

The DALLAS POST

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SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF THE DALLAS AND LAKE-LEHMAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Working to feed the hungry

Food Pantry operates out of TUMC

By REBECCA BRIA
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With newer, larger homes being built almost daily and Memorial Highway booming with new businesses opening, it's almost hard to believe there are underprivileged families living in our area.

Louise Hazeltine, coordinator of the Back Mountain Food Pantry and a resident of Trucksville, knows better. She

started working at the pantry in 2003 and has seen first-hand the financially needy residents of the Back Mountain.

The Back Mountain Food Pantry is sponsored by the Back Mountain Ministerium and serves low-income people and families residing in the Dallas and Lake-Lehman School Districts. The pantry is operated out of the Trucksville United Methodist Church at 40 Knob Hill Road off Church

Road in Trucksville.

In 1977, the Commission on Economic Opportunity asked churches in the Back Mountain to aid them in providing non-perishable food to needy people in the area. Food was collected after services at Back Mountain churches, the Back Mountain Food Pantry was formed and operated out of a room in the lower level of the Kingston Township Municipal Building. The room was small

and food had to be carried up and down a flight of stairs.

At the onset of the pantry, only three to five orders were issued each week. CEO handled client records and verified their eligibility. By 2003, the program had grown so much that CEO asked the pantry to begin verifying clients' eligibility. In the same year, the new Bennett-Rattigan Back Mountain Food Pantry opened in the lower level of the William and Melba Dickson Educational Facility at the Trucksville United Methodist Church to devote

more needed space to the pantry. The pantry celebrated its 30th anniversary in May.

Currently, nine to 17 orders are issued each week and extra food is given out at Thanksgiving. Donations of food come in from groups and individuals. St. Therese's Roman Catholic Church recently brought 750 to 800 pounds of food after a drive it conducted at Masses over two weeks. Trucksville Pharmacy also held a drive not long ago and raised goods for

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'Komatsu' is the REASON for this

Lisa Smith of Centermoreland realizes dream of a lifetime

By REBECCA BRIA
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Lisa Smith always wanted a horse of her own. But living in the suburbs of Philadelphia in Bucks County, the family did not have the land or the money to buy a horse. When Smith moved to Centermoreland 15 years ago, she had the property to get the horse of her dreams. Five years later, she adopted Komatsu, a Paint breed who is now 26 years old.

Smith and her former husband, Don, founded The Retired Equine Adoption Society of the Northeast (R.E.A.S.O.N.) about three years after she acquired Komatsu and started doing horse rescues. One week from today, R.E.A.S.O.N. will hold its second annual "Rock the Horse" benefit concert on Sunday, Aug. 12 at its farm on Route 292 in Centermoreland, located between Dallas and Tunkhannock. The site opens at 11 a.m. and music starts at 1 p.m.

The non-profit R.E.A.S.O.N. organization adopts equine out into new, loving homes. "There's always something you don't know and you can learn something everyday." Lisa Smith R.E.A.S.O.N. founder

"A lot of times they will go to be slaughtered or to pull Amish buggies," said Smith. "Most horses go to Canada to be slaughtered because many Americans are against slaughtering."

She says many are pushing for a nationwide horse slaughter ban but Smith does not know if she agrees.

"My thought is, it's too much too soon," she said. "A horse would be better off dead than out in a field being starved."

Right now, Smith is focusing on bringing in standardbreds from the Downs at Mohegan Sun. But she gets other horses because people find R.E.A.S.O.N. on the internet and the organization is the Petco Foundation's horse rescue in the area. Horses have been sent to the farm from as far away as Australia.

Between 16 and 23 horses are at the farm any given time - waiting to be adopted. Unfortunately, Smith must turn down horses all the time due to lack of space and currently has a waiting list of six horses. She is forced to be selective in choosing and picks the horses she thinks she can adopt out to homes. Twenty-five to 50 horses are adopted out each year, generally within the tri-state area, and more than 250 horses have been adopted since R.E.A.S.O.N. began.

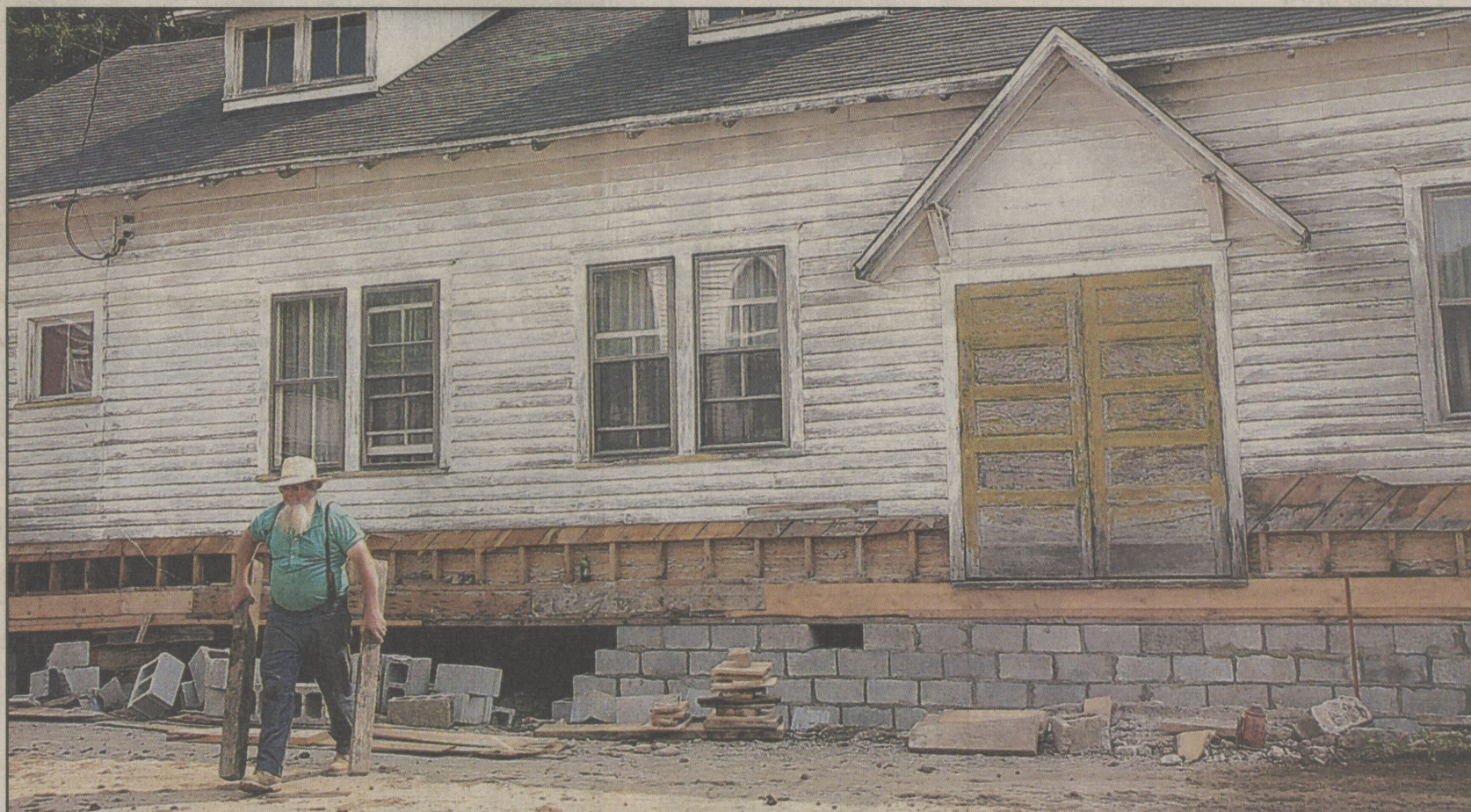
About 80 percent of the horses stay within a 50-mile radius of the farm.

People who adopt a horse from R.E.A.S.O.N. are required to sign a contract and follow rules meant to keep the horses healthy and happy. Yearly inspections of adopted horses by the organization are mandatory for the remainder of the horses' lives. Adopters must meet the following requirements: Be at least 21 years of age, have a turnout area and a minimum three-sided shelter; have no barbed

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"I was afraid when I saw how rotten the studs were. I was afraid when we put it back in that it was strong enough to lift it. It's being done and done right."

- Leroy Mast



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Leroy Mast, an Old Order Amish from Warren Center, PA, is determined to save the old hall at the Methodist church in Orange.

Preserving history

By REBECCA BRIA
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The Orange United Methodist Church hall is a piece of history. So when the building was determined to be getting weaker and in need of drastic repairs, members insisted it be restored and not rebuilt. And that is what is currently being done.

Built in 1926, the hall has served as a place for socialization among members for years. It also was the home of church school classes in the warmer months of the year and was used as a polling location for Franklin Township residents. Each year, a community-wide dinner is held before Thanksgiving and a Mother's Day dinner occurs in May. The hall is the site for a yard sale every June and other various events throughout the year.

A previous structure where the hall stands was an "L"-shaped shed used to house church members' horses while they attended services.

Church member Bill Perry saw Amish men working on a barn nearby and took interest in their work. Perry spoke to the men about doing construction on the hall. The men agreed to do the work and began in the end of June.

The Amish men are members of the Mast family from Warren Center, PA, located 20 miles outside of Towanda. Each weekday, Leroy Mast and several of his sons make the hour-and-a-half ride to Orange to fix the hall. The Masts belong to the Old Order of the Amish faith.

An employee named Bryan, who is not Amish, drives the group to work each day because

the Old Order faith does not allow its members to drive automobiles. Together, the group will construct a new footer, foundation, floor joists and plates. Additional work includes replacing some siding, putting trim on the bottom, and repairing the chimney. Mast says half of the hall was still in good condition, but the section with the kitchen was in very bad shape.

"I was afraid when I saw how rotten the studs were. I was afraid when we put it back in that it was strong enough to lift it," he said. "It's being done and done right."

Mast learned the construction trade from his father. The father of 11 children, he is passing his knowledge on to his own sons. In addition to their construction business, the Mast family also receives income from a small farm and harness shop.

Construction was estimated to be completed by the end of this next and some church members were prepared to paint and clean the building before its reopening.

Jack Mokychevic, chairman of the Orange United Methodist Church Board of Trustees, is thankful the neighbors surrounding the church

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Leroy Mast Jr., an Old Order Amish from Warren Center, PA, his father and two brothers work to save the old church hall at the Methodist Church in Orange.

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