

The Deacon Project  
Daniel P. Sullivan Council 10208  
Community Service Project

Knights of Columbus Daniel P. Sullivan Council 10208 is headquartered out of Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church in Hot Springs Village. For many years at Christmas, the church has been providing food baskets and presents to needy families. Knights and their spouses assist by providing financial support and helping to assemble and deliver the food and presents to the families. Three years ago, three of our knights approached the pastor Father Bill Elser about including a statement in the letter from the parish that families could contact us if more assistance was needed. Father Elser, who is the State Chaplain of the Arkansas Knights of Columbus, in conjunction with these three knights decided to sponsor a parish Family Assistance Committee (FAC) and provided seed money from the parish to run the operation.

This past Christmas Sir Knight Deacon Larry Lipsmeyer and his wife Jan delivered a basket to a family of three people – a husband, his wife and a grandson that they had been raising for many years. Deacon Larry is a member of Council 10208. In the process of delivering the food to the family and the presents for the child, Deacon Larry learned that the husband had lost his job and the wife was being treated for pancreatic cancer. They had moved into a partially built, uninsulated house that had a cold water tap and some electricity. There were no facilities for bathing and toileting, and a kitchen did not exist. The beginning of the building had been done by the husband on property he owned prior to the loss of his job.

At the January Council meeting, Deacon Larry contacted Past Grand Knight (PGK) Tom Ament who was also a member of the Family Assistance Committee, as well as the coordinator of the Pennies from Heaven for the Council. After visits to the family by FAC chair Knight Marvin Young and Tom Ament, it was decided we should assist this family as follows:

The Council's Pennies from Heaven donated \$300 for a septic tank and that was matched by the Arkansas state Knights of Columbus. The Family Assistance Committee donated an initial \$1000 towards a partnership with the Council to upgrade the family living conditions. A fairly new member of the Council, Jim Arnold, who is a retired aerospace engineer, drew the plans for a 32'X10' addition, and agreed to direct the project. PGK Ament became the project coordinator and he put out a plea for assistance to the Council for the necessary manpower to build this addition. Many Knights volunteered that night, and others joined in later.

By the end of February, the addition was completed to include the placements of the necessary windows and doors. Outside steps were also made for the addition and the water lines from the well on the property were replaced in an underground trench dug by the members to avoid freezing.

Twelve fellow Knights spent some 1000 volunteer hours over 13 days of on-site work. They drove a combined total of approximately 2000 miles traveling to the work site or picking up building materials.

The hours spent working together drew us all closer as brother knights, and gave us that good feeling that comes with doing good deeds. The family was overwhelmed with our commitment and our Council's generosity.

Knowing funds were limited, Ament reached out to different businesses for donations or reduced prices with great results. The following businesses deserve recognition.

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**Lowes Co. of Hot Springs** provided approximately \$1100 of materials at cost for the actual building.

**Peters Paint in Hot Springs** is donating the carpet for the grandson's bedroom.

**B and M Plumbing of Hot Springs Village** is providing the labor free to connect all the plumbing for the shower, sink, toilet and washer as well as the connection to the septic tank.

**Razorback Roofing of Hot Springs** is donating the labor to roof the addition.

**Carpet Barn Co.** is providing the floor covering at cost.

**Caldwell Hardware** donated pipe fittings for water line.

**Village Home Center** sold the hot water heater at a reduced price

**Ouachita Construction** sold the septic tank hole dug at reduced price.

**Village Outreach** provided funds for hot water heater

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Family Assistance Committee has donated another \$1000 to cover the cost of the shower, hot water heater and roofing materials. A woman in the village who heard about the project has also donated \$400 to assist in the completion.

Depending on the weather we anticipate the project will be completed by March 31.

The good news for the family is that the husband who at the start of the project was experiencing blood clots that required stents in his legs, was able to avoid serious complications to his feet and as of Monday, 6 March has been able to go back to work.

We believe the work accomplished by the members of this Council to assist this family was quite exceptional because all of these Knights are retired from active work life. It also demonstrates the power of Councils working with the parish to create a better life for all God's children and people to fulfill one of the key Principles of the Order - **Charity**.