

January 2019 Newsletter



Bringing Families Home

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Family Promise®
of Shenandoah County

Building community, strengthening lives.

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Message from Sherry

Happy New Year - welcome to 2019! I hope everyone had a peaceful, fun holiday season. I want to shout out a big "THANK YOU" to everyone for all your prayers, donations and help you gave FPSC in 2018. It was an exciting year of growth and new opportunities. Please put **Sunday, February 17, 2019, 6:30 pm at Antioch COB** on your calendar - FPSC will hold a **community meeting to highlight successes and share information** about upcoming events. Families without homes continue to exist in our community - we all have a role to play in helping these families become safely and securely housed. Together, we can and are making a difference - one family at a time! I am looking forward to what God has in store for Family Promise of Shenandoah County in 2019!

How We Served in 2018

Families served:	14
Adults:	19
Children:	31
Children under age 5:	15
Pregnant mothers:	5
Babies born in program:	1
Veterans served:	1
Families in transitional housing	1
Guests continuing education	1
Value of meals served:	\$26,250
Value of lodging:	\$33,220
Number of volunteers:	over 600



Jonathan & Christian building a snow fort at their new home – look how they have grown up. Baby sister, Genesis, is doing well too!

Jesus Multiplies

We all know the story of Jesus multiplying the loaves and fishes, but we want to tell you about a story much closer to home. A few days before Christmas, a lady came to the Family Center with an envelope in her hand. She said, “My coworkers took up a collection for Christmas to buy one of our coworkers a car – she hasn’t had one in a very long time. At first we wondered if this was too big of a project, but we decided to go for it. Not only did we get enough to buy the car but we also got enough to pay for insurance and had money left over! We agreed to donate the remaining amount to Family Promise. **What was the remaining amount? \$589.00!!!**

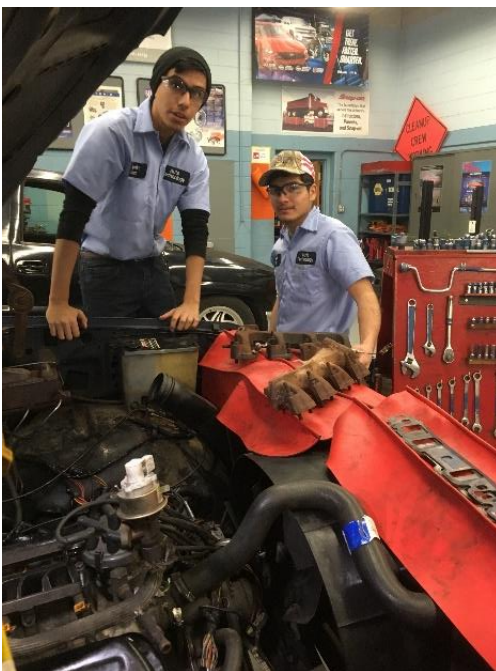


A special thank you from me and the Family Promise Board to all the employees of FPSC and to all of our Coordinators, Volunteers, and Supporters! Thanks to each one for doing all you do and have done to complete three years of hosting and ministry to homeless children and their families! May God Bless each of you with a very Happy New Year!

**In Jesus,
George Bowers
President, FPSC Board of Directors**

A Different Kind of Community Involvement

Transportation is a real barrier for our guests in obtaining employment. We have received assistance in this area from some unexpected places. ***Three vehicles have been donated by individuals*** to FPSC guests, and two of them have been repaired by students at **Triplett Tech**. For **Lucas Long** and his students, it is important to help out where they can; “we all need a little help once in a while” is the sentiment he expressed.



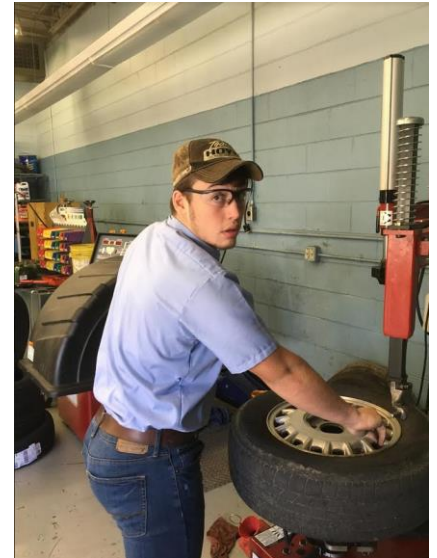
“I’ve come full circle,” says Long, instructor for the Auto Service Technology class at Triplett Tech. He graduated from the school’s program in 2005. Triplett has offered the program ever since it opened over 50 years ago, and Lucas is only the 3rd or 4th instructor in all that time. While he was a student, he worked at **Muhlenburg Ford (now Leckner Ford)**. Then he went to work with **Shenandoah County Public Schools** at the bus garage working on county vehicles. Five years ago, he became a teacher at Triplett Tech, completing the circle. The program runs for two years. He has about 16 seniors who attend the morning session and about 18 juniors in the afternoon. All the students come from one of the in-county high schools: Strasburg, Central or Stonewall Jackson. According to Long, “they will learn to diagnose, service, maintain and repair all makes and models. Our goal here is to have students in an environment that mirrors the industry they will later enter into.” Upon completion of the program, students will have four licenses and certifications “which sets them up for potential in their careers”:

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- Virginia State Inspection License
- Automotive Service Excellence certification
- EPA Section 609 refrigerant license (auto air conditioners)
- EPA Section 608 refrigerant license (refrigerated trailer units and residential units)

Lucas wants his students to be career ready to enter the industry after graduation or to further their education in a technical field. The EPA Section 608 refrigerant license actually gives them an entry into not just the automotive field but also into the construction industry. They work on a variety of vehicles including automobiles, trucks, motorcycles and road tractors.

Holtzman Corporation recently donated two road tractors and a pickup. Other vehicles are donated by individuals. Sometimes the vehicles aren't running; and in that case, he calls on **Zeek Miller**, owner and operator, of **All & All Towing** in Mount Jackson to help out (in fact, he towed one of the FPSC donor cars). His students take care of the mechanical problems, and the autobody class helps spruce them up. They are sold at the annual auction which is open to the public. Proceeds from the auction are put back into the two programs by purchasing tools and other needed items. Private individuals can also bring cars there to be repaired. Contact Lucas Long at 540-477-3161 to learn more about having your vehicle repaired.



The automotive students also participate in a number of competitions throughout the year. Right now, their competition schedule includes: motorcycle repair, diesel repair, and auto maintenance and light repair. Most of them are held in the surrounding counties, and Triplett will host one of them as well. On Feb. 8th & 9th, they will be at Universal Technical Institute in North Carolina for their Top Technical Challenge.

Triplett Tech's program is accredited by the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation which, according to the NATEF website, means, "Programs that receive accreditation are considered to be the elite auto mechanic education programs in the United States. The NATEF was created as a way of enhancing auto mechanic education as a whole. When an automotive technology program is certified, it has proven to have surpassed standards that are considered to be above the industry norm." As part of this accreditation, Long is in contact with his students and their employers for at least a year to track their progress. Long is an NATEF Evaluation Team Leader which reviews automotive, diesel and auto collision education programs. He feels this is really valuable to the Triplett program because it gives him the opportunity to see what other schools are doing, and he can bring back ideas to incorporate into his classes.

There is a nine-member program advisory board which is composed of employers, former students, vendors and employees in the industry. They meet at least twice a year and have other interactions as well throughout the year. As part of the program, students are taught to prepare resumes, and Long has an extensive network he uses to help students gain employment by providing introductions. This is a co-operative education program which means, in addition to their classes, students are employed in the industry. Long keeps in contact with the students' employers to see how they are doing. Currently one young man is employed in the evenings by Appalachian Freight servicing heavy trucks. Recent graduates of the program have gone on to graduate school at the University of Northwest Ohio to earn an auto services technical degree, one is employed by Gregory Poole Equipment in Winchester working on Caterpillar forklifts, another works on Caterpillar heavy equipment for another company, and one works at the Ford dealership in Harrisonburg.



As you can see, Shenandoah County is fortunate to have such a great technical program available to its students. And Family Promise of Shenandoah County is grateful to have such good neighbors.

Many thanks to Lucas Long and his students for helping “pay it forward”!

It’s That Time Again!!

FPSC Steak Dinner & Silent Auction March 23, 2019, Woodstock Moose Lodge

We are looking for sponsors, theme baskets, auction items, etc. We challenge our *SUPPORT* and *PARTNER* churches to make a theme basket or handcrafted item for the silent auction. We are especially in need this year of a greenhouse owner who supports Family Promise to help us with table decorations. If that's you, please call us! If you have any questions, need ideas, or would like to sponsor the event, please call Becky Leland at 540-333-1976, email beckyaleland@gmail.com; Willie Mitchell at 540-335-6235 or mow@shentel.net; or Ellen Bowers at 540-325-9362 or trevorcoco2@yahoo.com. *This event has been successful in the past solely due to the generosity of FPSC supporters like you! Please know that we thank God for all of you.*

Left: Willie & Becky



SVEC & CoBank Collaborate

Surprise! Christmas came early for three area nonprofits thanks to the CoBank Sharing Success program. These agencies received SVEC Operation Round Up grants earlier this year, and CoBank matched the amounts awarded. We surprised them with checks this week. Congratulations and great job to Family Promise of Shenandoah County, Page One of Page County and The Laurel Center. Many thanks for all your support!!! Preston Knight & Gina Stetter delivered the surprise to Sherry Arey on December 11th. Gina is a member of the Operation Round Up Committee, which consists of member-owners and one employee. The committees review grants for charitable contributions on behalf of SVEC.



Above: Gina & Sherry

Another Christmas Surprise

We have received a number of blankets from Project Linus to distribute to our guest families. The children just LOVE THEM – using them to snuggle with and play super hero!

A couple of weeks ago Rebecca and Jessica, with Project Linus, dropped off another batch of beautifully handcrafted “hospitality”. Many thanks to all of their blanket makers – much love and many prayers go into each one!



Left: Rebecca & Jessica with blankets in rocking chair

Case Manager's Corner

I hope everyone had a safe and Happy New Year's Eve and Day! I want to say thank you to everyone for supporting Family Promise and our guests throughout 2018. And an even bigger THANK YOU for your generosity this holiday season! Thanks to donations of items, eight former FPSC families were able to get some type of assistance, whether it was food, a gift card or toys. Four of the eight families received a turkey and the trimmings for their Thanksgiving meal; for Christmas, seven of the eight families received gifts for their children.

One family especially stands out in my mind. A week before Thanksgiving I asked the single mother of five children if she could use a turkey for their Thanksgiving dinner. “Yes, please. I was skipping the holidays this year,” was her response. That evening I was able to take that turkey, along with other traditional Thanksgiving fixings and some baking items, to her home. These items were brought into the Family Center just that afternoon! **Another God-moment that happens all the time in the FPSC program!!**

Thank you again for your generosity and compassion for our families! Wishing you a blessed 2019.



Family Promise Thursdays!

The Sugar Shack ice cream shoppe on Main Street in Woodstock will be donating 20% of their sales on Thursday nights between 5 - 7 p.m. to Family Promise. Offering locally made Garber's hand dipped ice cream crafted into scoops, milkshakes, floats featuring Boylan soda, banana splits, brownie sundaes, the Sugar Shack also offers Mayorga organic hot coffee and Ghirardelli hot chocolate!

So, come on out after dinner to treat yourselves while helping others; let's make Thursday nights a Family Promise ice cream night!

Many thanks to El Keegan for supporting FPSC!!

Words of Wisdom

This note arrived with a check a few days ago and we thought it was worth sharing.

Something to pass along. "Your life is a garden. Your acts are the seeds. You can grow fruit trees or you can grow weeds. Simple but true.

To all of you who give a 'hand up' to folks in need - Thank You! There are so many wonderful success stories, I'm sure. There is a slogan, 'I don't need, so I must help those who do.' God bless!"

Many thanks to all of you who helped give a hand up to our families in 2018. You are a blessing to the staff and our guests!!

Public Transportation Feasibility Study

There is a need for public transportation in Shenandoah County, according to study results presented to the Board of Supervisors in December. Karen Taylor, with the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission, told the board, "The study came after area nonprofit agencies identified that the lack of transportation is a barrier for people to access services, jobs, medical care and educational opportunities. Major employers have indicated that hiring and retaining entry-level employees is a challenge because of limited transportation resources."



Some of the specific concerns identified by area businesses who responded to the survey were:

- **Turnover; absenteeism;** concerns regarding the ability to run production / warehousing due to turnover & absenteeism
- **Cost of travel and cost of reliable auto for entry level jobs** for even short distances We have several workers with very old cars. When they break down, they have no way of getting in.
- **Many members of our housekeeping staff do not drive**, and therefore rely on other employees or family members to bring them to work. If and when that transportation falls through, our employees are forced to call out, which negatively affects everyone involved.
- **Some employees either do not have a reliable vehicle or do not have a valid license.** Many will rely on other employees, but that does not always work out. When employees cannot make it to work, they will get absences which can lead to termination if excessive.

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Wish List

Body Wash (men, women & children)
 Hair Products (men, women & children)
 Detangler
 Dental Floss
 Laundry Detergent
 Dryer Sheets
 Clorox Wipes
 Air Freshener
 Liquid Dish Soap
 Laundry Baskets

- **Since some of our employees ride with others, due to not having a car or license themselves, if the driver calls off then we also lose the employees that ride with them.** Same as if the driver quits. I had an employee who was not able to drive because of vision issues, ultimately she had to seek employment within walking distance to her home but it was a real trial. As a bank we see many customers who are not able to get to the bank for similar reasons.
- **Multiple people that carpool and a vehicle breaks down,** which results in multiple people having to quit.

It was suggested that priority be given to a “form of public transportation along the U.S. 11 corridor between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. Monday through Friday.” The next step is for the NSVRC and their consulting firm, the KFH Group, to research other rural public transit systems and local private nonprofits with transportation systems.

Grandparents as Parents Group Meeting, Monday, January 14, 6:30 pm, FPSC Family Center, 781 Spring Parkway, Woodstock. Speaker is Erica Van Stee Hepner from the Shenandoah County Library - she will be discussing children’s activities/programs available at the library. Questions, contact GAPofShenco@gmail.com or (540)246-4272.

FPSC Community Meeting, Sunday, February 17, 6:30 pm, Antioch COB, to highlight successes and share information.

Steak Dinner & Silent Auction, March 23, Woodstock Moose Lodge

Cardboard City, September 6

*Each one of us is made in the image of God. Each life is a work of art, an act of our creative God.
 Yet how often do we overlook the potential of someone for one reason or another?
 How would our relationships be transformed if we actively viewed each person as a work of art,
 crafted by the hand of our gracious God?
 As you look into the eyes of those you meet today,
 remind yourself of who they are – a work of art created and loved by God.*



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