

*From the Delaware State News*

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## **Warmth for the weary: Donations for the less fortunate decorate downtown**

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DOVER — While the City of Dover is now decked out in its holiday finest, about 15 volunteers from Keller Williams Realty Central Delaware dressed up the downtown area with a different kind of decoration last week — scarves, knit hats and gloves for the less fortunate, which they tied around light poles and other accessible areas.

Attached to its giveaway item was a card that said, “I’m not lost. If you’re stuck out in the cold, take this scarf to keep warm!”

Sandy Hohrein, a realtor with Keller Williams, coordinated the winter attire giveaway.

“This is the fourth or fifth year that we’ve done this,” Mrs. Hohrein said. “We started out working with Code Purple Kent County back in the beginning.”

She said herself and about 14 others started out at the Dover Public Library and went as far west as they could with the clothing they had before the Capital Holiday Celebration took place last Thursday night.

“There were several people coming up to us while we were putting them up and stopping and asking us what we were doing, taking the items and thanking us for them,” said Mrs. Hohrein. “They certainly seemed appreciative of the gesture.”

By the time the group finished its charitable endeavor, they had put out about 1,500 scarves, as well as lots of gloves and hats, for those less fortunate as the temperatures begin to drop.

Keller Williams Realty Central Delaware partnered with about a dozen different schools around Dover to collect the winter wear for distribution.

Patricia Hill, program manager for Hopes and Dreams Peer Resources at 621 W. Division Street, was happy to see the community reach out to the less fortunate.

“I applaud Keller Williams Realty for their generosity and compassion,” she said.

“The scarves and gloves tied to poles are a wonderful way to offer easily accessible winter necessities to those in need, particularly during times when programs like ours are closed.

“The City of Dover has approximately 400 people experiencing homelessness and Hopes and Dreams provides services to roughly 50 people per day. With so many people in need, every act of kindness can have a positive impact.”

ecky Martin, director of Code Purple Kent County, said that she was sure the homeless and the needy appreciated the effort that was put into getting warm clothes to them.

However, she cautioned, organizations should not try to get too cute when trying to make a difference for the underprivileged.

“I’m sure they loved it,” Mrs. Martin said. “We have done it in the past (along with Keller Williams) but have found it better to actually bring (the clothing) to the sanctuaries or the shop.

“Then there is no worry as what has happened in the past where (the items) ended up for sale at Spences (Bazaar).”

Code Purple Kent County sanctuaries open

The Code Purple Kent County sanctuaries opened last Saturday and will be open for the homeless until March 31 when the temperature or wind chill reaches 32 degrees or below.

The Code Purple nonprofit organization guides the homeless to emergency shelters that offer hot meals, beds, bathrooms and a warm environment.

The sanctuaries usually have at least 25 to 30 men and 10 to 15 women when they are open. It is estimated that there are between 300 to 400 homeless people in the Dover area.

There will be men’s sanctuaries offered in Dover at Peoples Church, Presbyterian Church, Mt. Carmel Church, Wyoming Methodist Church and Centennial Church in Smyrna.

For women, sanctuaries will be hosted by Maranatha Church in Dover on East Division Street and Christ Church in Dover on Fridays.

Code Purple will be providing dinner and a light breakfast to its guests.

The sanctuaries will open by 5 p.m. and close prior to 8 the following morning.

Mrs. Martin said Dover Air Force Base has stepped up and has between 35 to 40 volunteers ready to help at the sanctuaries.

Anyone who would like to help provide meals or make a financial donation to Code Purple Kent County is encouraged to call 302-339-0123 or 302-270-2177.

“Unfortunately, this year our grants did not go through, but that’s OK,” Mrs. Martin said. “This will all work. So, we will need help with coffee, sugar, creamer, water, juice mix, paper supplies, cleaning supplies and snacks.

“And thank you to all the community for helping us to help all those in need.”

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