



Union Aid Society Matters

neighbors helping neighbors since 1898

The Union Aid Society serves as the community safety net for those in need who reside within the Quaker Valley School District.

Union Aid is Citizen of the Year!



Past and present Board members who attended the Sewickley Herald's dinner from left to right (top row) Kathy Shields, Eleanor Friedman, Mary Ann Klussmann, Cherry White, Susan Jones, Susan Aleshire, Karen Steup, Barbara Cooley Thaw, Barbara Johns from left to right (middle row) Carroll Logsdon, Brenda Keirn, Gwen Clements, Susie Elste, Sue Harvey, Sharon Patterson, Shannon Taylor, Susan Nitzberg, Vike Rideout (sitting) Gretchen Burnham, Hanley Cox, Cathie Johnson, Robin Kifer

The Sewickley Herald has named Union Aid Society its Citizen of the Year for 2010 for "its commitment to provide financial assistance, food, shelter and other supplies to a growing number of families within the Sewickley community".

Each year the Herald asks its readers to nominate civic-minded individuals or a community-focused organization for this tribute. The Herald received a number of comments in support of the selection of UAS. According to the published announcement of the honor, Doug Florey, Executive Director of the Laughlin Center wrote: "I can't think of an organization that deserves it more. Sherri and the Board of Union Aid are terrific assets to the broader community. Union Aid has been very generous about considering requests for help from our clients who needed help above and beyond what our internal financial aid program could offer."

The current Board and its executive director share this honor with distinguished alumni that for

more than one hundred years have developed the organization and addressed the evolving challenges of those in the Quaker Valley School District. The Board alone could not have accomplished its legacy without the financial support of individuals and organizations in this generous community.

At the April 29 honors dinner, Board President Gretchen Burnham commented that: "If there is a common thread in the Union Aid Society quilt, it is growth, change and a desire to meet the needs of our community. This has been strengthened over the years through collaborations with other local organizations including Heritage Valley Hospital, the Sewickley Community Center, the YMCA and most recently with Youth Connect and Side by Side."

We are proud of this accolade from the Herald and the community. It motivates us to continue to address families in need by diligent attention to the economy and how it affects all of us.

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Sherri Leifman MSW, LSW
Executive Director

Union Aid adapts to today's changing needs



Since the completion of our strategic plan last year, the Union Aid Society has been working hard to address the needs of our community in new and creative ways. In addition to providing immediate and confidential assistance to our neighbors for help with rent, food, utilities and other

necessities, we are partnering with other local groups to reach those who may need our help, but may be unaware of or unable to ask for our assistance. We are collaborating with the school district to provide funding to supplement the free lunch program; we are working closely with Quaker Valley's community youth worker who can now, with the help of Union Aid, encourage students to participate in a variety of activities such as YBL basketball, piano lessons and voice lessons. We have always helped families pay for summer school, but we have expanded the scope of support to include summer enrichment classes. For over one hundred years, the Union Aid Society has adapted to the changing needs of the community and we continue to follow this proud tradition.

Sherri Leifman

Sherri Leifman, MSW, LSW
Executive Director

“Since my divorce, life for my children and me has been a daily financial struggle. Sometimes I simply can't find a way to provide the necessities like food, water, electricity and gas. The Union Aid Society has helped us immeasurably; there are times when we literally couldn't have made it without your help. But most of all, thank you Sherri for the quiet times in your office when you reached out and talked to me about my life. I had struggled so long on my own and you were the only one who listened.”

— *Quaker Valley Resident*

Thank You for Your Support

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President's Message



What a wonderful honor it is for the Union Aid Society to have been selected as the 2010 Sewickley Herald's Citizen of the Year.

As I reflected on this award, I quickly realized, that while our projects and programs have evolved throughout our history, Union Aid's mission and our commitment to helping those in need in our Valley have never wavered. All that has really changed are the names and faces of the members of the Board, of our Executive Directors and social workers, of the recipients of our assistance and of our generous financial supporters.

The Union Aid Society was founded in 1898 by a group of remarkable women who had a vision. They would join to form a society whose mission would be to provide aid and assistance to individuals and families in need. I believe these women would be pleased to see that the foundation they laid has endured...and prospered.

We wish to thank the Quaker Valley community for its belief in our mission, for its continuing support, for its encouragement, and for its trust in the endeavors of the Union Aid Society as a community safety net. You are all a reflection of our finest qualities.

Gretchen Burnham
President, Board of Directors

Then...and Now

From Union Aid Archives – 100 Years 1898 - 1998

Winter, 1918-1919 "Influenza conditions lasted through the winter...as late as March, soup, puddings, eggs, and the like were provided for families where there was no one able to cook. Many families were ill at once."

NOW...A single mother, who was having difficulty feeding her family, came in for help. We assisted her with an application for food stamps and provided grocery gift cards until she was approved for benefits.



The Depression Years, December, 1933 "The Case of Mrs. Dods" A widow with four children is to be met with food relief and milk from the Union Aid. Also, a petition for Mother's Assistance pension will be applied for through the proper authorities."

NOW...One of the four Dods children created a scholarship in memory of her mother and in appreciation for assistance to her family. She continues to endow this fund annually.



October, 1942 "Brother supports sister who has two boys drafted and Union Aid asked to supplement family budget."

NOW...A father is deployed to Afghanistan and his family is assisted with mortgage payments and holiday gift cards.



October, 1960 "Executive Meeting to discuss housing project. Letters being written to other agencies operating or attempting to operate similar facilities – a project for elderly, retired, non-working people."

NOW...Union Aid built its first apartment building in the 1970s, added a second building in the 1980s and expanded the complex in 2009. There are now 22 affordable modern apartments in the heart of Sewickley.

Help your neighbors



When giving to the **United Way** specify donor number **703** on your pledge form to designate your gift to the Union Aid Society.

The following prayer, written by former Board member Carroll Logsdon, is recited at the beginning of each monthly Board meeting. It reaffirms the organization's commitment to its mission of serving the community with respect and dignity.

THE UNION AID SOCIETY PRAYER

O God, as we begin another meeting of the Union Aid Society, bless all of us and all that we do. Help us to be wise in our choices, compassionate in our dealings with those who are in need, and respectful of all with whom we come into contact. Help us not to be judgmental, but to treat all of our friends and neighbors in need, with love and understanding. Amen.

Getting back on her feet



Sandy* has worked all her life from the time she was a teenager. As a single mother of a nine year old boy, she makes sure her work schedule allows her to be at home to get her son on the school bus each morning.

Although Sandy has often lived from paycheck to paycheck, she has always provided for her family without receiving any type of financial assistance. When she was recently laid off from her job of several years, she immediately started to look for another one, but her job hunting went slowly. She came to the Union Aid Society after being referred by a neighbor, to request help with her rent which was a month overdue. She had applied for unemployment benefits and was waiting for her first check. However, there was an extended delay in the processing of her unemployment benefit and her funds were running out. Union Aid was able to help pay her rent for two months and provided gift cards so that she could go grocery shopping. After several months, Sandy found another job and was able to get back on her feet.

**not her real name*

Scholarships:

The gift that keeps on giving



Jessica Holman, the 2010 Union Aid Society – Dods Scholarship winner. Jessica is attending Robert Morris University majoring in psychology. The Dods Scholarship is endowed by a grant from Marjorie Saunders in honor of her mother Kathryn S. Dods in continuing gratitude for the scholarship she received from Union Aid in 1945.

Three new scholarships were awarded this spring, one two-year \$10,000 award, and two one-year \$5,000 awards. We are pleased to have received a record number of applications for these competitive need-based scholarships.

Congratulations to Sydney Fondi, Katelyn Hazelbach and Caitlin Stuckwisch, our 2011 scholarship winners!

Please help us make a real and lasting difference in the lives of others.

Name (please print)

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone

Email

Enclosed is my/our gift in the amount of:
\$ _____

Please charge my/our

- VISA
 Master Card

Account # _____

Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

**To increase my support I have enclosed my
employer's matching gift form.**

Name of company _____

I/we would like to make my/our gift:

- in honor of
 in memory of

Acknowledgement to be sent to:

Name (please print)

Address

City, State, Zip

- I/we wish to have my/our gift
listed as "Anonymous"

Send your gift to:

The Union Aid Society
601 Thorn Street, Sewickley, PA 15143
or donate online at
www.UnionAidSociety.org

For more information call us at **412-741-9240**
or email us at **info@unionaidsociety.org**



union aid society
neighbors helping neighbors since 1898

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www.UnionAidSociety.org

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Friends of the Union Aid Society



Pictured from left to right: Representative from the Woodlands. Students from QVHS Economics/Entrepreneurship: Cara Kohler, Ari Redcross, Abigail Kennedy, Aunalee Brown, & Justin Chorba. Union Aid Society Executive Director, Sherri Leifman.

The Economics/Entrepreneurship class at Quaker Valley High School, taught by Susan McCaley and Alexandra Mariano, connects course content with real world experiences developing

21st century work skills. The course teaches students the knowledge and skills necessary for successful personal financial management and provides students with career opportunities in the field of entrepreneurship. Students are immersed in authentic learning experiences as they manage a Quaker Valley student-run business. This group of students ran the HotSpot, a store that provides snacks for students during lunch. They have the opportunity to make decisions, track results and learn from the outcomes.

A philanthropic spirit is instilled in these young entrepreneurs. Profits from their business are donated to charities selected by the students. This year the Union Aid Society was one of the recipients. The students choose the criteria used for evaluating a number of potential recipients. The Union Aid Society rose to the top, scoring high in the categories of student interest, impact on recipients and number served.

As of 2010, students have donated more than \$4,500 to the Union Aid Society.

“I am so happy in my new apartment. Now that I no longer am driving it is great to walk to the village whenever I want. I have a lot of new friends here, and we enjoy getting together in the commons room and on the patio.” — Resident of Union Aid Society apartment building