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## Companies give back for holidays

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Vanguard Toy Drive



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Pine Street Carpenters' 100 Wheels Project, a commitment to assembled 50 bicycles for needy children in time for Christmas, graduated to 150 wheels this December thanks to the added support of customers and subcontractors.

The West Goshen-based remodeling contractor is just one of many companies, along with their employees, in Chester County to reach out and help those who are less fortunate have a happier holiday season.

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At Pine Street, cycling is part of the corporate culture with staff competing in bike events throughout the year, according to Michael Dolan, marketing manager and brother of company founder, Brendon Dolan.

A couple of years ago when the economy was "not great" and donations to toy drives were down, Brandon Dolan got the idea to purchase unassembled bikes and get friends in the cycling community to help put them together to make the holidays brighter for children in need, Michael Dolan said.

"It is a opportunity to do good and have some fun," Dolan said.

What started out as 50 bikes, or 100 wheels in 2008 funded by Pine Street, is now 75 bikes, or 150 wheels, a \$5,000 undertaking funded by Pine Street along with some of its customers and subcontractors.

Earlier this month 85 cyclists gathered at Pine Street's South Bolmar Street location and assembled to bikes.



ALERT: What Your Tongue Says About Your Thyroid. See the Photo.

"It was a tight fit," Dolan said of the workspace.

The bikes are being distributed to five social service agencies in Chester and Montgomery counties using Pine Street trucks.



Stocks soar--but some wealthy citizens are preparing for the "End of America." Here's why.

"We went back to the non-profits Pine Street worked with in 2009) and all of them had more need this year," Dolan said. "The need is there, the need is always there."



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From a toy drive held by the county's largest employer to an East Goshen entrepreneur who is giving Chester County employers, as well as their employees, are digging deep to raise spirits this year despite the cheerless economy.



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The following is a sampling of holiday gift giving in the county.

### VANGUARD

On Dec. 1 Vanguard employees loaded more than 25,000 colorfully wrapped gifts and hundreds of bikes onto trucks to benefit the Delaware Valley Children's Charity.

This year Vanguard's Sponsor-A-Child gift drive is supporting more than 2,000 children in the region.

In a year when several other area companies scaled back or ceased their drives because of the economy and layoffs, Vanguard offered to sponsor more children than ever in an effort to fill that need, company officials said.

Vanguard, the county's largest employer as well as the largest company supporter of DVCC, is sponsoring more than one-third of the children in the program.

This is the 15th consecutive year that the Children's Charity has worked with Vanguard. The first year, 1995, Vanguard's employees sponsored 25 children.

### QVC

This year QVC's Make a Change program "adopted" 355 seniors, children and families through Chester County Children and Family Services and two nursing homes.

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QVC employees donated and delivered 1,851 gift items and \$4,100 in gift cards.

In addition, cash donations of more than \$800, plus the \$2,000 donated from QVC's Community Affairs funds, also helped with food and winter heating bills for the adoptees.

QVC's Make a Change program, now 7 years old, has benefited more than 2,000 children, families, and seniors in need.

"QVC always strives to encourage positive change in the communities in which our employees live and work," said Beth Rubino, senior vice president of human resources and workplace services at the West Goshen-based multi-media retailer.

"During the holiday season, we find it especially important to give back and ensure that those in need can experience the magic of the holidays."

In addition, last Wednesday, QVC delivered a \$5,000 check to Salvation Army Maj. Gerald Morgan in response to the loss that occurred when the nonprofit's freezer broke down. The food Salvation Army volunteers had been collecting since September spoiled when the freezer malfunctioned.

**SHIRE**

Shire of Tredyffrin partnered with Northern Home for Children in the Roxborough Neighborhood of Philadelphia to provide gifts, needed supplies and a Christmas party for children that are part of the non-profit's afterschool program.

Twenty-five Shire employees volunteered their time to organize and host the party, which took place at Northern Home on Dec 10.

"We transformed the space into a winter wonderland complete with decorations, food and Santa and his elves providing gifts for all the children," said Matt Cabrey, Shire spokesman. "Chester County-based caterer Cornucopia Catering provided food and supplies at cost for this wonderful party."

Shire employees donated 55 gifts for Northern Home's after-school program and 175 items for the non-profit's residential program for the teen moms and their infants.

"At Shire, we collect these items through The Shire Giving Trees -- Christmas trees in the lobbies of our two main buildings that have tags with specific gifts requested on them," Cabrey said.

"Employees take a tag and purchase and donate the gifts as part of this project."

Shire also supported the United of Way of Chester County's Share the Warmth program this year, contributing \$5,000.

**AGI**

Employees at Analytical Graphics Inc. of West Whiteland a adopted family with four children ranging in age from 1 to 10 as well as a child whose house burned down in November.

**KITCHENKUFFS**

East Goshen entrepreneur Barbara Doran, creator of KitchenKuffs, has committed to donate a percent of her December sales to Enchanted Makeovers.

Founded by Terry Grahl, Enchanted Makeovers is a non-profit that transforms shelters for women and children into places of peace and possibilities.

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Originally connecting with Grahl through Martha Stewart's online community, Dreamers into Doers, Doran said she was moved by the impact Enchanted Makeovers' programs have had in bringing hope to so many across the country.

"By donating a portion of each sale, my customers can feel good that the KitchenKuffs they buy for themselves, or give as gifts, will keep on giving long beyond the holiday season," said Doran, who makes a product that keeps sleeves pushed up and out of the way when doing dishes or preparing meals.

To contact staff writer Gretchen Metz, send an e-mail to [gmetz@dailylocal.com](mailto:gmetz@dailylocal.com).

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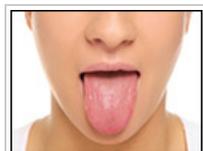
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