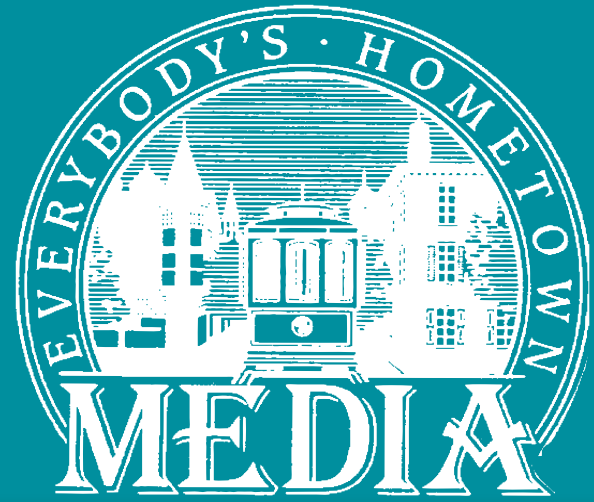


2018

Our Town Media



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LOCAL INSTITUTIONS

150 years of keeping the faith

Nativity Blessed Virgin Mary Parish celebrates 150 years of faith, hope, charity

Alice Pearson, co-chair of the Nativity B.V.M. Parish's 150th Anniversary committee, holds up the commemorative t-shirt and vehicle magnet available this year to parishioners and friends of the parish. Over 1800 families belong to the thriving parish. The committee has worked on hosting a variety of events and projects throughout the year to mark the century and a half milestone of their church.

PEG DEGRASSA — DIGITAL FIRST MEDIA



By Peg DeGrassa

pdegrassa@21st-centurymedia.com
@PeggyDe5 on Twitter

MEDIA » The congregation of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church has much to celebrate this year – 150 years' worth of loving and praising God, compassionate and charitable parishioners, community involvement and a rich, vibrant history.

Nativity BVM Church, as it's colloquially called, will culminate its year-long series of special events on the Feast Day of the Nativity of the Blessed Vir-

gin Mary on Sept. 8, with a special 150th anniversary Mass at 4 p.m., celebrated by Archbishop Charles Chaput, and followed by a celebratory dinner at Drexelbrook Catering and Special Event Center. In addition to current parishioners and friends in the community, former priests and nuns who served at the church, former parishioners and school alumni will also be invited and welcomed to the celebration.

The Rev. Edward Bell, now serving his 15th year as pastor of the parish, explained, "From its founding in 1868, the mission of our

parish has remained the same: to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, minister to the poor and sick, educate in ways of faith and celebrate the sacraments."

Currently the spiritual home to 5,200 individuals, Nativity BVM Parish is situated in the heart of Media at 30 E. Franklin St. Rev. Bell is assisted by two retired priests in residence, Monsignor Joseph McGeown and the Rev. John Mulgrew and Deacon William Kussmaul. Before being named pastor in 2004, Rev. Bell was preceded by pastors the Rev. Henry Wright, the Rev. Francis Aiden Brady,

Monsignor McCloskey, the Rev. Lawrence Deering, the Rev. Joseph McCaffrey, the Rev. George Shay, the Rev. Thomas Kelly, the Rev. Bradley and the Rev. Francis Giliberti.

From its humble beginnings as a spin-off from a mission site in Media for St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Chester Heights, the first 54 parishioners met in homes in Middletown and Media before the church was erected in 1882, at a cost of \$15,000. The church building itself has undergone countless updates through the de-

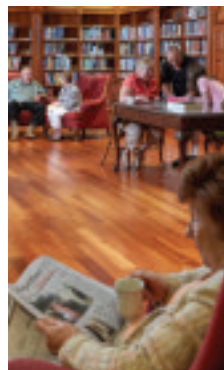
CHURCH » PAGE 3

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RIDDLE VILLAGE KNOWS LIFECARE



Church

FROM PAGE 2

acades, including new windows, flooring, aisle expansion, Children's Chapel, Adoration Chapel, the outside Shrine to Our Lady, pipe organ, updated Stations of the Cross, new and refurbished interior art, new roof, kneelers and lighting system and much more.

The parish's logo is "We are the Hands of Christ," representing their solid commitment to helping those in need, locally through their weekly and monthly hands-on involvement in a multitude of ways, from outreach locally in Philadelphia's shelters and in Graterford and George Hill prisons, to globally through its mission group that has traveled to Biloxi, Miss., after Hurricane Katrina, St. Croix to aid a sister parish in need,

CHURCH » PAGE 11



PEG DEGRASSA — DIGITAL FIRST MEDIA

The banners proclaiming the 150th anniversary of Nativity BVM Church in Media depict the Blessed Virgin Mary with her parents Saint Joachim and Saint Anne looking up to her. The anniversary logo was especially designed and painted by artist Neilson Carlin.

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LOCAL PEOPLE

Veteran Dave Tatum honored

Media Theatre's 'Veterans Night' recognized Vietnam veteran

By Peg DeGrassa

pdegrassa@21st-centurymedia.com
@PeggyDe5 on Twitter

MEDIA » Former Delaware County resident Dave Tatum was the "Veterans Night" honoree earlier this year when the Media Theatre Veterans Alliance, a partnership of the Media Theatre and the Pennsylvania Veterans Museum, awarded the Vietnam Veteran a special certificate, thanking him for his years of heroic military and community service.

Tatum's wife of 42 years, Mary Ann, was at his side, as he accepted the award. Tatum commented, in a voice laced with emotion, "This is a night that I will always, always remember."

Tatum, the 73rd local veteran to receive an Alliance commendation in the past 18 years, was presented the award by veteran Ed Buffman, a co-founder of the Pennsylvania Veterans Museum, on the stage of the theatre. Before the presentation, Tatum and his family and friends, as well as fellow veterans, were treated to a special reception in the theatre's upstairs Crystal Room.

The Vietnam vet, a resident of Malvern, grew up in Darby and enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps when he was only 17. His parents had to sign the papers for him to join. In 1965, Tatum headed to basic training at Parris Island, followed by more training at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina and then Radio School in San Diego for a year, where he became a highly-trained radio operator in Morse Code.

Tatum, attached to the 1st Battalion 9th Marines, was then sent to Okinawa. Due to its high casualty



PEG DEGRASSA — DIGITAL FIRST MEDIA

rate, the Battalion was nicknamed "The Walking Dead." In 1967, the troop was helicoptered into the Mekong Delta in Vietnam where, unfortunately, the Viet Cong were expecting them. Eight Marines in Tatum's troop were killed in the first day there. Tatum was a part of an operation called "Deckhouse Five," a U.S. Marine and Vietnam Marine operation that took place in the Mekong Delta. The combined seaborne and heliborne force assaulted an area of Viet Cong on the coast between CoChien and Ham Luong Beach.

From there, Tatum was sent for jungle training in the Philippines before boarding a ship in the South China Sea, headed to Da Nang, Vietnam, where he would become part of the 3rd Marine Division, 3rd Shore Party Battalion. Operating out of the Dong Ha Combat Base, Tatum became part of a helicopter support part of a helicopter

support team, which would choose landing spots for helicopters to land to pick up the dead and wounded. Tatum's 3rd Marine Division was sent to Con Thien, a Marine base only three miles from North Vietnam, where fighting was heavy to prevent the North Vietnamese from crossing into South Vietnam. During one of the battles, Tatum was photographed and his photo appeared in Life Magazine. From there, Tatum engaged for almost two months in The Battle of Hill 861, the first battle of Khe Sanh, where the Marines suffered heavy losses.

In November 1968, Tatum had contracted Malaria and was hospitalized for a month. In December, he was wounded in the leg by shrapnel. Tatum extended his tour of duty for another six months, serving with the same troop and continuing in the field with helicopter support groups. Tatum finally left Viet-

Tatum finally left Viet-

Tatum finally left Viet-

Tatum finally left Viet-

Tatum finally left Viet-

Veteran

FROM PAGE 4

nam after 18 months there, getting honorably discharged. Through his years of service, he had received the Purple Heart Medal, the Combat Action Ribbon, the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnamese Service Medal with One Star, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Gold Star, the Presidential Unit Commendation and the Good Conduct Medal.

After returning to civilian life, Tatum attended West Chester University, where he met his wife and earned his teaching degree. The Tatums now have three children and seven grandchildren. Tatum taught social studies and language arts at Upper Darby High School for 34 years. After he retired, Tatum taught 12 more years at Torah Academy in Wynnewood, before retiring, once more, last year.

While teaching, Tatum shared his military experience in Vietnam with the students and created a ten-year award-winning re-

search project for students. They wrote biographies about the 185 men from Delaware County who were killed in Vietnam.

Tatum is currently a member of the Vietnam Veterans of America Post 68 in Delaware County. He was a technical advisor for the new Vietnam War exhibit at the Pennsylvania Veterans Museum.

Veterans Night at the Media Theatre was the event which planted the seed for what is now the Pennsylvania Veterans Museum at 12 E. State St., Media, in the former Armory below Trader Joe's. The museum got its start in 2001 in the Media Theatre after a stage production of "South Pacific." Veterans were encouraged to bring memorabilia from their service days to the theatre during the show's run. Local veterans came with photos, ribbons, letters to home and medals for the exhibit, unknowingly forging the foundation for what was later to become the Pennsylvania Veterans Museum, just a short distance down the street from the theatre.

Currently, the nonprofit museum contains the fol-

lowing exhibits: D-Day Highlights, Korean War, Paratroopers Kiosk, U.S. Army Air Corps, Naval Battles in the South Pacific, U.S. Marines in the South Pacific, the Ruptured Duck movie theatre, Women in War, and more, as well as the new Vietnam War exhibit. Admission is free. Hours are 12 to 5 p.m. Thursday through Sunday. For more information, call 610-566-0788.

As he stood on stage with his fellow veterans, Media Mayor/Vietnam Veteran Bob McMahon, WWII U.S. Navy Combat Veteran Ed Buffman and U.S. Army Veteran Bill Lovejoy, who was the director of Veterans Affairs in the County for 55 years, Tatum commented, "This is such an incredible honor. I don't know if the word 'wonderful' has ever been said in the same sentence as 'Vietnam' but tonight I'm making the exception. I can't thank everyone enough for this wonderful night."

Before being drowned out by a thunderous applause for Tatum by the audience, Buffman responded simply, "You rightly deserve it. You are a true American hero."



PEG DEGRASSA — DIGITAL FIRST MEDIA

On stage, prior to Disney's Newsies The Musical, are WWII U.S. Navy Combat Veteran Ed Buffman, left, as he presents a special award to U.S. Marine Vietnam Veteran Dave Tatum, second from left. Also on stage for the presentation are U.S. Army Veteran Bill Lovejoy, second from right, and Media Mayor/Vietnam Veteran Bob McMahon, right.

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LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT

Media Theatre to present Theatre Exile's 'Tommy and Me'

Show by Ray Diding, directed by Joe Canuso to take stage Aug. 8 to 26

"Tommy and Me" was hailed as "unabashedly sentimental and sincere" by theater critic Mark Cofta during its premiere at Theatre Exile. The play is an autobiographical account of a seminal time in Ray Diding's life as he assists his lifelong hero, Tommy McDonald, reach the goal of being accepted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Diding said, "I heard from many people who did not get to see the play they hoped they would have another chance. Now they do! What is really gratifying, though, is hearing people say they saw the play and want to see it again. And that they are bringing a friend, their dad or someone along with them. Even non-sports fans have been touched by the show. It's a story that makes people feel good, and that's a beautiful thing."

"Tommy and Me" had its first public reading in

May 2015 by Theatre Exile of Philadelphia. The world premiere was also produced by Theatre Exile under Deborah Block, producing artistic director, in 2016. The Media Theatre's presentation, Aug. 8 to 26, will be the first time it has appeared in Delaware County.

The play's writer, Diding, was a sports columnist for the Philadelphia Bulletin and Philadelphia Daily News for three decades. He was named Pennsylvania Sportswriter of the Year five times. He was the first print journalist inducted into the Philadelphia Sports Hall of Fame. He won six Emmy Awards as a writer and producer at NFL Films. His documentary on the 1960 Eagles championship season won a Telly Award in 2011. He was the 1995 recipient of the Dick McCann Award for long and distinguished reporting on pro football. He is a 2017 inductee to the

Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame. Diding is a graduate of Temple University and a member of the School of Communications Hall of Fame. He has authored 11 books. He is a talk show host on WIP radio and a football analyst on the Comcast Sports Network.

The show is all about McDonald, who was born in Roy, N.M. He was a wide receiver who was a third-round draft pick of the Philadelphia Eagles in 1957. An All-America choice at Oklahoma, he won the Maxwell Award in 1956 as college football's player of the year. A six-time Pro Bowl selection (1959 to 1963 and 1966), McDonald played seven seasons with the Eagles (1957 to 1963), one with the Dallas Cowboys (1964), two with the Los Angeles Rams (1965 to 1966) and one each with the Atlanta Falcons (1967) and the Cleveland Browns (1968). Now 82,

THEATRE » PAGE 7



Theatre

FROM PAGE 6

McDonald currently lives in King of Prussia.

The director of the show is Joe Canuso, the founding artistic director of Theatre Exile who has directed many of its shows including "Ideation," "Lost Girls," "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?," "Annapurna," "A Behanding in Spokane," "That Pretty Pretty," "Mr. Marmalade," "Red Light Winter," "The Gin Game," "Burkie" and "Belmont Avenue Social Club,"

as well as the world premieres of "RIZZO," "Last Call," "Amputation Nation," "Cryptome," "Big Blonde," "Live at the Apollo Diner," "The Frankenharry Plays" and "Tommy and Me." He was nominated by the Barrymore Awards for Outstanding Direction of a Play three times and was named Best Director in 2009 by The Philadelphia Weekly for "Blackbird." He was nominated as Best Director for a Phindie Award for "The North Plan" in 2013 and won in 2015 for "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" He was part of Exile's Barrymore Award-winning ensemble for "Glengarry

Glen Ross" in 2007. And he has performed internationally in London, Prague and throughout Italy.

Bruce Graham was the script consultant for the show. Graham began his career as a playwright at the Philadelphia Festival Theatre for New Plays (PFT) in 1984 with "Burkie." Graham became playwright-in-residence at PFT and later served two years as artistic director. He has received grants from the Pew Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation and was a past winner of the Princess Grace Foundation Statuette. He won the Rosenthal

Prize for Coyote On A Fence. He has won consecutive Barrymore Awards for Best New Play ("Something Intangible" and "Any Given Monday") and Chicago's Jefferson Award for "The Outgoing Tide." He is the first American playwright to be invited two years in a row to the Galway Arts Festival, which produced "The Outgoing Tide" and "Stella and Lou." Graham is a graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He teaches playwriting and film courses at Drexel University. In the past, he has taught graduate-level playwriting at University of Pennsylvania, Villanova University and Rutgers. He has conducted playwriting workshops in high schools and colleges across the country.

The cast features Simon Kiley as Young Ray, Matt Pfeiffer as Ray, Frank Nardi Jr. as Young Tommy and Tom Teti as Tommy.

The artistic team includes set designer and lighting designer Thom Weaver, costumer designer Katherine Fritz, sound designer and original music Mi-

chael Kiley, props master Flora Vassar, video/projection designer Michael Long and script consultant Bruce Graham.

Tickets are \$30 to \$40 and are available at mediatheatre.org or by calling The Media Theatre at 610-891-0100.

"Tommy and Me" is scheduled for Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m., as well as a Saturday matinee at 2 p.m. and Sunday matinees at 1 and 5 p.m. each week Aug. 8 to 26.

There are special guests hosting a talk-back with the audience at each performance:

- Aug. 8 — Dick Vermeil, former Eagles head coach, also head coach of Super Bowl champion St. Louis Rams.
- Aug. 10 — Chris Stigall, WPHT talk show host.
- Aug. 11 (2 p.m.) — Gene Collier, author and playwright of "The Chief," the play about Steelers owner Art Rooney.
- Aug. 11 (7:30 p.m.) — Vai Sikahema, Channel 10 news anchor and former Eagle.
- Aug. 12 (1 p.m.) — Bill Bergey, former Eagles linebacker.

- Aug. 15 — Phil Martelli, St. Joseph's University basketball coach.

- Aug. 17 — Glen Macnow, 94 WIP Sports Radio Host

- Aug. 18 (2 p.m.) — Bill Marimow, editor, Philadelphia Inquirer.

- Aug. 18 (7:30 p.m.) — Phil Heron, editor, Delaware County Daily Times.

- Aug. 22 — Mike Mayock, NFL Network analyst.

- Aug. 24 — Ron Jaworski, former Eagles quarterback and TV analyst

- Aug. 26 (1 p.m.) — David Boardman, dean, Klein School of Communications, Temple University.

- Aug. 26 (5 p.m.) — Joe DeCamera and Jon Ritchie, WIP sports radio midday hosts.

Sponsored by Media Real Estate (title sponsor), Fellini Cafe and Ariano's of Media, Barnieu Restaurants, Bruce & Giuliana Zallie and Zallie Shop-Rite Supermarkets, NovaCare Rehabilitation, SportsRadio 94 WIP, Comcast, Spasso Restaurant and M & T Bank

LOCAL BUSINESS

Media salon thriving despite world of high drama, chains

Many of us have heard the stories or seen with our own eyes how big box stores are hurting the bottom line of small, local mom and pop businesses.

Sadly, we've even watched some local businesses that were forced to close their doors for good. Unfortunately, the traditional hardware stores find it difficult to compete with Home Depot and Lowe's. The small printer/stationary stores are just about obsolete now with Staples and Office Max in town. Small, family owned restaurants lose customers to the well-known chains that open nearby and can afford glitzy advertising and ongoing promotions. Just this week, at least three different people randomly told me that they're going to TGI Friday's because the ribs on their current commercials look so outstanding. The classic all-American corner store, what few there are left, can barely hang on, with supermarkets and Super Wawas every few miles. And business owners of every sort feel the pinch from Walmart, Target and other huge variety super stores.

One business which I never thought about struggling in

an ever-changing world is the small, local hair salon. I guess they were just always there, in every town, so I took them for granted and never gave them much thought.

Earlier this year, I received a phone call from Cheryl Ferguson, of Newtown Square. Cheryl owns Fergy's at 25 S. Jackson St., right in the heart of Media Borough, across from Spasso's restaurant. I had never met Cheryl before, but as we talked, I began to find her story more and more interesting because it was making me look at the neighborhood hair salon in a whole new light. Also, I felt like her story may be more universally common than she thinks. I told her that I would stop by her salon sometime in my travels, and she could share her story. After all, I told her, each and every small business is important to all of us because they're the backbone of our community. We need to support our small businesses, help them to grow and thrive because no one wants empty storefronts in their towns. Their success means our success.

I stopped by Fergy's on a sunny afternoon last week. Be-

fore all was said and done, Cheryl not only gave me an inside glimpse of salons and small businesses from her unique perspective, but she instilled greater salon empathy in me going forward.

Thanks to the help of her husband, Cheryl opened Fergy's in 1990 so she could fulfill her dream of taking care of people's hair needs and working with other like-minded professionals. She named the shop after her husband's nickname. Cheryl and the other stylists at Fergy's have been servicing happy customers in this same shop for 28 years, washing, cutting and dyeing hair, creating up-dos for proms, weddings and other special occasions and making her faithful customers look and feel their best. Fergy's is located on the former site of the police station/borough hall/firehouse, which was torn down in 1971, she said. Before she opened Fergy's, the shop was Henry's and then Francesco's.

The salon is charming, painted in pinks and purples. It's bright and cheery and cutely decorated with all kinds of memorabilia, gifts from customers and trendy touches.

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LOCAL ATTRACTIONS

Media offers variety of fun events



PETE BANNAN — DIGITAL FIRST MEDIA

Vincent Galantino, 10, of Sharon Hill, enjoys his weekend at the Spring Super Sunday in April 2016.

By Tina DiSerafino
For Digital First Media

Summer isn't over yet. There's still plenty of time to enjoy summer activities and events around Media. From delightful nights of experiencing Dining Under the Stars in the very streets of Media to indulging at Super Sunday Festivals in the early fall, here is your complete guide for events taking place in the Media area now through early fall.

Dining Under the Stars

Every Wednesday evening from now until September, grab your significant other or friends and

EVENTS » PAGE 9



PETE BANNAN — DIGITAL FIRST MEDIA

Mary Galantino, Gabby Galantino, Laurie Cauller and Lindsay Cauller of Galantino Supply Co. are among the many vendors at the Spring Super Sunday in April 2016.

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Events

FROM PAGE 8

dine under the stars on State Street from Jackson to Orange streets at your favorite local restaurants.

Media's most popular local restaurants participate in this event. To see a full list of current participants, visit visitmediapa.com and be sure to visit their Facebook page for more events and details happening throughout the event. Dogs, bicycles and other motorized vehicles are prohibited.

Fall Super Sunday in Downtown Media

Kick off the beginning of the fall season with Town Talk's Super Sunday on State Street in Media on Sept. 9 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., State Street will be covered with an endless row of different vendors with a variety of items, ranging from homemade unique crafts and jewelry to sports memorabilia and food.

While you shop, enjoy music from local bands or even stop to take a break and have some lunch at one of the local restaurants.

2nd Saturday Art Stroll

Every second Saturday of every month, enjoy Media during late night hours where over 30 businesses remain open to participate in a free arts event open to everyone. 2nd Saturday is the perfect opportunity for local talent to showcase themselves.

Starting at 6 p.m., local cafes, shops and galleries open their doors to local artists and musicians and invite visitors to enjoy the artwork and tunes.

In addition to this event, the Media Arts Center and Gallery located at 609-B W. State St. holds openings for concerts from 4 to 6 p.m. All are welcome to come, and the event is BYOB.

Now that you have all the essential information you need to know about the local happenings in Media now through early fall, pick a few and invite some friends to join and enjoy the town!



PETE BANNAN — DIGITAL FIRST MEDIA

Scott McConnell of The Joe Staffieri Band sings at the Spring Super Sunday in April 2016.

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LOCAL ATTRACTION

DINING UNDER THE STARS

Every Wednesday evening through September, dine under the stars on State Street from Jackson to Orange streets. Popular Media restaurants participate in this event. To see a full list of current participants, visit visitmediapa.com. Dogs, bicycles and other motorized vehicles are prohibited.





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Church

FROM PAGE 3

and only a few weeks ago, to Roanoke, Va.

In preparation for the 150th anniversary year, Father Bell and 18 parishioners formed a committee in April of 2016, meeting monthly and then bi-weekly. The committee includes Rev. Bell, co-chairs Linda Reilly and Alice Pearson, Frances Blanchette, Sandy Buchanan, John Blisard, John Deady, Ted Deady, Annette Debevec, Maryann Dotts, Marie Gianchetti, John Isselmann, Peg Isselmann, Barbara Kearney, Colette Pastore, Gary Rainey, Thomas Stephan and Patricia Walton.

"Father Bell really is the strength of our parish, embracing newcomers, lifelong parishioners and welcoming ideas," Reilly said.

The group worked diligently to host a year full of events that kicked off last De-

cember with a Mass and reception and hasn't skipped a month since.

"We truly worked as a team to make our anniversary year special," co-chair Reilly said. "Everyone did their part and worked hard, but with great joy, to make it happen. Marie Gianchetti planned our trips, Gary Rainey worked on acquiring wooden church replicas, Tom Stephan was our photographer, Fran Blanchette worked with the printer on the history book, everyone helped in some way. I couldn't even begin to name all of the ways each person contributed and helped to make our anniversary year special."

So far, activities have included special speakers, a bus trip to Washington, D.C., with Mass celebrated in Immaculate Conception Basilica; a concert by Chester Children's Choir in the church; a parish picnic in the schoolyard; Good Friday Stations throughout Media; a St.

Vincent DePaul Poor Man's Supper; a Memorial Mass and luncheon for Parish Founders and other deceased parishioners at Calvary Cemetery; an Anointing-Healing Mass; and many more. Even the youth got involved and held a special CYO sock drive with hopes of collecting 150 pairs of socks for the men at St. John's Hospice. They surpassed their goal and collected almost 500 pairs.

In addition to the upcoming Anniversary Mass on Sept. 8, other future activities planned, before the milestone year draws to a close, include a Blessing of Animals and a Pasta and Pinot night on Oct. 6; a Parish Mission with John Leonetti, Oct. 7-9; a Mass of Remembrance on Nov. 2; a parish karaoke night on Nov. 3 at Media Community Center; and an all-class alumni memorial Mass, followed by a reunion in the school on Oct. 27.

Nativity BVM School closed in 2012 and merged with St. John Chrysostom

in Wallingford to form Our Mother of Providence Regional School, where some Nativity students now attend. The former school on Gayley Street is now used for the 300 plus PREP students who attend religious weekly instruction and as additional space for parish groups to meet and hold activities.

In celebration of the 2018 banner year, the church steeple has been equipped with outdoor lights, to shine as a beacon of hope and light in the community.

"We have a great spirit in our church," Father Bell explained. "People always tell me that when they come into our church, they immediately get the feeling of what a very caring and special parish we are."

Nativity BVM is an active parish, with parishioners participating as lectors, altar servers, Eucharistic ministers, CYO coaches and in other ministries of the church, as well as working as "the hands of Christ,"

almost daily. The Nativity Stitchers make hats, blankets and more for Mother's Home in Darby, as well as Baptism bibs for Nativity babies and hospice blankets. Another group at the church handcrafts Rosaries, which Father Bell blesses. The Rosary beads are then distributed, with messages of hope and inspiration, to area prisons.

The parish has a busy food pantry, its own Knights of Columbus and Saint Vincent DePaul Society chapters, which help those in need locally, an adopt-a-resident program that pairs parishioners with nursing home residents, a H.O.P.E. program that helps to transport elderly or disabled parishioners to doctor appointments and other errands, and an active outreach ministry to feed, clothe and provide toiletries for the men at St. John's Hospice homeless shelter in Philadelphia. The parish prepares more casseroles for St. John's Hospice than any other parish

in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and serves lunch each month at the St. Francis Soup Kitchen in Kensington. Some parishioners also participate in the church's Legion of Mary, Altar Society, Garden Club, Book Club and Rosary For Peace groups. The church also has an active youth ministry.

"Our dedicated and caring parishioners always are the first to respond to any kind of need, in our parish and in the community," Father Bell said fondly.

"Our parish is all about faith, friendship and charity," co-chair Alice Pearson added.

To commemorate the spirit of Nativity BVM, the committee collected photos, stories and artifacts from current and former parishioners for display. The committee also put together several items as remembrances of the special milestone and to recognize the extraordinary parish spirit that is so prevalent at Nativity BVM.

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