

2022

The Commandery of the Palm Beaches donated a total of US\$64,580 during 2021. Following the earthquake in Haiti, multiple donations, totaling US\$3k, were made to support agencies. Additionally, US\$2.5k was given to the First Haitian Baptist Church Food Drive, to help feed the poorest in the community. The Belle Glade Building Fund received US\$59k towards the new FHBC Youth and Children Development Center. Further, over US\$2.2k was donated in memory of three Knights and Dames that passed away in 2021.

2021

The Commandery of The Palm Beaches 2021 Philanthropy Report

The Commandery of The Palm Beaches is pleased to report its Philanthropic donations for the year 2021.

During 2021 The Commandery of The Palm Beaches donated \$58,454.52 to six not for profits serving the sick and poor.

After the earthquake struck Haiti the Commandery gave \$1 ,000 to two organizations. St Gregory's Episcopal Church, Dame Reverend Anita Thorstad's Hatitan Children project and Dame Melissa Nash, Hope of Haiti, each received donation of \$500 for their agencies.

The Commandery of The Palm Beaches sponsored The First Haitian Baptist Church Food Drive with a donation of \$2,513.72, feed the poorest in our community.

The Belle Glade Building Fund received \$58,815.80, to pay for the architect drawing for the new FHBC Youth and Children Development Center. Construction should start the beginning of 2022.

The Commandery of The Palm Beaches remembered its Knight and Dames who passed away this year with \$1,125 in donation to: St Vincents Ferrer Center in memory of Dame Marie Ryan \$500.00, Royal Poinciana Chapel in memory of Chevalier John Thomas \$125.00 and National Ovarian Cancer in memory of Commander Mary Howard \$500.00.

Yours in St John,

Commander James Siemon, KG SJ

The **Priory of the Southeastern United States** is pleased to report its Philanthropic donations for the year 2021. These donations are in addition to the philanthropic donations reported by the Commandery of the Palm Beaches.

Emphasis during the Pandemic was to assist those in need and the SE Priory donated **\$12,000** to four not for profits serving the poorest in our community.

- The food pantry of **Holy Redeemer Episcopal Church in Lake Worth** received **\$3000** and the **Christ Child Society of Naples** received **\$3000**. The **Emergency Fund of the Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County** and the **House of Hope Pantry & Grow a Garden** each received a donation of **\$3000**.
- When the earthquake in Haiti struck two agencies that the SE Priory was associated with were given donations of **\$1000 each**. Dame **Reverend Anita Thorstad's Haitian children's project** sponsored through St. Gregory's Episcopal Church and **Hope for Haiti** sponsored by Dame Melissa Nash received donations for their agencies' on the ground work in the areas most devastated by the 2021 Haiti Earthquake.
- The **Belle Glade Building Fund** received **\$1379.88** from the on-going efforts of Dame Pamela Martyna's Face Book page that keeps the project in front of the eyes of her followers,

Lastly, the SE Priory remembered its Knights and Dames who passed away this year with \$625 in donations to the churches of their choice.

The philanthropic donations from the SE Priory for 2021 totaled \$16,004.88.

2020

- Now during the Covid-19 Pandemic we are faced with another situation. **Feeding the poor in Belle Glade**. Many of the children are left alone or with 1 grandparent with a house full of children. The district has designated locations for the feed, however, they have no way to get there. Our Commandery has started a food drive through the philanthropy committee with Chairs Dame Mimi Howard & Chevalier Walter Jones and have raised \$2,900 so far. We have taken the Church to Restaurant Depot and stocked them with enough food to feed 21 families for 2 weeks and will continue to help. With the new vans they have been able to come to us instead of us having to drive the 100 some miles. The parents are in the fields as it is now corn harvest another one of their major crops in Belle Glade.

2019

- The Members of the Commandery of the Palm Beaches have dedicated themselves to the **First Haitian Baptist Church Youth and Development Center – Building Project**. So far they have raised a total of \$445,914, with \$245,115 raised in 2019. To rebuild the building that is about to fall down! You can read about it on our website SOSJPB.org. They have dedicated themselves to this unit and its needs. This year the bus that the Pastor drives to pick up and deliver the children was on its last leg and overheated at 30mph. Through 2 of our members they were able to secure two grants, a total of \$45,346, that resulted in the purchase of two 15 passenger vans.



2012

- **Church & Food Pantry Food Bags:** The Commandery of Palm Beaches distributed 800 food bags to the area Churches and food pantries suggested by our members. \$10,000.

2013

- **Christmas Gifts:** The Commandery purchased Christmas gifts, food and other needs in the City of Belle Glade, an area of considerable need. \$6000.

2014

- **Individual help:** The Commandery helped a family who were in dire need of a new roof, water heater and general need. The husband was bed-ridden and has since passed. They have an autistic son which prevents the mother from working. \$3,400.
- **Florida Outreach Centre for the Blind:** The Commandery adopted the Florida Outreach Center for the Blind. The members help raise funds and provided the Christmas party with gifts and food. The Commandery also provided a computer and tablets for use in their office. \$2,000.
- **Rotary Feed West Palm Beach:** The Commandery participated in the local Rotary Feed West Palm Beach. \$1,500.
- **Malta Orphanage:** Members of the Commandery provided the Malta orphanage run by the Ursulines with face cloths and sheets. A further donation was made to help them refurbish the orphanage. The donation was made with the Washington and Cleveland Commanderies also participating. € 800.

2015

- **Eagle Wings Foundation:** The Commandery assisted the Eagles Wing Foundation in providing post-disaster in Haiti relief. \$1,000.
- **Homeless Coalition:** The Commandery helps them provide help and shelter for the homeless. \$2,400.

- **Matthew 25:** This local prison ministry was received a support grant. \$6,000. A further grant was made to paint a truck and provide signage. \$2,850.
- **On-going help for Belle Glade:** Belle Glade, Florida is located in Palm Beach County, one of the richest counties in the State, while it is one of the poorest cities within the County. Our Commandery has adopted The First Haitian Baptist Church located in Belle Glade, Florida. Pastor Morales St. Hilaire provides an After School Program for the local children to help them and keep them off the streets. The children are picked up from school and helped with school work, play time, music and are fed snacks and faith and then returned to their homes. The existing building for this project has reached the end of its life and is unfit to refurbish. The Commandery has undertaken a campaign to try and rebuild this building. To date we have collected \$16,510. Our goal is to get 5,000 people to donate \$200 to reach this goal.
- **In Jacob's Shoes Foundation:** The mission of In Jacob's Shoes is to provide new and gently used shoes, school supplies and athletic shoes and equipment to economically disadvantaged youth. Scholarships are also awarded to children and teens for camp, athletic, education, travel, after school care and extra-curricular programs. Further, we obtained over 132 pairs of shoes for the children at First Haitian Baptist Church After-School Program. Then in August, we obtained another round of shoes and this time we delivered to school back packs filled with school supplies. Working hand in hand with them we have collected shoes and even had a "Cleaning Night" where members participated in the process of making the shoes look like new. This program requires more effort than cash. \$1,000.

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- **Urban Youth Impact SMART Coding Component Project:** This project teaches Computer Programming to train the children in the intercity a trade. We also sent school supplies to the Urban Your Impact that was accumulated during our annual BBQ. \$4,500.
- **Food and Clothing:** Member volunteers picked up and delivered food and clothing on an ongoing basis from local food pantries, donations from individuals and churches to be given to the Academy for Nurses & Health Occupations, a not for profit school, whose students come from the Belle Glade & Pahokee area. Many of these people do not know where their next meal will come from on the weekends when most pantries are closed. The Commandery has also given clothing to One Love – One Community Foundation which provides clothes closets in Title 1 Schools in Palm Beach County. At our Investiture we requested those participating in the Luncheon to bring an inexpensive rain poncho for the children in the Title 1 schools so that when it rains, they won't get soaked. We filled a large bin!
- **Coral Springs Museum of Art:** A software package was donated by a member in the name of the Order to start an autistic program for painting. The program allows them to point at a paint can and then paint on the wall digitally, save it and never make a mess on the floor or wall. It will be a special exhibit. \$5,000.
- **Hygiene Bag Project:** This year at the Investiture Weekend the Commandery did a "hands on project" where we prepared 100 hygiene bags for the homeless. Many members purchased product and also collected various items from all of their travels. These bags were assembled at our Friday Luncheon and all participated. Even the Grand

Master! We also teamed up with St. Paul's Lutheran Church who provides "Glad Sacks" filled with snacks for the children at the First Haitian Baptist Church. These were also assembled by our participants at the luncheon and 160 glad sacks were delivered to Belle Glade. A dollar amount cannot be given as it was a hands on project that comes from the heart!

2016

The Commandery's main Project was our Food Drive

Food Drive - Chev. Bohlman stated the Commandery had a great turn out of members and volunteers at our Food Drive held on May 14th at the **Children's Home Society**. We raised funds and with the Order's match we were able to fill 1,000 bags for 15 Charities for \$16,060. We had many volunteers, potential aspirants and even the youth. Next year we will begin earlier collecting funds and fill the bags bigger. 82% of the Membership Participated. Thanks to Chev. Bohlman & Dame Landen for a great job.

Other Projects:

\$5,000 – **Feed Palm Beach County** (Chev. Tony Lofaso) Donation and Helping Hands

\$2,000 – **Family Development** (Ken Bowers) Ken has been inactive for a few years due to poor health.

He runs a summer camp and he needed help financially.

\$7,500 – **In Jacob's Shoes** – 30 members donated \$5,775 and Commandery \$1,725.

We teamed up with this worthy cause a few years ago. They have provided new & gently used shoes to our many poor areas in Belle Glade, Pahokee, Riviera Beach. The funds donated helped them provide backpacks filled with school supplies along with shoes for back to school.

\$3,400 – **Pahokee Retreat House** - Fire Alarm System (donated by Kirkwood Foundation)

\$100 – **Children's Home Society**

\$1203 – **Florida Outreach for the Blind** – This was our Christmas project where we provided money for

Them to purchase gifts for the young children and our members had a gathering where we

Brought Gift Cards for the teens. Supplied food for their party also.

\$1,000 – **YWCA High Tea Sponsorship** 4 Members gave to support the YWCA at the Tea.

\$4,500 – **Urban Youth Impact for a Coding Program Pilot.**

Belle Glade – First Haitian Baptist Church Building. Funds totaling approximate \$25,000 in a restricted fund for the rebuilding of the area where the children go to do homework and play in a free after school program. We continue to support this church with food and clothing. Palm Beach County is the richest county in the State of Florida with 2 of the poorest cities Belle Glade & Pahokee with many gangs and drugs. Pastor collects these children after school and gets them off the street. Dame Pam Martyna has spear headed this committee which was under the Philanthropy Committee. Last quarter 2016 it was decided that if this was to go ahead more detail must be determined. It was taken out of the Philanthropy Committee and Chev. Schoech & Williams have offered their expertise. A feasibility study with questionnaire to be completed by the Pastor was presented and we are still awaiting results. Dame Martyna was not able to be at the Annual Meeting and I don't think much has moved forward. One consideration out of the meeting that was held by this Committee was to investigate nearby existing buildings to renovate.

2017

\$500 – Feed Palm Beach County (Chev. Tony Lofaso) Donation and Helping Hands

(At this event, several members and future Aspirants participated in February)

\$1000 – Florida Outreach for the Blind – This was our Christmas project where we provided money for

Them to purchase gifts for the young children and our members had a gathering where we

Brought Gift Cards for the teens. Supplied food for their party also.

\$1,000 – YWCA High Tea Sponsorship 4 Members gave to support the YWCA at the Tea.

Due to this being an Investiture year with 15 Aspirants, the Treasurer had limited the committee to \$5,000 as robes and regalia had to be purchased. The balance will be remaining for the Food Drive in 2018.

BELLE GLADE PROJECT:

The First Haitian Baptist Children Development Center. Funds totaling approximate \$40,690 in a restricted fund for the rebuilding of the Children Development Center where the children go to do homework and play in a free after school program. We continue to support this church with food and clothing. Palm Beach County is the richest county in the State of Florida with 2 of the poorest cities Belle Glade & Pahokee with many gangs and drugs. Pastor collects these children after school and gets them off the street. Dame Pam Martyna has spear headed this committee which was under the Philanthropy Committee. In 2017 it was discussed that we either have to meet with the Church and get a current plan that they have for the project. Otherwise if action isn't taken on their party, we were prepared to write to each person who donated to the fund and find out their wishes since the project seemed to reach a dead end. It was taken out of the Philanthropy Committee and Chev. Schoech & Williams have offered their expertise. A meeting

was held with Assistant Pastor Morana St. Hilaire to discuss how the plans are progressing. We met the Architects and listened to their plan of action. One problem is how they are going to run the program once the building is torn down. Apparently, the City will tear it down. We were promised information by our Annual Meeting. Dame Martyna was not able to be at the Annual Meeting.

Hurricane Irma brought more destruction to the building along with the Pavilion that is used for an eating area for the Children. The top blew off and the tables that were made of press board were soaked and warped. After the Investiture weekend, several of us took members of SOSJ from Vancouver to see the project and give us some guidance. After that meeting and seeing the destruction, Dame Martyna and Chevalier Smith took it upon themselves to find a solution to mount tables purchased from Lowe's and remove the legs, remove the damaged boards and mount them on the existing frames. Wonderful solution. Hurricane Irma could have been a bit nicer and blew the house down so insurance could be collected. Oh Well!

Other Activities – HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

We started the New Year with a New Year's Eve Party at Dame Marshall with Fireworks on Flagler. Ran a 50/50 where the first 2017 Charity Champion was born. It was won by Dame Howard and awarded to the **Celtic Festival in the Keys**.

This clever idea was created by the Chair, Dame Nancy Marshall. The idea was to allow members to support their favorite Charity having to complete an application created by the Philanthropy Committee and Hospitality Committee. The member must work with their charity raising \$2,017 and meet the criteria of the committees. In the meantime, the Hospitality Committee worked on several fund raising ideas to raise the matching \$2,017. At almost every event an Auction was held raising funds along with items purchased such as bracelets, credit card holders & aprons for sale.

March 26, 2017 was the Annual Shalhoub BBQ – Open to all Members and Future Aspirants and friends that members feel should be considered. Always a wonderful event hosted by Chevalier & Dame Shalhoub. Great success! We collected Easter Baskets along with a great auction to raise funds for the 2017 Charity Champions.

On June 24th 25 Knights and Dames celebrated the Feast of St. John the Baptist with services held at St. Mark's Episcopal Church (site of Investiture) and had a pot luck supper afterwards. Of course we had a jewelry sale from pieces donated by members. Great fun!

July 24th brought our Board Meeting to In Jacob's Shoes Wine & Cheese Shoe Cleaning Evening – Several members traveled to their headquarters and had a wonderful evening of fun cleaning the shoes. Little wine helps!! **In Jacob's Shoes** was the second 2017 Charity Champion to meet the criteria and funds were raised by doing a Bakeless Cake Sale. They rose along with Toni Mastrullo over \$3,000. The award was given that evening.

On September 24th several members gather at the Colony for Lunch to Celebrate the Commander's Birthday. In lieu of gifts contributions were made to the 2017 Charity Champions.

Boutique was also available at the Meet & Greet at Investiture Weekend!

December 9, Dame Martyna and Chevalier Smith held a Merry Christmas Party at their home and fun was held by all. And yes we had one last auction!

At December, 2017 we had enough funds to award 2 more Charities – **Children's Home Society** and the **Cancer Alliance of Help & Hope** \$2,017 each. Awarded at the Annual Meeting.

Since the auctions and Sales of product was so wonderful we have enough funds to do approximate 3 more charities so notice was sent out and we are waiting the outcome from the Committee evaluating them.

At our February, 2018 meeting we will present the remaining funds of \$5,336 to the following charities who completed the criteria:

Palm Beach Habilitation Center

Visiting Nurse Foundation of Florida

Florida Outreach Center for the Blind, Inc

This pilot project will be evaluated for continuance in 2018. Congratulations to all charities awarded.

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