston went to the JFK Library in Boston recently to participate in the first of three lectures offered by the Kennedy Library Forum. They attended “Assessing Obama’s Presidency” by **Jonathan Alter** of Bloomberg News, and **Hendrik Hertzberg**, senior editor and writer at the New Yorker. The program was moderated by **Renee Loth**, former editor of The Boston Globe editorial page.

BUSINESS BRIEFS: State Senate President **Therese Murray** of Plymouth was honored by the Rotary Club of Plymouth with her second Paul Harris Fellow award for her “tireless commitment” to Plymouth, the state, and public-health efforts in Russia, said **Robert Hollis**, Paul Harris Fellow president of the local Rotary Club. The award is named after the founder of Rotary International.

Jen Vondenbrink, owner of Life Simplified in Foxborough, was hired as the social media specialist for the Tri-Town Chamber of Commerce, which covers Foxborough, Mansfield, and Norton. Vondenbrink will work with businesses and chamber committees to build an online community to help both residents and businesses. A chamber blog is expected to be launched in the spring.

Marie Peeler, CEO of Peeler Associates in Pembroke, an executive coaching and leadership development firm, was named an SVP Partner at Social Ventures, a group of leaders that helps local nonprofits. Peeler will provide leadership and executive coaching services for SVP Boston investees within the donor network organization.

Stacy Wilbur of Quincy was hired in the public relations division of The Castle Group Inc. in Boston, a public relations, social media and events agency. She joined the company as account supervisor. Most recently, Wilbur was director of public relations for Project Bread - The Walk for Hunger. She has also held positions at Cone Communications, Girls Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts, and Regan Communications.

Southcoast Hospitals Group in New Bedford, consisting of Tobey Hospital in Wareham, St. Luke's Hospital in New Bedford, and Charlton Hospital in Fall River, recognized workers in the 2011 Southcoast President's Award for Excellence, and two teams of employees.

The winners included Wareham residents **Joseph Couto**, who works in environmental services at Tobey Hospital, and **Emily Sivvianakis**, who works in food and nutrition at Tobey.

The teams recognized were: The Breast Care Improvement Project team, which included **Kevin Dwyer** of Marshfield; **Ronald LaFleur** of Marion; **David Rezendes** of Freetown; **Kimberly Ryan** of Rochester; and **Robert Ward** of Kingston; and the Revenue Recovery Team, which included **Donald Colacchio** and **Amy Wiegandt**, both physicians from Wareham; **Therese Mulvey**, a physician from Milton; **Deborah Rideout** of Easton; **Kimberly Ryan** of Rochester; and **Carne Tripp** of Marion.

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