

# GFS CARING AND SHARING

Providing opportunities for our school community to become aware of needs within our greater community and our individual ability to bring hope and joy to others.

## The GFS Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

By Anne Powers

Most busy families could use a day off together. That's why it's surprising that the one day we spend helping others together is the day we feel closest as a family.

For the past few years we've spent Martin Luther King Jr. Day volunteering with Goshen Friends School in ways that each child can take part in and appreciate. Most kids want to help others, but it can be daunting to know where to start. Days like this let our kids see that something simple, even fun, still counts as valuable and necessary work.

Our family participated in GFS MLK Day of Service in different ways. My husband and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders spent the day helping at the Parkesburg Food Bank, while my preschooler and I visited Park Lane. Each location offered something different, but we all walked away with an increased sense of community, personal motivation and civic responsi-



bility. As our seven-year-old daughter says, "it just feels good to help others."

We all strive, and struggle at times, to raise competent, secure, tolerant and balanced children. To see themselves as valuable members within their own families, as well as significant participants within their communities is a tall order for many parents. Learning and understanding empathy plays a crucial role in our children's experiences. GFS Community Cares and Kids Care provide such valuable learning opportunities for our children to develop this critical skill of empathy.

With today's busy schedules, numerous activities, and long

work hours, reaching out and volunteering in your community can be challenging. Our family is grateful for GFS' strong commitment to ongoing community service projects and its service-learning curriculum. It is through family volunteering that we teach our children to be compassionate, respectful and responsible. After our own day of service, we reflected on our individual experiences. While my husband and I searched for the right words to describe civic responsibility, our four-year-old daughter reflected: "you pack snack bags for people who need food and make cards for people who need love."



## Calendar of Events

### Community Cares (2<sup>nd</sup>

Wednesday of each month  
( 10:45 am—12 noon )

**March 10**—Bellingham

**April 14**—Environment

**May 12**—Something  
Special

### Kids Care

( 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each  
month (3:00 until 4:15 pm)

February 17 — BINGO

**March 17** — Show-n-Share

**April 21** — Earth Day

**May 19** — Plantings

### Willistown

#### Conservation Trust

Wildflower Planting

**April 24**

## BE SURE TO READ

Souls4Souls for Haiti

Thank you

Willistown Conservation  
Trust

A Parent's Perspective on  
Kids Care

Reminder Bin

Kids Care Schedule  
and Sign up

Want to Get Involved?

## Let Your Life Speak By Liz Tankel



Sometimes our actions speak loudly—or they are quiet as a whisper. Our lives can speak from the wisdom of many

years or from the innocence of youth.

At Goshen, our lives speak in many voices. We feel that every life, however young or old, can speak volumes. In our community, all members speak through our service to those in need.

The children of Goshen Friends School know that

every life can speak. You may be a Kindergarten student speaking with a smile to a senior friend at Bellingham. You may be an energetic fifth grader who can lift her own weight in canned goods while restocking shelves at a food pantry.

Goshen Friends students let their lives shout!

## Souls4Souls for Haiti By Susan McCardell

As business manager for GFS, I am always impressed and humbled by the response of our school families to others in need. When the call went out to help those affected by the recent earthquake in Haiti, shoes, boots, sandals, cash, change and checks came pouring in. The list of chores completed was quite diverse – from helping with their little brother/sister to dishes to pet care. GFS sent \$1,386 to the American Red Cross and \$1,208 to the American Friends Service community, a total of \$2,594.

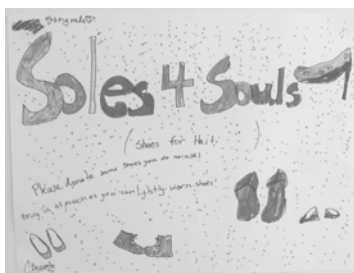
With the help of Joe Long, our devoted maintenance person, and the children, the

800 plus pairs of shoes were rub-

ber banded, boxed, packed and shipped to Alabama. They will then be directed to children and adults in Haiti.

Over 800 pairs of shoes? Amazing! Over \$2,500 collected? Inspiring! Proud to be a part of the GFS community? Always!

Thank you for allowing me to serve this wonderful place that makes a difference every day!



A student's inspirational poster

**"I felt very happy to help Haiti by collecting shoes. It was very fun to look at different kinds of shoes. It was very generous to help Haiti. After the earthquake everyone was very upset. A lot of people died and a lot of people got hurt. Maybe even some survived. Carrying those boxes was heavy but it was worth it. My favorite part was when we all counted the shoes because I was happy to find out. I learned if people in the world are having a disaster we should help right away. If Pennsylvania had a disaster I would freak so I really appreciate what I have."**

Mariah, 4th

## Many Thanks...MLK Day

As Goshen Friends School creates purposeful service learning projects and after-school outreach opportunities, more and more people and businesses want to get involved. For our third annual MLK Day of Service, in addition to the over 140 registered volunteers, three businesses offered their support.

**Kids Care Clubs**, a program of

**HandsOn Network**, and their premier partner, **Quaker**, awarded us a \$200 grant to purchase a wonderful assortment of snack items for the over 300 bags we stuffed for the West Chester Food Pantry.

For the second year, **Chester County Family Dentistry**, Drs Dave Montgomery and Nick Scarantino, the staff, and their suppliers donated over 300

tooth brushes, tubes of toothpaste and bottles of mouth wash to our snack bags.

**Aveda in Exton** asked their customers to purchase and donate hand lotion which will be included in gift bags our kindergartners and fourth graders put together for the residents of Home of the Sparrow in West Chester.

## Many More Thanks...The Greenhouse

As the garden club kicks off a new planting season, two area organizations are stepping up to keep us growing.

**Agway of West Chester** recently donated many of the supplies needed to help the club reach a few of its short-term and long-term goals. **Agway** has donated planters, soil, and seeds for us to start our butterfly and hummingbird garden near the kindergarten entrance

to lower school. They also donated hand tools so that we can work the soil when the risk of frost is gone, a rain barrel to collect water, and a tarp to cover the greenhouse when necessary..

**Willistown Conservation Trust** jumped in to offer guidance as to what planting projects we can do at GFS. We would like to construct a raised-bed garden to grow produce for the

Food Cupboard, grow flowers to gift to our senior neighbors, grow catnip for the S.P.C.A., and re-certify ourselves as a "Backyard Habitat".

There is much we would like to do . Through the GFS garden club and its partnership with **Agway of West Chester and Willistown Conservation Trust**, we know we can make them happen.

## Willistown Conservation Trust Wants Your Help By Lisa Kiziuk

We are approaching our third year of wildflower plantings and the concept has been spreading throughout our community with more landowners planting wildflowers instead of turf grass. We are especially grateful to the dedicated volunteers from the **Goshen Friends School**, who has graciously helped the Willistown Conservation Trust plant over 2,400 native wildflowers at our headquarters. This April, the Trust plans to expand our meadows to over 3,600 wildflowers

It has been well documented that mowed lawn areas are typically a monoculture of

non-native grasses, which require a great deal of time and resources to maintain and provide little benefit to wildlife. In an effort to create richer habitat on privately owned lands, the Trust has created a demonstration wildflower meadow at our office headquarters to highlight a simple, attractive and sustainable planting alternative to a manicured lawn. Over time the native grass and wildflower species eventually out-compete the weeds, making the wildflower meadow far less maintenance-intensive than pure lawn. In addition, the species that we have selected provide

cover and seeds for birds, provide nectar and food for butterflies, bees and other insects, and offer aesthetic diversity through their native colors and textures.

**Come out and join us  
for our third planting on  
Saturday, April 24  
from 9 am until 12 noon**

RSVP: Nancy Hiro — 610-696-8869  
nancy.hiro@goshenfriends.org

## A Parent's Perspective on Kids Care By Michele Kornegay

Jonathan and I have been participating in Kids Care for three years. Once a month we walk to Bellingham and spend about an hour with our senior friends. Some months we play bingo (a favorite!); other times we sing songs, make crafts, or plant flowers. We enjoy snacks together, something both the children and the seniors enjoy. As soon as we walk in the building we are greeted by the happy faces of the seniors who live there. They absolutely love seeing the children walking through the hallways! The residents smile and wave at the children and are completely delighted to see them. You can tell that having the children in their presence just makes their day.

Through the years that we've participated in Kids Care, I have seen a very definite change in the children who participate. At first the children are shy around the seniors. Some of the seniors are in wheelchairs, some are hooked up to oxygen, some can't speak or move around very well. This is strange for the children, who are

used to the rambunctiousness and vigor of their classmates. Gradually, however, the children start to "come out of their shells" and interact with the seniors. It may start with one child helping a senior whose hands don't move very well decorate a sugar cookie or with one senior helping a child who hasn't quite learned her numbers play bingo. As they begin to interact, both the children and the seniors gain something valuable, each finding that the others are "just like them" in many ways.

A few months ago when we went to Bellingham one of the seniors drew an amazing picture of a horse. Many of the children could relate to this, since they love horses and love to draw. Another time two of the girls from Goshen Friends showed the seniors the scarves they were knitting. The seniors loved that the children were participating in such an "old-fashioned" hobby! Both the children and the seniors see, whether young or old or in between, we are all more alike

than we are different.

On a personal level, I believe that Jonathan's relationships with older adults have truly benefited from his participation in Kids Care. Just last summer, my grandfather—who's 90 years old and lives in Orlando—spent nearly two months in Pennsylvania visiting with family. We spent lots of time with "Grandpap Grape," as Jonathan calls him, but there was never an awkward moment. I feel that because of Jonathan's interactions with the seniors at Bellingham, he was comfortable around my grandfather. Jonathan told my grandfather about his friends at Bellingham and what they do together each month. My grandfather loved hearing the stories about KidsCare. It was a joy to see my son chatting with my grandfather as if they were old friends. And now that Grandpap Grape has returned to Florida, Jonathan is looking forward to new experiences with his friends at Bellingham in the months and years to come.

## Don't Forget Your Reminder Bin

This is easy, costs little or no money, recycles items, and makes the world a better place one gift at a time.

For the **West Chester Food Cupboard** — non-perishable food items (soup, canned vegies, pasta, rice...)

For the **Home of the Sparrow**, collect personal care items such as body lotion, soap, shampoo and conditioner

For the **S.P.C.A.**, collect shoe boxes, newspapers, and towels.

For **Aveda in Exton**, collect plastic bottle caps to recycle.

For the **Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia**, collect the aluminum tabs found on cans.

# KIDS CARE

March 17 — Show-n-Share

April 21 — Earth Day

May 19 — Plantings



If you have questions, please contact Teacher Nancy Hiro at 610-696-8869 or [nancy.hiro@goshenfriends.org](mailto:nancy.hiro@goshenfriends.org).

## KIDS CARE

Child's name) \_\_\_\_\_ in (class/grade) \_\_\_\_\_ has my permission to participate in the following Kids Care after-school activities from 3:00 pm to 4:15 pm (Activities may change as, we hope, the children will generate ideas.):

- March 17 — Show-n-Share
- April 21 — Earth Day
- May 19 — Plantings

He/She

\_\_\_\_\_ will be picked up at 4:15 in the GFS Extended Day room.

\_\_\_\_\_ is contracted to stay in the Extended Day program until (time) \_\_\_\_\_.

This child is a preschooler and, therefore, will be accompanied by (name of adult) \_\_\_\_\_.

I would also like to attend these events

I would like to attend and bring my other children (names/ages) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone in Case of Emergency: \_\_\_\_\_

## Want to Get Involved?

With so much going on at GFS, we would like parents, alum, or members of our local community who would like to get involved to complete and return the following form. There is no commitment; we just want to keep you in the loop so that when the right opportunity becomes available you will be the first to know.



### Community Outreach Volunteer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Check what applies

Parent of \_\_\_\_\_

Alum, age \_\_\_\_\_

Local Community member, connection to GFS \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Areas of Interest:

Event Planning, Brainstorming

Soliciting Sponsors

Public Relations

Newsletter

Lending a Hand with Kids

Shopping for Supplies

Event Set up or Clean up

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Whatever