

# The Journey of Friendship HOLIDAY EDITION



**Commitment to Our Mission**  
Friendship Community is a Christian ministry cultivating capabilities of individuals with intellectual disability and autism.

**Living Our Vision**  
Impacting the World with Capabilities

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The Journey of Friendship is published quarterly.  
Email your comments  
and suggestions -  
cbeebe@friendshipcommunity.net

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Visit our websites for additional information:  
FriendshipCommunity.net  
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## GWEN SCHUIT IS NAMED PENNSYLVANIA ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

Recognized and awarded for determined advocacy during a critical time of change by PAR (Pennsylvania Advocacy and Resources for Autism and Intellectual Disability), Gwen Schuit, the Chief Executive Officer of Friendship Community, was

awarded the PA Advocate of the Year. PAR is the Commonwealth's leading association representing providers who support people with autism or intellectual disability. Gwen received her award at the PAR Annual Solutions Conference "We Are Worth It" Awards Ceremony in October at the Harrisburg Hilton Hotel. PAR is the statewide association dedicated to ensuring, strengthening and promoting the ability of community-based provider organizations to support people with autism or intellectual disability and their families.

A six-year member of the PAR Board of Directors, Gwen was chosen for this award due to her diligent efforts in engaging people with autism and intellectual disability and their family members, as well as direct support professionals, advocating to local legislators within their district and the Capitol on behalf of the disability provider community for improving supports and services throughout the Commonwealth. Her advocacy with legislators was also extended to the national level.

Her devotion to this work comes from her deep belief that serving others and making a difference in people's lives is her calling in life. Gwen is honored, loved and respected by her colleagues, the people she serves, and employees.

Shirley Walker, President and CEO of PAR saluted Gwen for "her sense of deep devotion to ensuring that every person with autism or a developmental disability is honored for their humanity and gifts to the world."

Walker continued, "Gwen's heart and personal devotion to improving the lives of people with disabilities touches all with whom she interacts. Legislators listen to her and respect her because they know that she is advocating with all her heart for a cause in which she deeply believes."

(Photo left to right: Gordon & Gwen Schuit & Shirley Walker)



Early on in Gwen's tenure, which began in 2010, I asked her if she anticipated spending much time in Harrisburg when she accepted the position. She responded, "No." However, she realized rather quickly, that it was imperative to embrace this process by contacting local politicians and constituents and to model advocacy for ID/DD Individuals to all of Friendship Community. When it comes to advocating for services, regulatory changes, funding, etc, Gwen responds with passion, purpose and prayer. No stone is left unturned in her path.

~Bob Redcay, FC Director of Human Resources



# Chalk the Block

by Ally Rohland  
Friendship Heart Gallery Coordinator

An empty parking lot, pieces of sidewalk chalk and over 80 Community Members and Heart Gallery Artists was all it took to bring to life a large mural at Friendship Heart Gallery's first ever Chalk the Block Event.

In collaboration with Lancaster City Alliance, the Gallery planned this event to coincide with the Downtown Arts Celebration occurring in conjunction with the PA Governor's Arts Awards. Steeple View Loft residents, Robert Fulton Elementary School Students, City Residents and Heart Artists worked side-by-side to make this unique creation.

The image, inspired by local Artist Vania Hardy's original work entitled "Where the Heart is," was gridded off into 30 blocks. Each participant received a print-out that was a small portion of the larger image they then had to replicate in an 11' by 11' square on the lot in front of the Gallery.

Each Community Member and Heart Artist used their own interpretation of what they saw and collaborated to create the final, unified image. After the mural was completed, a drone captured an aerial shot of the image (bottom right).

Chalk the Block was a beautiful reminder that while we may all have different abilities and perspectives, when we come together as a community, we are able to accomplish amazing things!





# Business "Frame" Supports Others

by Anne Koenig, Volunteer & Contributor

It's interesting how a "light bulb" moment can put the focus on what really matters.

That's how Friendship Community became one of many local non-profits that benefit from the vision and generosity of ModernEYES Optical owners Jon Ressler, Chad Weaver and Ralph Scott (above left to right).

Friendship Community Team Members and their families obtain eyeglasses at discounted rates at ModernEYES; in addition, a percentage of those sales goes right back to the organization at the end of the year, amounting to thousands of dollars. ModernEYES has also donated eyewear to several Friendship Community Individuals in need.

"We've been in business 11 years," Ressler said recently. "The first five years, we were having fun and making as much money as possible." When his daughter survived a complicated childbirth, however, he said, he began to re-examine his former disinterest in matters of faith. And, as his new Christianity unfolded, so too, did his perspective on success.

Ressler said an invitation to attend a Friendship Community dinner contributed to his sense that ModernEYES, in Lancaster, could play an altruistic role in the larger community. "I started to think, if Friendship didn't offer care for persons with disabilities, what would be the alternative? And it's not good."

He was gripped by the realization that people with disabilities can truly give love and truly be loved. And, Ressler added, "Some of the caregivers I've met are the most quality people you will meet. Genuine, caring people."

"I just had a light bulb go over my head one day," he said. So he talked with his partners, who were already long-practicing men of faith; and with input from their staff, they developed ways to work charity into their everyday business plan. Subsequently, ModernEYES has donated more than \$60,000 to participating nonprofits.

God's light shines! Amen.

**Caring about our community!**



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Like ModernEYES, and many other businesses, Groff's Home Comfort Team & Re-Uzit Shop believe in Friendship Community's mission. We appreciate their encouragement and support at many of our events!



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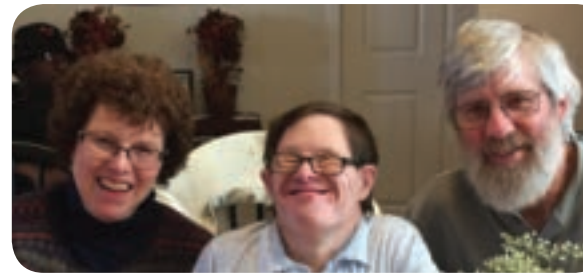
Hard-working, dedicated, generous.

All these words describe 62-year old, Doran Mummau. Doran's diligent work on his handmade potholders has generously benefited the Church of the Brethren Disaster Relief funds for almost 40 years. He tirelessly creates his colorful woven pot holders, then sells them for a donation at the Relief Auction every September. All of Doran's proceeds are given to the Relief Fund. Doran also offers his pot holders every year at the Friendship Community May Fest, and once again donates the money he raises. Now you have a chance to support Doran's efforts by purchasing these uniquely designed creations. The woven pot holders make absorbent coasters or handy hot pads. Details below. With the Christmas season approaching, you can purchase a gift that will benefit the needs of others, and encourage Doran to *impact the world with his capabilities!*

~ by Jill Gormley, Direct Support Professional at the Westwood Home since August of 2015.



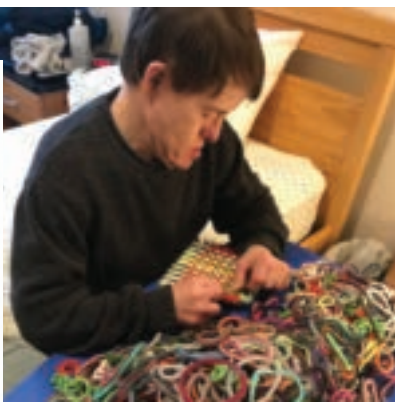
All the Direct Support Professionals (DSP) in Doran's community home assist him with daily care and living skills. They also encourage Doran to create his potholders. Although, he doesn't need much encouragement! Shown here are Darnell Smith and Jill Walck who have been (DSPs) for 3.5 and 5 years, respectively. They, along with the other 325 DSPs, are a vital part of our Team.



Jeff & Marcia are Doran's brother & sister-in-law. They continue to promote Doran's ministry. To date, Doran has raised over \$20,000 from his craft.

# Woven with Love

Interested in these potholders? Please email Cynthia Beebe @ [cbeebe@friendshipcommunity.net](mailto:cbeebe@friendshipcommunity.net) or call to place your order, 717.656.2466 ext 1104.



The end-of-the-year fund raising time is upon us. Although the giving season is launched by Lancaster County Community Foundation's incredible Extraordinary Give, we are blessed to experience the generosity of so many throughout the year. More than ever, we are dependent upon your loving support.

Here are just a few ways you have blessed the Individuals at **Friendship Community, Friendship Heart Gallery** and the **Meaningful Day Academy**.

- provided volunteer projects at your business or non-profit
- cooked dinners for our Board meetings
- remembered us in your planned giving or estate plans
- donated towards fund-a-need capital projects in our programs
- volunteered your time in a program or at an event
- donated financially through the ExtraGive or throughout the year & had your company match it
- supported our Direct Support Professionals & Team Members who work extra hours & shifts
- purchased online through Amazon Smile & designated FC as your non-profit of choice
- donated in-kind services or products on our wish list
- prayed for our ministry
- advocated for us in your church, community or place of employment
- invited us into your home, church or place of employment
- attended & sponsored our fund raising events
- shared about our ministry with a friend or business connection about our ministry
- visited a program & shared in fellowship & fun
- saw one of our Individuals in a community setting & initiated conversation
- purchased handmade items made by Individuals at the Heart Gallery & Meaningful Day Academy

**THANK YOU! DANKE! GRACIAS! ASANTE! MERCI! GRAZIE! XIEXIE! HVALA!**

We so appreciate your helping us to stay on track for our fund raising goals in December. A giving envelope is included within this newsletter should you consider a gift, supporting 216 Individuals, who continue to **IMPACT THE WORLD WITH THEIR CAPABILITIES** because of **YOU!**







Enjoy these photos from our recent fund raising dinner.

(more on our web site)







Friendship Community  
1149 East Oregon Road  
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Need to dust off your shoes for the Christmas season? Donald Beck's shoe shine business is just what you need! For only \$4 per pair, Don will make your shoes look brand new! Call Cynthia Beebe @ 717.656.2466 ext 1104 to schedule your appointment.



Thank you for helping Don to impact the world with his capabilities!



Merry Christmas  Happy New Year



The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today, in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."