

**FREE**

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## Greater Valley YMCA Expands Child Care Offerings At Slate Belt Y

By Tara Craig

**PEN ARGYL** - Earlier this week, the Greater Valley YMCA announced the expansion of its child care offerings at its Slate Belt location. Since 2015, the Slate Belt Y has offered child care through its Keystone STARS-Accredited Program in a DHS Licensed facility for school-age children. Beginning March 15, the Y will offer care for toddlers and preschool children ages 2 through 5 in its newly-constructed child care wing. For decades the Slate Belt community was looking for a local community center and hub of support.

The Y became a part of the conversations 15 years ago, and was able to make the dream a reality in 2015 with a core facility located in the heart of the Slate Belt area at 315 West Pennsylvania Avenue in Pen Argyl. The Y team is currently finalizing this community group's original plans by completing the facility's child care wing expansion, as well as the addition of the pool and gym this spring.

The Slate Belt region is a service desert, and the Y has stepped up to provide even more solutions through this program despite the pandemic's effects. Once the child care wing construction was completed earlier this year, volunteers with the United Way VISTA program supported the move of furniture and other supplies to get the classrooms prepared.



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## The Salvation Army To Adopt New Model For Social Services To Pen Argyl

By Major John Wheeler

**Pen Argyl, Pa.** — The Salvation Army of Pen Argyl will soon be undergoing a transition. Effective June 30, 2021, the operations currently conducted out of the existing Corps Community Center will move under the supervision of the Easton Corps.

Social services such as food, clothing and emergency assistance programs will continue without interruption, albeit under a different service model. Seasonal and holiday assistance will continue to be available, as will opportunities for children and senior citizens to attend camp.

"Change is never easy. It brings with it an uncertainty that can be very unsettling. The decision to change the way we provide service in Pen Argyl was necessary due to a need to reduce operational costs," said Lt. Col. Larry Ashcraft, Divisional Commander, The Salvation Army Pennsylvania and Delaware Division. "The financial ramifications of keeping things status quo were not going to work in the long term. By shifting oversight for operations to the Easton Corps, we are able to continue serving the greater Pen Argyl community as we've done for 130 years."

Over the last year, the Pen Argyl location provided food and critical support to some 598 families and brightened an uncertain Christmas Season by providing more than 1160 toys to children in need.

The Salvation Army in Pen Argyl has done its utmost to meet the extraordinary needs brought about because of the pandemic. Locally the Army raised \$4,052 in its annual 2020 Red Kettle Campaign. That money will stay in the Pen Argyl community and continue to benefit area residents in need who are served by The Salvation Army.

The spiritual needs of individuals will continue to be met. Sunday services will be available to congregants at The Salvation Army's Easton location, 1110 Northampton St, or the East Stroudsburg location at 226 Washington Street. The faithful are also invited to continue sharing the gospel via Facebook pages or SAConnects from the safety of their homes.

For more information or to volunteer at The Salvation Army, please contact Major John Wheeler @ 610-863-6677.



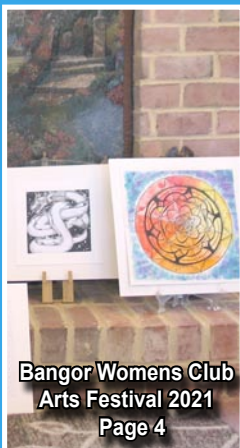
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