

Friends work to help Country's poor

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Mike Scott and Caroline Scherrer are dedicated to improving the lives of poor people in South Jersey.

In 2004, they co-founded People for the Poor, a nonprofit organization that has raised funds for soup kitchens and homeless shelters in Camden, Burlington, Gloucester, and Cumberland counties.

They plan to extend their outreach to Atlantic County this year and hope to broaden their community service throughout the country.

“Caroline and I have always wanted to help the poor,” said Scott, 53, of Audubon, who works in landscaping. “Yet, I never seemed to have enough time because I work during the day.”

“I decided to make time and called Caroline up on a Friday,” he said. “My concept was to start an organization called People for the Poor of South Jersey, but on Monday I called her back and told her we should call it People for the Poor, because I felt there could be no limit to those we could help.”

People for the Poor's co-founders have known each other for decades. They both grew up in Mount Ephraim. For six years, they ran golf tournaments all over South Jersey.

These days, the duo continues to organize tournaments, along with 50/50 raffles and benefit walks to raise money, which is then donated to organizations that help the poor.

People for the Poor, which has six volunteers, has provided financial relief to three soup kitchens and five homeless shelters throughout four counties.

Scott and Scherrer arranged a Feb. 13 benefit dinner at the Coastline Restaurant in Cherry Hill. They invited representatives from eight charities they're involved with and gave \$1,000 to each of them.

“It was an amazing night,” said Caroline Scherrer, 57, of Sicklerville, who manages a doctor's office. “One soup kitchen rep said that the \$1,000 would pay for all of their paper products for a month, and another said you'll pay our heating bills for two months.”

The Cathedral Kitchen in Camden was among the soup kitchens that received a \$1,000 donation from People for the Poor.

“Their donation has significantly helped us with operating costs,” said Karen Talarico, executive director of the Cathedral Kitchen. “They've helped us provide food, beds, and blankets for the people here.”

Scott and Scherrer hope to double the amount of their fundraising next year. They are also looking for more volunteers to help with coordinating future events.

Their main mission, however, is to continue to collect money for food, shelter, and clothing for the poor.

“Someone told me about two college professors who are now living on the street,” Scherrer said. “Anyone could become homeless. Mike and I are doing everything we can to ease their burdens.”

MORE INFORMATION

For more information contact Caroline Scherrer at 856-228-5365 or log onto www.PeopleForThePoor.org