

Anstett Goes To Bat For Homeless

ShIPLEY'S Resident Takes Leadership Role In Christmas Mission Project

By Ellen Kinsella

If you need a job to be done well you should delegate it to a busy person. Steve Anstett of Shipley's Choice - VP of American Wood Moulding, a Green Hornets coach, Ravens' Nest member, and Woods Church youth leader - fits that bill. And if all that isn't enough, he has agreed to co-direct Giving Back, Inc.'s Baltimore homeless drive for 2004, which was in danger of disbanding for lack of a director.

"Steve is a take-charge, big teddy bear who loves helping others," confessed Linda Greenberg, the founder and director of the Christmas Eve mission for the past 21 years who wants to step down to concentrate on mentoring programs and other priorities. "His focus on encouraging others, especially children, to achieve all they can be is his crowning glory," she added.

Steve, his wife Sue, and their sons Roby, 13, and Zack, 11, have eagerly volunteered with the drive for four years. They have recruited many neighbors to participate in both major and minor capacities.

Though the drive is year 'round, most of the work falls the week before Christmas Eve, when literally tons of donations need to be sorted, labeled, and loaded onto trucks in a massive operation conducted under the roof of the Farmers' Market on Riva Road.

Many of the volunteers who help with sorting and loading are teenagers working for service hours or simply to have fun with their friends while doing a good deed.

"It is inspiring to see how the young people respond to the call of the drive," commented Steve. "There are no barriers, no prejudices, just the pure interaction of one person helping another."

The reward for those helping with the sorting is being allowed



Photo by Candy Schwadron

Co-acting director of Giving Back, Inc., Steve Anstett and his 11-year-old son Zack stuff socks, hats, gloves and other necessities into one of the backpacks that will be distributed to the homeless.

to go on the December 24th deliveries into downtown Baltimore to experience the thrill of giving to destitute men, women, and children both in shelters and on the streets.

"Linda's drive evolved from a single car trunk-load of goods to last year's 17 truckloads," explained Steve. And it continues to expand. The inspiration for it dates back to her youth when she saw a homeless man on the street in Washington, D.C. crouched on the cement in the snow.

"Give him your coat," her mother directed her. She handed her coat, hat, gloves, and scarf to him, and for the first time felt what it was like to be truly cold. She also felt what it was like to be able to help another human. The significance of that simple act had a big enough impact on her life that she started delivering goods to the Baltimore streets.

The mission is becoming widely known in the area and churches, schools, and businesses want to get in on the action. U-Haul provides discounted rates on the trucks; Sams Club has donated numerous lunches to the volunteers; and countless churches, schools, and families donate bag lunches and backpacks filled with warm clothes and toiletries.

The demand is great, and for many of Anne Arundel County and Baltimore homeless (many of whom are women and children) the gifts they receive from Giving Back, Inc. will be their only ones this Christmas.

"We need help from organizations and businesses willing to donate new items or money so we can make our backpacks for the street," stresses Steve. Each backpack will contain sweatpants and a sweatshirt, thermal underwear, warm socks, hat, gloves, and

a bag of toiletries."

If you are interested in donating goods, distributing fliers, or helping with the Christmas Eve drive, leave a message at 410-295-0889 or visit homelessdrive@usa.com. Linda and Steve would also love other specialized help on Christmas Eve, such as a "traveling hairdresser," a nurse or doctor, a walking vocal or instrumental entertainer, or a Santa Claus. If you do not have time to volunteer but still want to help, monetary donations are needed so essentials can be purchased. If you know someone who would be willing to direct the mission, please call the number listed above.

Linda would like to remind the public, "We should teach our children to be respectful of everyone in our society and to personally become involved with helping one another."