

The Oakland Press (theoaklandpress.com), Serving Oakland County

News > Local News

Pictures of Hope project captures dreams of homeless children

Saturday, December 10, 2011

By DUSTIN BLITCHOK
Special to The Oakland Press

The hopes and dreams are startling in their simplicity.

"I hope my Mom will feel better."

"I hope to go to college."

"My dream is for furniture."

"I hope for my own house."

They are the wishes of 15 homeless children who live at a Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries shelter. This fall, Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame photojournalist and Bloomfield Township resident Linda Solomon came to the shelter, gave them cameras, and asked them to photograph their hopes and dreams.

What they came back with are, as Solomon's program is called, Pictures of Hope.

"The hope and dream for a safe home, for love, for an education — those are the most meaningful wishes of all," Solomon said.

"This project encourages people to realize that we should never take those things for granted."

This year, Solomon brought Pictures of Hope to 10 cities nationwide with the sponsorship of General Motors Corp.'s Chevrolet division. "It's important to share what you've learned in life, (and) to be generative," she said. "It's something we can all do in our professions; I've tried to do it with the children."

Solomon's résumé includes photographing the Academy Awards for nearly 30 years, commissioned portraits of celebrities such as the late Elizabeth Taylor and Al Hirschfield, and four books. The book "People We Know, Horses They Love," which Solomon collaborated on with her sister, Jill Rappaport, made the New York Times best-seller list.

The children, who are ages 7 to 10, were recently bused to Gordon Chevrolet in Garden City for the unveiling of their pictures. The greeting cards bearing their images, hopes, and dreams will be sold this holiday season to the benefit of the shelter.

The dealership's general manager, Susan Ianni, said Gordon Chevrolet has purchased the first 300 sets of greeting

cards and presented a check for \$6,000 to the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries. Customers at the dealership will receive a set of greeting cards when they purchase a new car during the holiday season.

Jim Harper, the host of Magic in the Morning on 105.1 FM, has publicized Pictures of Hope on his program.

"This might be one of those things you don't understand for a while," Harper told the children, "but when you get older, you will realize the gift that you're giving all of us in your cards and your messages is special."

Dr. Chad Audi, the president of Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries, said the non-profit has 14 locations in the cities of Detroit and Highland Park servicing men, women, children, and senior citizens. "Some of the dreams were as little as having a nice, warm bed and having the key to their own home," he said.

Audi said the need in the community is rising, and the resources to help the less fortunate are dwindling. "We're seeing a whole new population coming through our doors, such as the working homeless," he said. "Those are individuals who work during the day, but cannot afford living in a home of their own at night."

Brenden, who is 11, was enjoying pizza donated by Happy's Pizza in Westland during the ceremony. Brenden's contribution to the greeting card set was a picture of a Bible.

"It's about God, and if you pray, you could pray to get a house," he explained.

Follow Dustin Blitchok

on Twitter @SincerelyDustin.

FYI

The greeting cards from Pictures of Hope programs in 10 different cities can be purchased at www.lindasolomonphotography.com/PicturesOfHope/

URL: http://www.theoaklandpress.com/articles/2011/12/10/news/local_news/doc4ee3e0c47dab9271845461.prt

© 2011 theoaklandpress.com, a [Journal Register](http://www.theoaklandpress.com) Property