


Use it for life.

5 THE MORNING CALL

 themorningcall.com

» SO YOU KNOW

Cedar Crest College will host a free public seminar on how to deal with the financial market. MORE TO KNOW: A2



INSIDE NEWS FRIDAY

Valley's first baby of '09 »

Arriving five days before her due date, Livia Pizzini of Allentown was born at 12:38 a.m. New Year's Day at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Cedar Crest. **B1**



No homicides reported in Bethlehem in 2008

The last time the city had a homicide-free year was in 1992, police records show. **B1**

PARK AND PIPE:
Area ski resorts lure snowboarders

SPORTS: PAGE C1



DISCARDED CHRISTMAS TREES:
Learn how to put them to good use

LIFE: PAGE D1

CARING KIDS:
They bring smiles at nursing homes and shelters

LIFE: PAGE D1



“They’re learning something about life and problem solving and being patient with animals, and most importantly, that they don’t always have to get paid for a job.”

WENDY GODSHALL, Center Valley



DEVIKA KNAFO, 9, delivers a gift basket to Mary Jandrisovitz at Phoebe Home in Allentown.

Joanna Poncavage The Morning Call

Help at a nursing home

The **Knafo children's** idea to honor their grandfather's memory came from **Nilaya, 10, and Devika, 9**, singing in nursing homes through their school. With the

VOLUNTEERS PAGE D2

WHERE TO FIND PLACES TO VOLUNTEER

The Volunteer Center of the Lehigh Valley's Web site lists more than 300 volunteer opportunities for people of all ages in many different locations.

To make a difference, visit www.volunteerlv.org or call 610-807-0336.

VOLUNTEERS

FROM PAGE D1

Kids learn
to put
others first

help of their parents, Angeli- que Knafo and Philippe Knafo-Renaud, they asked area businesses for dona- tions of money and items suitable for nursing home residents. With the help of their brother, **Pasha, 5**, they filled gift baskets with use- ful things such as socks, puzzle books, candy, tissues and quarters for vending machines.

In addition to their deliv- eries at the Phoebe Home and Country Meadows, both in Allentown, the children are forming a non- profit organization with the help of their parents, who are matching donations. The children created a Web site, www.mauricemitzvah.org, and have plans for the new year.

"Our next project is grandbuddies," says Nilaya. "Pairing up kids with se- niors. First, they'll keep in contact with letters, and once they get to know each other, they'll visit for events." Children also will make art and frame it and give it to their grandbud- dies for their walls.

"From a sad event, it turned into something that would make their grandfa- ther very proud," says their mother, Angeli- que.

Help at an animal shelter

Mikala Leszcynski asked her fourth-grade teacher at Shafer Elementary School in Nazareth for help in starting her own Admira- tion for Animals Founda- tion to raise money to help animals at the Center for Animal Health and Welfare in Williams Township near Easton.

Each week, "if we have enough donations," she says, she buys supplies, including cat litter, cat and dog food and laundry deter- gent and her whole family delivers them. While Mika- la and her father, Mike Leszcynski, walk dogs, her mother, Tracy, and young- er siblings visit the shel-



Photos by Joanna Poncavage The Morning Call

NILAYA KNAFO, 10, helps Phoebe Home resident Beatrice Sterner unwrap a gift basket. Nilaya and her brother and sister decided to volunteer in memory of their grandfather.



PASHA KNAFO, 5, of Allentown visits with Phoebe Home resident Mary Jandrisovitz. Pasha and his sisters also delivered gift baskets to Country Meadows in Allentown.

ter's cats.

"It's a fun family thing to do," says Tracy Leszcyn- ski, and it's important that children learn about being responsible for animals.

"A lot of kids are really in tune with the needs of our animals," says Barbara Loch, center director. "We couldn't manage without our volunteers."

Help at a family-focused organization

Rachel Hoats was in sixth grade when her par- ents started attending meet- ings for PROSPER, a pilot program in the Salisbury School District designed to strengthen families and prevent negative behavior. Today, she's a senior and a youth member of this project, helping middle school students resist peer pressure and encouraging them to sign up for the program. She also helps organize the school's PROS- PER fundraising.

Hoats says she enjoys the opportunity to work with a lot of different peo- ple and to meet other youth members from teams across Pennsylvania. "I plan to major in education and I can use some of the tech- niques I've learned," she says.

Help with farm animals

Wendy Godshall of Cen- ter Valley and her three children — **Jordan, 12**, **Shane, 8**, and **Brylee, 7** — volunteer at the Flint Hill Farm Educational Center in Upper Saucon Township. They've done all sorts of farm chores, from planting berry bushes to grooming horses to nursing baby goats back to health. "They're learning some- thing about life and prob- lem solving and being pa- tient with animals, and most importantly, that they don't always have to get paid for a job," says their mother.

March for a cause

Catharine Aboulhoda, daughter of Susan and Mike Aboulhoda of Upper Ma- cungie Township, is only 6 years old, but she has al- ready met President George W. Bush and all of Pennsylv- ania's legislators. National Ambassador for the March of Dimes, she spent much of last year traveling across the country promoting the organization and thanking its volunteers. Born 16 weeks early, Catharine is now a healthy and energetic little girl. "We volunteered as a family," says her moth- er. "It's important to let children get involved in giving back at a young age." Catharine and **Micha- el**, her 13-year-old brother, are often the youngest vol- unteers in the room.

Help other children

Leanna Arnold, 18, of Center Valley has volun- teered at Camelot for Chil- dren for six years. Daughter of Marie and Ron Arnold and a senior at Southern Lehigh High School, she started as an arts and crafts summer camp counselor, and now is a junior board member who helps plan regular parties and events. The organization helps children with life-threaten- ing illnesses, disabilities or chronic conditions.

"I like getting to know the different children, and spending time with them and letting them feel they are the same as everyone else," she says. "I like to see how the community comes together, and how people want to be involved and help."

Work in a healing environment

Lindsay Wisser of Coo- persburg, 16, spent the last two summers voluntarily doing housekeeping duties in the physical therapy department at Good Shep- herd Hospital in Allentown. A daughter of Linda and Matthew Wisser, she said it has helped her decide she might want to study physi- cal therapy after she gradu- ates from Southern Lehigh High School. "It was really rewarding," says Lindsay.