



# Dignity & Respect

A publication of South Hills Interfaith Ministries

Fall/Winter 2009

[www.shim-center.org](http://www.shim-center.org)

The South Hills Interfaith Ministries (SHIM) website is full of new content. [www.shim-center.org](http://www.shim-center.org) is the place to go to find out more about our programs, to see What's New, How to Get Help and How to Donate and Volunteer. The updated website features an interactive map that will allow visitors to get directions to our Park Ave. location, a downloadable volunteer application and volunteer job descriptions. Please take some time to go online for the latest information.



## Annual Appeal

Anyone can fall on hard times. South Hills Interfaith Ministries helps people from all walks of life—some who need temporary relief from a bad situation, others who need help lifting themselves out of poverty and along the path to self-sufficiency. Our goal is to be a bridge, a resource to families in need. A bridge, after all, is potentially a solution to a problem, a structure over an obstacle, or a means of coming together. SHIM is that link for many in our community who have a need and do not know where to turn.

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.

- author, *Leo Buscaglia*

At South Hills Interfaith Ministries (SHIM) our staff and volunteers often provide that small act of kindness that makes all the difference in the lives of our neighbors.

*Here is just one story...*

Lowenda Hallberg a full-time administrative assistant and part-time waitress, dreamed of making a better life for herself and helping others by becoming a nurse. In a leap of faith, she began classes at Carlow College. Juggling classes, her household and work schedule was a challenge. With support from her family, Lowenda decided to focus on her schooling full-time. To avoid over-taxing her parents' resources, she looked for additional ways to make ends meet. Lowenda shares, "I had always heard

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## Mission

South Hills Interfaith Ministries (SHIM) is an interfaith organization actively extending God's love with dignity and respect to the people of the South Hills of Pittsburgh.

## Staff

Executive Director  
**JIM GUFFEY**

Executive Assistant  
**MAGGIE WINTER**

Director of Youth Programs  
**DORIS NAGEL**

Financial Administrator  
**CAROL COWSER**

## Prospect Park Family Center

Site Director  
**COURTNEY BAHR MACURAK**

Family Development Specialist  
**LORI HALLER**

Community Liaison  
**JINAN HISSAN**

## Early Childhood Program

Lead Teacher  
**CINDY HUMAN**

Assistant Teacher  
**PATTI KOZARIAN**

## Programs

- Food Pantry, clothing room and utility assistance
- Early childhood program for preschool-aged children
- After-school homework clubs
- Multi-cultural and interfaith community education

## Contact Us

Learn more about how you can help support our mission, please call us at 412-854-9120 or visit us online at [www.shim-center.org](http://www.shim-center.org)

# Message from the Executive Director

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” *Matthew 7:12, King James Version – Christianity*

“This is the sum of duty: do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.” *Mahabharata 5:1517 – Hinduism*

“None of you [truly] believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself.” Number 13 of Imam “*Al-Nawawi’s Forty Hadiths*” – *Islam*

“What is hateful to you, do not to your fellow man. This is the law: all the rest is commentary.” *Talmud, Shabbat 31a – Judaism*

Religious groups differ greatly on their beliefs and practices but nearly all can agree that each person should treat others in a decent manner. From an early childhood I recall this being taught simply as the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.” I believe that this simple belief – the Ethic of Reciprocity – is one of the reasons SHIM was created in 1968 and still exists today.

SHIM provides a bridge for individuals, congregations and civic organizations/institutions to put into action their beliefs of helping others. Either through contributions of financial support and tangible goods, or by volunteerism, SHIM can positively touch many lives.

SHIM also provides a bridge for those in need. Through SHIM, services and programs are available that allow individuals and families to move towards self-sufficiency.

As 2009 comes to a close, SHIM faces a critical time. The demand for our services continues to dramatically increase. Our call for your continued financial support is louder today than possibly ever before. The Golden Rule - “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you” - rings as loudly today as it did in 1968. During this past year of economic uncertainty and instability, if you have received blessings, I ask that you consider reciprocating and sharing those blessings with our neighbors in need.

As always, SHIM is thankful for the continued support of our donors and we wish all a prosperous and blessed year in 2010.  
Sincerely,

Jim Guffey  
Executive Director

## Angel Emporium December 7-10

*Families who participate in our food and clothing pantry programs are also in need of assistance with holiday gifts. Those families who were certified before November 1, 2009 will be able to select gifts for each household member - parents select for children and children for their parents. Through the generosity of congregations, schools, businesses and individuals, donated items line Angel Emporium tables to bring holiday cheer to our clients. Donations of new gift items are being accepted through December 5 at our Park Ave. location. Check the SHIM website for a complete list of donation suggestions. We are making a list and checking it twice... Will you be nice?*

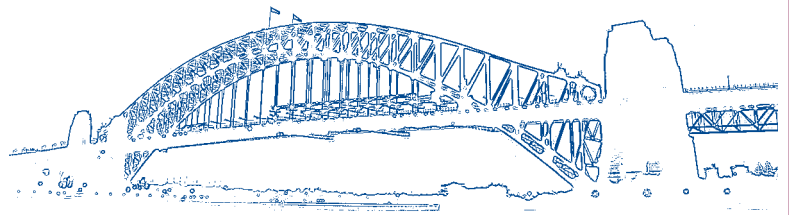


## Building Bridges for our Neighbors in Need

Wednesday, December 16, 2009

LeMont Restaurant  
Mt. Washington

Featuring football legend and motivational speaker **Rocky Bleier**



Celebrate with **SHIM**

Join us for the celebration!!! Enjoy an evening of “friend-raising and fund-raising” while overlooking the beautiful city of Pittsburgh and its numerous bridges. Pittsburgh is known for its vast number and styles of bridges, all erected to move people from one side of a river or ravine to another; thus providing a solution to a problem. In its rich 41-year history, SHIM too has been a bridge, a connection for our South Hills neighbors in need between resources and families trying to overcome the obstacles of suburban poverty.

Our featured guest for the evening is football legend and motivational speaker Rocky Bleier who overcame significant obstacles as a result of injuries sustained while serving our country in Vietnam. The story of his determination, recovery, and contribution to the Steelers four Super Bowl victories is unique and inspiring.

The evening's festivities include hors d'oeuvres at 6:00 p.m., dinner at 7:00 p.m., and entertainment at 8:15 p.m. The evening will include both Chinese and Silent Auction opportunities. Individual tickets are \$75. Cash bar and \$5 valet parking will be available. To reserve your place contact Jeanna-Mar Simmons at 412-854-9120, ext. 24.



Runners, walkers, babies in strollers and furry friends joined in the October 10 family-friendly Walk/Run at South Park. The relatively flat out and back course along Corrigan Drive provided a scenic view of the changing fall foliage.

Congratulations to the top 3 overall event winners:  
Scott Beggs crossing the finish line in 23:08 minutes.  
Jason Fitzgerald crossing the finish line in 24:38 minutes.  
Bill Rogers crossing the finish line in 25:28 minutes.

JOIN US IN 2010 ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9.

Special thanks to our corporate sponsors:

 **BRENTWOOD BANK**

 **CENTURY**  
STEEL ERECTORS

## Check out the Landscaping

As you drive by our new location, you may notice our new flower beds, freshly planted trees and shrubs and working sprinkler system. Under the volunteer coordination of Chip Steeb and his son Joshua, the grounds surrounding our building are beautiful and inviting. Not one dollar of donated funds went to this project. Thanks to the following businesses and individuals that generously volunteered time, effort, and material to spruce up the grounds of our new Park Ave location:

### Businesses

A & S Landscape Supply  
Bruce Evanovich Landscaping  
Cox Plumbing – Bethel Park  
Evey True Value Hardware  
Federouch Landscape Supply  
Gold Star Posts PA.  
Irriland Irrigation  
Lowe's – Bethel Park  
TAR Landscape Supply  
Taylor Rental – Pleasant Hills

### Individuals

Tom Kotz  
Gary Rauch  
Steeb Family – Lisa-Chip-Joshua

## Snapshot of our Early Childhood Program

Regardless of country of origin, language spoken at home, or cultural traditions, the children enrolled in the SHIM Early Childhood Program (ECP) at Prospect Park all speak the universal language of play. Lead teacher Cindy Human reflects, "It is a joy working with these three and four year olds. They are enthusiastic learners and their parents are eager for them to excel. Their progress is two-fold -- we see the children growing, changing and exploring their world, and we see their English language skills improve exponentially."

The classrooms are a happy place to be with world maps, numbers and the alphabet brightening the walls. The educational framework takes into account different learning styles as children move from one learning center to another, experiencing hands on activities related to math, science, computers, art, music, and dramatic play. In this classroom learning and fun go hand in hand. In addition to the 387 hours of classroom instruction, seasonal field trips like a visit to the pumpkin patch and special programs are planned outside of class time.

Located in the same building, the Early Childhood Program works closely with the Prospect Park Family Center to meet the needs of the entire family. "It is important to learn about the family unit and what is going on in a child's life. It make for a richer experience and allows me to be a better teacher," Human shares. Human and Assistant Teacher, Patti Kozarian work as a team to prepare their students for the educational journey ahead.

To volunteer at SHIM's ECP, contact Program Director, Doris Nagel at 412-854-9120 ext. 20. On the ECP wish list are children's socks, mittens, boots and slippers.



### *Annual Appeal continued from front cover*

about SHIM at church and wondered if I might qualify for services. I was thankful that I could use the food pantry, and found not only nourishment for my body, but nourishment for my spirit as well. The volunteers and staff who assisted me, once strangers, became friends who would ask about my classes, encourage me during finals and cheer me on." For several years, as Lowenda completed her Bachelors in Nursing Science degree, SHIM helped to lighten her burden by providing food, clothing and other assistance. Now a Registered Nurse at St. Clair Hospital, Lowenda gratefully acknowledges the role SHIM played in her journey, "You have to be proactive in moving your life forward, and I am blessed that I had SHIM to support me along the way." In an effort to "pay it forward", Lowenda made a generous contribution to our 2009 Angel Emporium program citing the joy she felt in having something new at the holidays. "Saying thank you is one thing, but gratitude requires action and that is why it is important to me to give back." Her self determination and "I can do it attitude" have improved her earning capacity and helped to fulfill her dream of becoming a nurse, drawing many more blessings her way. We congratulate Lowenda as she plans her upcoming wedding for February 2010.

It is only through your continued support that SHIM will positively impact the lives of those we touch. As requests for our assistance increase, our need for your support increases too. Our annual appeal letters will appear in your mailbox in the next few weeks, asking for your continued financial support. Please consider a year end gift that can make the difference in the level of service we provide to our neighbors in need.

## Prospect Park Family Center Thanksgiving Celebration

November 19th marked the 4th annual Thanksgiving celebration of the Prospect Park Family Center (PPFC) at Whitehall Presbyterian Church. The evening was punctuated with music provided by the Burundi Choir from Cornerstone Free Methodist Church, laughter, games and crafts. The meal featured a bounty of traditional Thanksgiving fare blended with native dishes prepared by our refugee and immigrant families. The event brings the entire Prospect Park community together with staff from collaborative agencies: Catholic Charities, Jewish Family and Children's Services, the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council and SHIM to celebrate the universal holiday that crosses all ethnic and religious observances. According to PPFC Director, Courtney Macurak, "This is one of our best attended events where entire family units come together to share in fellowship, and celebration."

## Shelves Need to be Restocked

### Condiments

Mayonnaise  
Ketchup  
Mustard

### Boxed Cereal

### Canned Fruit

Peaches  
Pears

### Pasta

Spaghetti  
Elbow macaroni

### Helper Items

(i.e. Hamburger Helper,  
Tuna Helper)

### Boxed Potatoes



### Toiletry Items

Shampoo/  
Conditioner  
Individual  
toothbrushes  
Individually wrapped  
bar soap  
Toothpaste  
Mouth Wash  
Deodorant

### Paper Products

Paper Towels  
Toilet Paper  
Paper Plates  
Napkins

### Baking Items

Brownie Mix  
Canned frosting  
Vegetable oil

## Dollar Energy Fund Grants Add Up

The Dollar Energy Fund's Hardship Program assists eligible utility customers with their gas, electric and water bills. Eligible customers receive a one-time grant applied directly to their utility bill. As the only application site in the South Hills trained volunteers and SHIM staff fielded 97 phone calls in the month of October, screening callers for eligibility. Of the 28 individuals who came in for application appointments, 21 received grants totaling \$6,770. In addition to helping these families apply for utility assistance 38% of the applicants were certified for SHIM services or referred to other agencies for assistance. With winter ahead, SHIM will continue to be a valuable resource to families in need as utility bills increase. For more information go to [www.dollarenergy.org](http://www.dollarenergy.org).

## OUR MOST SIGNIFICANT BLESSINGS – EACH AND EVERY VOLUNTEER!!

ap•pre•ci•a•tion [ ə prɪʃee əyʃh'n ] noun

Definition: **1. gratefulness:** a feeling or expression of gratitude **2. positive opinion:** a favorable opinion of something **3. valuing something highly:** recognition and liking of something's qualities **4. statement of praise:** a written or spoken statement of somebody's qualities **5. full understanding:** a full understanding of the meaning and importance of something **6. growth in value:** an increase in value, especially over time

At Thanksgiving we set time aside to reflect on family and the blessings that have come our way. SHIM is blessed to have as our family a team of devoted volunteers who contribute thousands of hours each year to bringing our mission to life. Volunteers are crucial to the operation of our organization. The responsibilities are as varied as the individuals that come through our doors to share their time.

The following are just a sampling of how our volunteers contribute to the efficiency of our agency:

*Administrative volunteers answer phones, accept donations, greet guests, assist in mailings, organize supplies and resource materials, and assist in Dollar Energy & client certification activities.*

*Building Maintenance volunteers hang shelves and coat racks, change light bulbs, paint, rake leaves and maintain the flower beds and trouble shooting maintenance issues as they arise.*

*Clothing Room volunteers sort, size, hang and display donated clothing, track what is needed and what is available and monitor clothing room usage.*

*Food Pantry volunteers coordinate food pick up and delivery, stock shelves, track and assist families in food selection on pantry days.*

*Volunteers with youth assist in the pre-school program and provide after school tutoring.*

*Special Events volunteers assist with Angel Emporium, Back-to-School and winter coat distribution, sell Enjoy and Entertainment books and coordinate fundraising activities.*

*Members of the Board of Directors and Various Committees provide leadership and support.*

We honor all who choose to share their time, talents and hearts with us as we work to fight hunger and feed hope. For more information on these opportunities contact Maggie Winter at 412-854-9120 ext. 10 to set up an appointment.



## South Hills Interfaith Ministries

5301 Park Ave.  
Bethel Park, PA 15102

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Bethel Park, PA  
Permit No. 79

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll free within PA 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

### Tour de South Hills

The inaugural Tour de South Hills will be held on Saturday, May 8, 2010. This participatory, family-oriented bike ride will allow riders of all abilities to tour through neighborhoods in the South Hills. Various course lengths from 5 to over 50 miles will be offered. Riders will witness suburban poverty in a very different way while also having the opportunity to pass many houses of worship. Should you desire to be part of the event organizing committee, contact Jim Guffey at 412-854-9120 x11 or [jguffey@shim-center.org](mailto:jguffey@shim-center.org). To learn more, visit [www.shim-center.org](http://www.shim-center.org).

Mark your calendar for Saturday, May 8, 2010!



## 31st Annual SJHIM Holocaust Observance

Sunday, April 25, 2010

7:30 PM

Beth El Congregation of the South Hills  
1900 Cochran Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15220

*Each year we gather as an interfaith community to commemorate the lives lost during the Holocaust, to honor and recognize survivors and to educate and to learn, but most of all to remember. By recalling the past and teaching future generations the lessons of the Holocaust, we can keep alive the hope of "Never Again". Please join us for an evening of remembrance and reflection.*