Meeting of the St. Vincent de Paul Society

St. Ann Church, Bethany Beach DE

June 13, 2016

The meeting was called to order by President Mike Ferrar in Delaney Hall at 9:30 AM. Deacon Jack led us in Opening Prayer and a meditation on the grace of humility.

No **newcomers** were present.

**Treasurer’s Report**. Both Eileen and Mary Ellen were absent. Vince Bertone reported a $9,000 current balance. Please report any trouble getting vendor checks to the Treasury Team. Or you may write your own check and get reimbursed.

**Secretary**: Minutes accepted as read.

**Pyle Center Presentation**: (See below)

**President’s Report:** Bill Clarke’s re-organization task force has met. Copies of Deacon Jack’s suggested re-organization plan, as well as the membership surveys, were distributed to the membership – please return them to your team captains. Two main sub-divisions are being considered: Food Pantry, headed by Ron Forgnoni and Home Visits/Phone Ministry, headed by Tish and Deacon Jack.

**For the next meeting**: we will divide into these 2 sub-groups and brainstorm. Mike Galu asked where the garden fits in that scheme. Conference approved putting it under Food; however, no produce may be stored in church. Dan diLuzio asked if the Confirmation candidates could volunteer in the garden or the food pantry as part of their 10-hour service project. Mike stressed that people should feel comfortable with whatever SVDP activities they choose.

Madeleine Lazaro asked if we could discuss the **Extended Care Ministry**. Mike said to bring that up next meeting.

**Resource List**: Copies were distributed. Mike advised we all read it and use it on phone duty. Because resources are always being added or subtracted, it can never be a “final” list. He thanked Tish and her Committee for taking this on.

Mike asked Marilyn Janus to report on the **Eastern Region SVDP meeting** she attended on June 4 at Princeton Theological Seminary. (See below) She brought back handouts, which Dan will put on the website.

**Team 7 Report (**Myra Stock): Food Pantry was not open. They took one call and spent $177.

**Team 1 Report**: (Linda Palladino) : 8 clients at the Food Pantry, gave out 24 bags of food. Had 3 calls, gave out no money. Linda referred 2 women out of our area to Millsboro SVDP. It concerned her that, after repeated calls to their listed contact number, she received no return call. Should she follow up, even after her scheduled week? Mike said yes.

**Joe Lane** reported on an **SVDP he observed while visiting, which has been in operation 55 years**. They have their Food Pantry in its own small house, set up like a grocery store, with shopping baskets, refrigeration, and freezer capability. Clients do their own shopping. Their teams keep the phone for a month. They have a rent team and a utility team. They make up “baggies” of food which they hand out to the homeless they encounter, either on foot or while driving. The baggies have their conference contact number on one side, and basic resources numbers on the other. Mike suggested we discuss this idea in workshop at the next meeting.

Joe still has tickets to sell for the **VIC Dance**, and reminded us that SVDP will get 1/3 of the dance proceeds.

Mike Galu will be out of town this week and needs people to water the garden, either early in the AM or PM. He said it’s a two-person job and takes about 15 minutes.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:45 AM.

**Next meeting: Monday, June 27 at 9:30 AM in Delaney Hall.**

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Janus

Secretary

marilyn.janus@gmail.com

P**yle Center Presentation**: Karen Elliott, Director and Jackie Steele, Staff Interviewer, addressed the meeting. Mike shaped the discussion around two questions: What is their intake process? When and why do they deny help?

**Karen**. Pyle is one of 15 regional, mostly state-funded centers. It serves the area from Millsboro, South of Route 24, to Fenwick Island. It differs from the other centers in having its own Board of Trustees, who can authorize local projects, like cameras on Day Care Center playgrounds. Pyle considers itself an **emergency service only**: food, rent, utilities, and housing. Social Services handle all other benefits. EAS money is available for those who are Medicaid qualified. Last year, Pyle conducted over 37,000 interviews and gave out over $100,000, mostly in state money.

**Jackie**: Clients are interviewed by herself, Pat or Candace, who determine the nature of the client’s emergency and attempt to determine what caused it. Interviews generally last 45-60 minutes, and ask about areas of need other than the current emergency. Pyle Center will send clients to other agencies, if

appropriate, but client must make the appointment.

**Client Profile**: Serve all ages, but see mostly people in their 20s and 30s. Elderly people prefer to ask their church for help. See many repeaters, a fair number of addicts and/or disabled. Do not see many Hispanic clients, except on Tuesday for WICC or Social Services.

**Utilities**: Interviewer calls Delmarva Electric, who offers payment plans and Delaware Electric, who does not, to verify the client’s situation. Client must product all their past bills and their disconnect notice. Interviewer must verify their financial status to determine if this is a true emergency. (In disputed situations, Karen makes the final ruling.) Same process is followed for Water and Propane. Pyle has a firewood supplier.

**Rent:** Interviewer calls landlord to verify client’s situation. Will landlord take less than the total owed? Is landlord the property’s true owner? Client must fill out a W9 and claim rent aid on his taxes.

**Shelter:** Interviewer calls the Homeless Planning Council, who does their own evaluation. Client may qualify, but all facilities may be full. Clients must produce proof of tax returns, as they cannot be used to pay for a motel room.

**Food:** Pyle has a Food Pantry, one staffer to give out emergency food and a state budget of $250 for 6 months. Food/ money for food comes mostly from donations.

**Denial Letter**: Denial of emergency services does not mean denial of total services. Pyle Center has 48 hours to process a case and then it is closed. Denial letter can be taken to other agencies, like the Utility Fund, which has a yearly budget from the State, but covers all 15 Regional Centers. Client could still receive partial aid or matching aid from other donors like SVDP.

**Q & A:**

Rosemary Wlaschin: how do we best interface with Pyle Center: Jackie: refer them to us first for a detailed interview and income verification. If we cannot help, we can give you a copy of the denial letter. Never give out cash or a check.

Dan Quigley: will Pyle refer food pantry clients to us? Yes.

Vince: does ACTS help the Pyle Center? ACTS will only help a client once in a lifetime, for $200 max.

Deacon Jack: would it be better to have just one contact name for SVD? Yes, but they can call the assigned weekly team leader. Deacon Jack said if he is on duty, he would rather be called directly. Karen said they can send us clients with a Pyle Center referral form.

Tish Galu: would our Conference re-organization make it easier to get help faster? Not in emergencies. Does Pyle do home visits? Not required to and only do them rarely, when other Social Services and/or the police are involved. Never go alone; not every place is safe.