

More than \$132K awarded by Makefield Women's Association in last 5 years

By Joan Hellyer Staff Writer | Posted: Sunday, July 27, 2014 6:00 pm

Makefield Women's Association volunteers have looked for ways to help local nonprofits with their missions for more than 40 years, a group member said.

"We are kind of like grown-up Girl Scouts, except we don't sell cookies," said MWA volunteer Carolyn Fogel. "Everyone is so anxious to help in whatever way we can."

The group includes stay-at-home moms, working moms, retirees, people who do not have children and young members of the community who have not started a family.

"It is actually pretty amazing to be part of such a dynamic group of women," Fogel said.

In the past five years, MWA has donated \$132,800 in monetary awards and services, she said. The group's biggest fundraiser is Autumn Fest, previously known as Harvest Day. This year's event will be Sept. 27 at Shady Brook Farm off Stony Hill Road in Lower Makefield.

More than 100 vendors are lined up, and MWA continues to recruit additional participants, said Fogel, a Lower Makefield resident.

"This money (raised at the festival) goes back to the people who really, really need it," Fogel said. "It really is for the good of the community."

MWA members support the Bucks County Emergency Homeless Shelter in many ways, said a spokeswoman for the agency that runs the shelter in Bristol Township.

"We consider their endorsement much like a Good Housekeeping seal of approval," said Nicki Bedesem, the communications coordinator for the Family Service Association of Bucks County.

The Middletown-based FSA has operated the homeless shelter off New Falls Road since 2012. It provides a temporary residence to individuals and families who have lost safe and stable housing, Bedesem said.

MWA presented a monetary award to the association in April with funds collected during the group's 2013 Autumn Fest. In addition, MWA members volunteer at the shelter throughout the year, the



Ashley Lopresti, 6, paints a pumpkin during the first Makefield Women's Association's Harvest Day at Shady Brook Farm in Lower Makefield Saturday.

communications coordinator said.

“Just to give you one example, an MWA volunteer dressed up as the Easter Bunny to celebrate the holiday with the children residing at the shelter,” Bedesem said. “MWA volunteers are always creative, energetic and willing to help out in any way they can at the shelter.”

The homeless shelter is one of 10 nonprofits that received financial awards totaling \$14,500 from MWA in April, Fogel said. The awards vary by need and MWA does not disclose amounts of individual awards, she said.

The women’s association has already picked 11 nonprofits that will benefit from the 2014 Autumn Fest, Fogel said. They include A Woman’s Place, Aid for Friends, the Yardley-Makefield Fire Co. and the county homeless shelter.