

Joan Mitchell Reviews Human Needs Council for Drumright Rotary

At Friday's Drumright Rotary meeting, Rotarian, Gary Smith, introduced his guest speaker, Joan Mitchell. Joan is the secretary at the First United Methodist Church in Drumright and is also involved in the Human Needs Council, an organization created by the Drumright Ministerial Alliance.

Joan was raised in Drumright and spent her first career working in the oil industry. But it is her second career direction that she is passionate about now.

The Ministerial Alliance in Drumright consists of ministers from Drumright, Shamrock, Olive and Freedom Hill. One of the services Drumright's Ministerial Alliance provides is access to discounted frozen food from Mid America Foods. This ministry also enables disadvantaged families an opportunity to receive free food as well. There are applications and restrictions in place to allow the ministry to help where help is needed the most.



Pictured L - R: Joan Mitchell, Gary Smith

Picture taken by Greg Roberts

Drumright's Ministerial Alliance realized there was a greater need than what their scope currently handled; and in April 2007, they created the Drumright Human Needs Council, a ministry to assist the Alliance in aiding families by expanding the scope of their current ministries. The Human Needs Council consists of two lay persons from each church involved in the Ministerial Alliance and is solely dependent on donations and fund raisers.

Drumright's Human Needs Council assists families with utilities, rent and other forms of necessary provisions. They work with the individual or family to determine the best solution and also provide counseling for applicants. In order to help the recipients best and to help a larger number of people, all applicants are screened and reviewed by the Review Board to ensure that the available funds are spent accurately and to avoid an applicant trying to manipulate the system. Since inception, the total monetary assistance from the Human Needs Council is \$32, 743.73. One-hundred and sixty families were assisted from 2007 to 2011. The Human Needs Council has also published a forty-one page resource guide that lists local and statewide services and organizations that are available to those in need.

In addition to all other activities, recently, a Bible Ministry was started. Any funds donated for the Bible Ministry are used only for that ministry. A total of twenty-eight Bibles have been distributed to applicants along with six adult Christian Books and forty-three children Bible stories and game books. Bibles have also been placed at the Drumright Jail and local area lodging.

Joan also talked about several other programs in Drumright including: the local Food Bank located at the First Baptist Church of Drumright; the Patient Care Program for medication assistance; the Drumright Hospital Auxiliary providing reading material, juices and a friendly visit for our hospitalized residents; and the newest ministry, a baby product drive, by the First United Methodist Church which recently provided diapers to five local families. She also discussed how Drumright's First Baptist Church's Activity Building was recently certified as a Red Cross Emergency Shelter. Joan declared how much she enjoys that our community "all get together, all coordinate to provide food and shelter".

Rotarian, Gary Smith, announced "there is a lot of hurting people in this town that is not as obvious, but there is a real problem". Of course Gary sees this first hand as the Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Drumright and an active member of the Ministerial Alliance.

It can be easy to be removed from this side of life in Drumright and not be aware of the struggles that people go through day to day just to exist. However, just existing isn't living; it's surviving. Having programs like these available, in a small community, such as Drumright, is such a blessing. But there is always more assistance needed and in an attempt to give a small part, Rotarian, Shirley Klaus, has challenged each Drumright Rotarian to bring a non-perishable food item each week to be donated to the local Food Bank.

If you would like additional information about the services offered that Joan discussed, please contact the Human Needs Council at 918-352-1010.

Please join us at Friday's meeting hosted by Rotarian, Cleta Cobble, and remember your non-perishable food donation.

If you would like more information about Drumright Rotary Club, please contact us on our FaceBook page, Drumright Rotary Club, or go to our website www.wix.com/drumrightrotary/drumrightrotary.

Written by Jena Drake, Rotarian