



District Council of Madison, Inc.

Vincentian Charity News

Helping Our Neighbors In Need | LENT 2019

Easter baskets created by a pair of anonymous volunteers and donors. The tradition's founder has given Seton House more than 500 baskets in the last 30 years. Seton House is a transitional housing program for women and children in Madison.



Easter Basket Magic Comes to Life at Seton House

Dear friends and neighbors continue 30-year tradition for kids of families in need

Have you ever seen a joyful child's eyes light up? It's that unbelievable feeling that sticks with you and always brightens your day.

That's the feeling that two anonymous, kindhearted volunteers and donors give to the women and children at the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton House, a program of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The compassionate, thoughtful women spread the joy of Easter and Christmas by making gift baskets for the children living at the Seton House.

Start of a caring tradition

"Thirty years ago, I was talking to the Seton House director and she told me how sad and worried some of the mothers were about their children not having anything for Easter," remembers the founder of

this Easter basket tradition. "That inspired me and gave me something I could do that would ease the minds of the parents and give the children a gift they could love and appreciate."

The founder and her friend, who are neighbors, use their own time and resources to assemble the packed baskets, which seem to get bigger every year! They both make sure to fill them chock-full of goodies and toys for eight to 13 kids every Easter and Christmas.

All-day affair

Now 30 years and over 500 gift baskets later, the pair of go-getters go all out to create special memories for these families.

"After we learn how many children there are, we start to put the shopping list together," describe the founder's friend.

"We wait until close to Easter when they have the particular Easter buckets we're looking for," add the women. "We start early and take an entire day to pick up all of the goodies, but we always make a special trip back when we miss something because we want to make sure each basket is perfect."

Unseen Samaritans

Like the elusive Easter Bunny himself, the women then discreetly drop off the buckets at Seton House without meeting any of the women or children.

"It's okay that we don't meet anyone because we want to position the parents as the gift givers. It gives the moms a feeling of confidence and joy to provide for their children."

Easter basket goodies!

- Stuffed animal or ball
 - Candy, fruit and cookies
 - Spring toys (kites, chalk)
 - Filled plastic eggs
 - Nail polish
 - Reusable basket/bucket
- (Christmas baskets include personalized clothes or toys for each child.)



"I think St. Vinny's is a marvelous organization. It's just wonderful; they help so many people in so many different ways. Doing these baskets makes me feel as if I'm doing something to help others."

—The basket maker

"It's impossible to put into words what these acts of kindness mean to our residents. *Every one of your donations, no matter how big or small, makes a world of difference.*"

**—Erin Shopofski,
Director of Seton
House**

You are the Difference



What you can do today

Donate a gift through the envelope included in this newsletter.

Become a Sustaining Samaritan monthly supporter.

Bundle up your gently used goods and drop them off at your favorite Dane County St. Vinny's store!

Leave a bequest in your estate plan.

Volunteer your time in our food pantry or pharmacy.

Give a donation online at svdpmadison.com/donate.

Visit our website at svdpmadison.org for more information.

"Would You Like to RoundUp for...?"

You can be the change by giving your change through new donation program at our stores.

"Thank you for shopping St. Vinny's today." Shoppers at our seven Dane County St. Vinny's stores have heard that for years – and now they're hearing something new: "Would you like to RoundUp for...?"



RoundUp is a new way shoppers like you can easily and immediately make a BIG change with your change by rounding up your total purchase cost to the nearest dollar amount. **For example, your \$5.63 purchase can be rounded up to \$6.00, for a donation of thirty-seven cents.**

The additional RoundUp amount is directed to a different local St. Vincent de Paul program each month. By choosing one program per month, we help bring support and attention to its needs in order to better serve our clients.

St. Vinny's stores in Dane County rolled out the RoundUp in late 2018 to test the concept with shoppers. "We're an organization that can offer services because generous, caring people like you donate to us. Donations come from goods that we then sell in the stores and gifts of money," says Ernie Stetenfeld, St. Vincent de Paul Madison CEO.

"We love seeing **shoppers' surprised and smiling faces** when they realize they can make a big difference collectively with a small donation through RoundUp," St. Vinny's Odana Road Store Manager Alie Tronnes says. "We even have some enthusiastic customers who get out their checkbook right then and there to help even more."

You can look for each month's RoundUp sign at the registers, and store VIP members will read about each RoundUp focus in the monthly Store Events email. Want to know more about what you're supporting? Just ask a sales associate – they know as much about our programs as they do about whether your scarf really goes with that jacket!

Programs You Support Through RoundUp

- Food pantry
- Charitable pharmacy
- Women and children's housing
- Men's housing
- Pantry garden
- Annual blanket drive
- Annual toy drive



Your RoundUp shopping donations will help families like Kim's. Each month will feature a different program.

Middlecamp Honored with Lifetime Achievement Award

Ralph Middlecamp, the President of the National Council of the United States Society of St. Vincent de Paul since his retirement from SVdP Madison, was honored by In Business Magazine with the 2019 Executive of the Year Lifetime Achievement Award on February 19 at the Overture Center in Madison.

The annual In Business Executive of the Year awards program recognized this year's eight business leaders who were honored for exemplary business leadership, innovation and company success. Middlecamp was one of two non-profit leaders honored and the lone recipient of the Lifetime Achievement award.

Middlecamp said he was fortunate over his nearly 30-year career to have great mentors, and a great team of St. Vincent de Paul conference members, volunteers and staff to significantly grow the impact the Society has made for Dane County neighbors in need.

"It has been a blessing to work in a community like Madison. We have big-city problems, but we still feel that we can do something constructive about them. There's great leadership and participation, and we get to work with new and established organizations."



Middlecamp noted that finding answers has been his life's work – especially answers to poverty and helping people coping with it.

The community is the shareholder of an organization like ours."

—Former CEO and Executive Director of SVdP Madison, Ralph Middlecamp

Middlecamp's Impact at SVdP Madison

- Opened the Center for Vincentian Charity (now the Middlecamp Center for Vincentian Charity) that houses the food pantry and six-year old charitable pharmacy
- Grew the number of St. Vinny's thrift stores from **one to seven**
- Raised over \$2.5 million in his final year of leadership, **more than double the annual amount at the start of his tenure**
- Improved the availability of transitional housing at Port St. Vincent de Paul and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton House

How Do You Want to be Remembered?

Tim's will says a lot about him. What do you want yours to say about you?

Tim Reilley, a former UW Foundation development officer who has been involved with St. Vincent de Paul since 2006, emphasizes the importance of supporting organizations that you trust, feel good about and find are aligned with your values.

"St. Vincent de Paul helps the poor in so many ways," Reilley says. "I know the money I give today and through my bequest will be used in many ways to help people achieve their goals as human beings."

"I want to help people reach the fullness of the human condition – physical and spiritual. The love shown by St. Vincent de Paul volunteers and staff is healing."

Leave a bequest today and know that your legacy will live beyond you to help those in need.



Tim Reilley said growing up during the Depression gave him an affinity for the poor – "and an urge to help when I could."

Please call for more information about your bequest:
Nancy Hansis, Development Director
608-442-7200 x405, nhansis@svdpmadison.org

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Society of St. Vincent de Paul
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Address Service Requested



Helping Our Neighbors In Need

Please join us as a
Care Cafe 2019
Table Captain or Sponsor.



Thursday, May 9, at 7:30 am
at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison
Keynote Speaker:
Michael Koval, Madison Police Chief

Contact Nancy Hansis,
608-442-7200 x405
nhansis@svdpmadison.org



It's Lent.
OFFER A HAND UP.
Give to St. Vincent de Paul.

celebrate **EARTH MONTH** in April!



at St. Vinny's
when you SHOP or DONATE,
you HELP
your budget, your planet
& your neighbor in need.

The District Council of Madison, Inc., Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a Catholic lay organization in which members join together in friendship to grow spiritually by providing person-to-person services to people who are in need, suffering or forgotten. Sales of donated goods at seven Madison-area thrift stores help fund the Society's charitable work in Dane County. At the Middlecamp Center for Vincentian Charity in Madison, the Society operates a large customer-choice food pantry and a charitable pharmacy; distributes vouchers for bedding, furniture and clothing; and supplies other forms of emergency aid to neighbors in need. The Society offers housing programs for men, women and children in Madison. All services provided by the Society are offered without regard to religious affiliation or beliefs of those assisted. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a nonprofit, tax-exempt charitable organization.