

AGAPE recollections

Love From Above To Our Community

Renaissance Fair Helps Us Grow



Above, Vicki Burnside and Kimberly Nearhoof-O'Malley manning the stand during the fair.

AGAPE raised over \$200 at this year's Renaissance Fair in Bloomsburg, PA. Volunteers helped by baking cookies, donating supplies, manning the stand and doing whatever needed to be done.

Karla Ungureit, Tracey Beere and Kimberly Nearhoof-O'Malley gathered Prizes to Raffle

off from local vendors such as **SEARS, Renco, Cole's, TSC Tractor Supply, and Sheetz.**

More importantly, volunteers had an opportunity to talk to people at the fair and tell them about AGAPE and what we're trying to accomplish. Every little bit helps!

PA Career Link is "Here to Help"



Seated From Left to Right: Karen Heaps, Denny Deskin and Dawn Deskin Manned the AGAPE Table at PA Career Link's "Here to Help Day" event.

On April 29th, AGAPE participated in the "Here To Help Day" at the PA Career Link on Tenny St. in Bloomsburg. The event was designed to provide residents with information on a variety of programs and help that is available throughout Columbia and Montour counties.

Twenty-one agencies were represented offering information ranging from how to get your GED, furthering your education, job searching venues, financial aid & assistance, Veterans Programs, health insurance and provider options and the Free Medical Clinic in Mifflinville just to name a few. Although the flow of people coming for information was a bit slow on occasion, those who attended were pleased with the amount of information available.

Who is Andrew Barnes and What is He Doing About Terrorism?

I recently had the pleasure of speaking with Andrew Barnes, Planner for the Columbia County Counter Terrorism Task Force. Mr. Barnes grew up in Espy, served in the Air Force for 24 years and after retiring from the military in 2002, returned to the area with Jill, his wife of 24 years, and his son Andrew who is now 18.

Andrew has held several positions in the area, and accepted the Planner position for the Counter Terrorism Task Force in 2006. As we all know, our world has changed dramatically since 9-11-2001, and the Counter Terrorism Task Force has been aiding our community in being prepared for the new dangers that face us in this changing environment.

Through local, state & federal initiatives Police, Fire & EMS have been the recipients of equipment & training that will enable them to better serve & protect us against the many threats and dangers that now exist.

Through programs set up by Emergency Management & Counter Terrorism, agencies are able to easily track personnel, equipment and resources that are available throughout the county to assist in areas of need in a timelier manner. Also, two local Strategic National Stockpile sites have been established for distribution of items such as anti-viral medications, vaccines, etc. that may be necessary in the event of a pandemic. These are the Bloomsburg & Berwick High Schools.

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Andrew Barnes
Columbia County
Counter Terrorism
Task Force



Terrorism (Continued)

In his role as Planner, Barnes serves as the representative of the **East Central PA Regional Task Force for Columbia County** and as point of contact for county specific programs.

One such program is the Special Needs Program. It identifies and helps those people who would need more assistance in the event of a disaster or emergency, particularly in a large scale evacuation. This would include those individuals who are physically or mentally challenged, those without radio or television, or those who lack necessary transportation.

To accomplish this Barnes uses a special needs survey tool. It helps to identify residents who are most at risk during a disaster. The survey tool is available online at www.columbiacountyema.org, just click on "Special Needs Survey", or you may call the Emergency Management Agency at 570-389-5725. AGAPE will also be available to assist you in enrolling. If you or someone you know falls in this category please see that they are registered with this program.

One area of concern to many residents in our community is the Nuclear Power Plant in nearby Luzerne County. I asked Mr. Barnes what special concerns he faces due to its location. Barnes stated that "The facility is well protected and has federal and state operational oversight.

There are also year round planning & training activities in which the county and local municipalities participate." Over 19,000 residents live in the 10-mile Emergency Planning Zone; an obvious concern would be the safe evacuation of these residents and schools in the event of a problem. Barnes emphasized that your best course of action would be to be prepared

before the need arises. Familiarize yourself with the "types" of emergencies, evacuation procedures and centers, and develop a Family Emergency Plan so that should an emergency occur, you will be ready. For more suggestions, check the website at www.columbiacountyema.org, pick up a pamphlet on "Susquehanna Steam Electric Station Emergency Preparedness Tips", or check your local phone directory.

When questioned about whether or not the new airport expansion will affect Barnes in his duties or impact the safety of residents, Barnes replied that he could not foresee any additional risks. The Counter Terrorism Task Force works hand in hand with the **Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency** & the **PA Department of Health** to provide the best programs and services for Columbia County residents.

Barnes offered some Tips for Preparedness that each of us can do to help ensure our safety in an emergency situation.

1. Preparing an emergency plan with all family members.
2. Have an emergency kit that includes items such as: food, water, a battery operated radio, First Aid kit, flashlights & extra batteries. You should keep enough to be self sufficient for at least three days.
3. Pre-identify places your family & pets can "relocate" in case of emergency or evacuation:
 - a. directly outside the house
 - b. in the neighborhood
 - c. outside the area
4. Take a **Red Cross** First Aid & CPR class every two years.
5. Adequately insure your home & possessions.

6. Keep informed through local media outlets:
 - a. **WHLM 930 AM**
 - b. **WHLM 103.5 FM**
 - c. **WQKX 94.1**
 - d. **WFYY 106.5 FM**
 - e. **WNEP TV 16**
 - f. **WBRE TV 28**
 - g. **WYLN TV 35**
7. Several pamphlets are available for additional information. They are available at local service agencies, Public Libraries, AGAPE, and from the Emergency Management website listed above.

Pamphlets include Columbia County Individual Special Needs Survey Tool; Pandemic or Bird Flu Facts & Tips; Hazardous Materials Basics; Susquehanna Steam Electric Station Preparedness Tips; Columbia County Emergency Management Agency; Lightning Wind Tornado facts & Tips; Flooding Facts & Tips; Winter Weather Facts & Tips and Drought Information.

Your best and first line of protection should always be personal awareness and responsibility. Do everything you can to prepare and protect your family. Being ready to act and knowing your plan will be much more effective than waiting for someone to come to your rescue. There are many more residents than rescuers and the more you can do to help yourself will help everyone else as well. On that note, get involved and become a volunteer! There are many volunteer opportunities available throughout the county with various EMA programs, fire, ambulance & public service organizations including AGAPE. Volunteers are becoming an extremely rare commodity. Be willing to reach out and help change a life.

Word Continues to Spread

The good word continues to spread as AGAPE Board Members continue their efforts to raise awareness regarding our cause. More volunteers are being added each day and progress continues at a steady pace.

AGAPE's participation at PA Career Link's open house is just one example of how we can support and assist organizations in our area.

Pray for our continued success as we grow, and never lose faith. We may appear disorganized to the naked eye, but we all know God has the plan and his GPS will get us there in his time, not ours.



Eileen Chapman Addresses a Group of Donors and Volunteers at Wesley United Methodist in Bloomsburg.

Contact Info

If you would like to become an AGAPE volunteer, or make a monetary or in-kind donation, please contact us for more information. we're here to assist our community.

Send Tax Deductible Financial Donations to:
Wesley United Methodist Church
(For AGAPE)
130 West Third Street, Bloomsburg, PA 17815

To Become a Volunteer Contact:
Karen Heaps at kshcats@verizon.net

In-Kind Donations:
Call 570.752.0484 or
e-mail emac@wesleybloom.org.

Thank you.

Join Us for An Open House Celebration on July 25th



AGAPE Volunteers working hard to get the building ready. In the Background from left to right: Joe Young, Cody Wenner, Chuck Deeley, Mike McCoy, Marvin Johnson, Nancy Hess & Jim Hess. In the Front row: Kimberly A. Nearhoof-O'Malley, Eileen Chapman, and Burt Wandell.

Volunteers have been working diligently to prepare AGAPE's new facility for use. Our opening day is scheduled for July 1st of this year, and we're doing our best to be ready to serve our community.

We're also planning an **OPEN HOUSE CELEBRATION** shortly after the facility opens on **July 25th from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm**. Once again, we need your help to succeed.

AGAPE is inviting all local non-profit agencies that serve people in any way to join us and show off your services. We will provide warehouse space to set up information tables, fundraising activities, demonstrations, games, raffles, and more. We're also arranging for some music to fill the air, along with the subtle fragrances of french fries and other food favorites.

If your church, group or organization would like to join us, PLEASE LET US KNOW ASAP!

Please contact Paul O'Malley at paulartist@pa.metrocast.net or 570.336.6787 and reserve your space today.

Our goal is to inform the general public about your services and ours. Together we can serve our neighbors, and have some fun.

The Gate House Needs Our Help

For many years the Gate House Transitional Housing and Care Center in Danville, PA has been providing a well-structured, temporary shelter for those who need short-term housing in our area. Very often this facility is the last resort for many individuals and families who literally have no where else to go, and no where else to stay.

The Gate House almost always has a waiting list of people who need help to get back on their feet. Please be advised though, this facility is not a place of rest and relaxation. Gate House provides a structured environment which requires residents to actively participate in the daily chores of the household, while

continually striving to better their own individual situations.

Once residents have had an opportunity to repair some of the damage in their lives, and get some air under their wings, their time at Gate House quickly comes to and end in order to make room for other people who are in need. Regrettably, there never seems to be a shortage of people who need assistance from the Gate House.

The economic realities in our area have now put a severe strain on this life raft of hope, and they need our assistance. If you are able, please send a financial donation to the Gate House so

they can continue serving the people in our area who need hope.

Representatives from AGAPE will be meeting with Gate House administrators to review options for any assistance we can offer to help keep this worthwhile organization to remain active in our community.

Gate House has been there for so many others. It's our turn to step up and be there for them. Thank you.

The Gate House
77 Hess Hill Road, Danville, PA 17821
Ph: 570.275.6766
