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Late plea for help

■ *Inundated by applications, Caring & Sharing is calling on the community to help provide for needy children.*

By LISA AURAND

News & Public Opinion Reporter

Westerville Caring & Sharing is asking for financial donations and sponsorships to meet a record number of requests for assistance this holiday season.

Caring & Sharing President Mary Pugh said that the organization had almost 700 children on its list this year by Friday, when the group made the tough decision to stop accepting applicants.

"That's the first time we've ever had to do that, and it's just killing us. We have never, in 17 years, had to close off applications."

—Mary Pugh
Westerville Caring & Sharing

"That's the first time we've ever had to do that, and it's just killing us," Pugh said. "We have never, in 17 years, had to close off applications."

Pugh said the organization usually provides gifts to about 550 children yearly. Currently, about 80 children are without sponsors.

"It was not an easy decision to make," Pugh said of Caring & Sharing's choice to turn parents away.

Those who still need assistance may leave their information on the Caring & Sharing voicemail, she said. Any donations left over after the initial distribution Sunday will be given out to wait-listed families on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The 100-percent volunteer organization operates the Holiday Project at Christmas-

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News & Public Opinion photo by Jeff Vidmar

Generations dancers (from left) Emily Hart, Amy Sucharski and Paige Meade rehearse for the Holiday Spectacular, to be staged at Westerville Central at 11:30 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday.

Holiday Spectacular returning Saturday

By LISA AURAND

News & Public Opinion Reporter

Commercials already are blasting *It's the most wonderful time of the year*, but for Cindy Staub, the holiday season never really starts until she sees her students on stage.

Staub and her sister Angie Haver are looking forward to the warm fuzzy feeling they'll get after they see about 150 of their students from Generations Performing Arts Center in Uptown Westerville

"It's very uplifting. ... It just sets the holidays off to a great start."

—Cindy Staub
Generations Performing Arts Center

Staub said. "I won't really get into the spirit of the holidays until we have the show."

The Spectacular, written by local screenwriter Angela LeRoy, features songs and dances by Generations students ages 6 to 26. The show incorporates both traditional carols and more contemporary music.

"It's basically a show that is centered around the holiday season. *Winter Wonder* show Saturday.

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perform in the annual Holiday Spectacular show Saturday.
"It really sets the holiday mood,"

Labor of love draws award nomination

By ANGIE SCHMITT

News & Public Opinion Reporter

Westerville radiology nurse Kathy Boston began her greeting card business, Kathy's Care Cards, with a textbook business model.

First, she noticed a gap in the market: greeting cards weren't tackling the real emotions of families struggling with cancer. Next, she performed careful market research,

"I knew that there was nothing out there that my patients could have, that said what they needed to hear."

—Kathy Boston
Kathy's Care Cards

through conversations and focus groups with cancer survivors. Then, she designed her product, with art-

work donated by sympathetic artists and messages designed by cancer survivors.

Later, she diversified her selection to serve patients struggling with illnesses from heart disease and depression. Now she's looking into expanding her marketing efforts, which began in local pharmacies and hospitals, to reach national and inter-

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Men Behind the Women Battling Cancer calendar cover.

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NOMINATION

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national hospital chains.

But unlike a business, Kathy's Care's bottom line is helping others. By that measure, or by any measure, the three-year-old company's success has been remarkable. Kathy's Cards have earned Boston a nomination for the Westerville Chamber of Commerce's Small Business Person of the Year award.

Rather than revel in her success, Boston continues to work tirelessly fighting the diseases that drive demand for her product. She recently expanded her focus to include cards that remind well people to have their regular cancer screening.

All of her profits benefit a charity Boston founded to help nursing students through school.

Boston began her career as an entrepreneur in 2003, while working in management at Mount Carmel Radiology, in Hilliard and Westerville. Through her work, she had come to know the pain and grief of families touched by cancer.

But she couldn't find a card that expressed her feelings when a group of her own friends were celebrat-

ing their victories over cancer at the 2003 Columbus Race for the Cure.

"I got a little ticked off because I couldn't find cards that said I admired them," she said. "These women were my heroes."

Her frustration lingered when she returned to work.

"I knew that there was nothing there, that my patients could have, that said what they needed to hear," she said.

Boston set out to change that. She began by talking to her patients.

"They help us put within the text of the cards (with) what they want people to say to them," she said. "That makes our cards credible."

As Boston's cancer-themed cards took off, others approached her about expanding her focus. She began designing cards to deal with the issues of miscarriage, depression and substance abuse. Later she added the medical screening reminder card.

Today Kathy's Cards has evolved into a product line offering awareness jewelry and, for the first time in 2007, a calendar, in addition to cards.

The calendar features 14 men whose female loved-ones have battled cancer.

Ray Martin, a 47-year-old project manager for Nationwide Insurance, posed for the December 2007 page on his motorcycle at Heritage Park. Below his picture, he is quoted discussing the courage his mother showed during her bout with lung cancer in 2002.

Although Martin said writing the passage about his mother's death was very painful for him, he enjoyed participating in the project.

"Having the chance to get that out there and help Kathy; I feel like a better person," he said.

The Men Behind the Women Battling Cancer 2007 calendar is available at CVS pharmacies in Westerville, New Albany and Granville, as well as online at kathyscardcards.com.

CHURCH EVENTS

Church of the Saviour

Church of the Saviour United Methodist will present a Christmas concert featuring the choir, soloists and ensembles at 7 p.m. Dec. 17.

Refreshments will be served.

A freewill offering will be collected.

For more information call 614-775-1232.

Central College Church

Central College Church is seeking donations and volunteers to assemble at least 650 baskets for needy families for Christmas on Dec. 18 at the church, 975 S. Sunbury Road.

For Thanksgiving the church gave three grocery bags of food and a turkey to 665 families.

for more information call 614-882-2347 or visit centralcollegechurch.org.

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