

# Season of sharing



Kevin Mertz/Standard Journal  
Students at Watsonstown Elementary School recently signed holiday cards, which will be distributed to residents at Watsonstown Nursing and Rehabilitation Center and to active military members through the Holiday Mail for Heroes program. Participating in a recent presentation of

the cards were, front and from left, rehabilitation center patients **James Robbins** and **Irma Robbins**. Middle, students **Carter Duitch**, first grade; **Makenzi Leitenberger**, fourth grade; **Quentin Frank**, third grade; **Harley Winder**, kindergarten; and **Ben Shaffer**, second grade. And rear, **Julie Lohr**, elementary assistant principal, and rehabilitation center staff members **Melonie Bushaw**, business office; **Malinda Houseknecht**, admissions director; **Christabel Smith**, activities director; **Nicole Waughen**, clinical liaison; and **Chad Breach**, administrator.

## Watsonstown students craft cards for center residents

BY KEVIN MERTZ  
Staff writer

WATSONTOWN — Students at Watsonstown Elementary School are learning the holidays are not just about receiving gifts and well

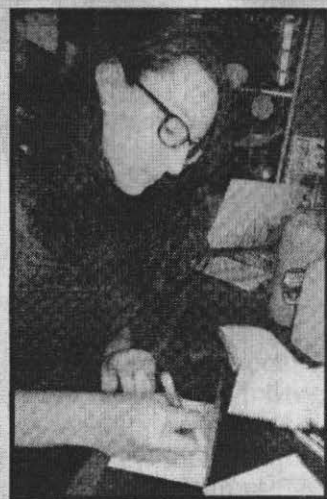
## Holiday cards to be sent to prison inmates; LPP coordinates massive writing project

BY MATT FARRAND  
Staff writer

LEWISBURG — “Giving Tuesday” was the designation applied four years ago to the Tuesday following Thanksgiving; as it is now considered a day for people to contribute to not-for-profit organizations.

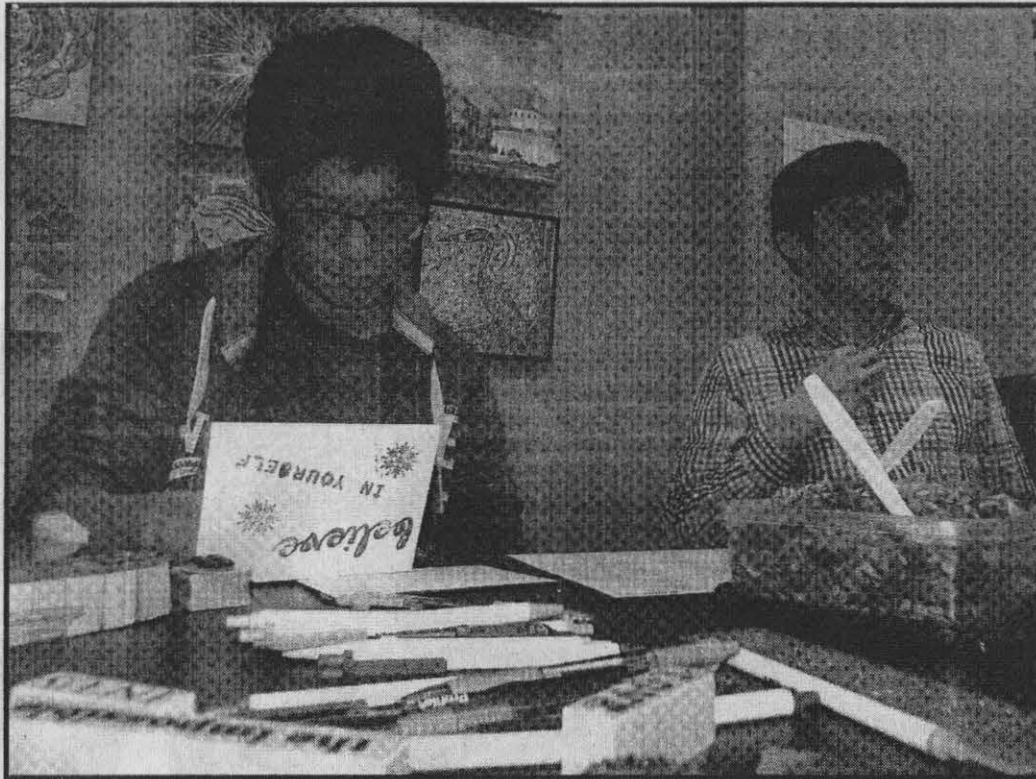
Local residents and students from outside the immediate area used the most recent Tuesday to write holiday cards to prison inmates, giving their time, creativity and thoughts in the process.

The effort was coordinated by the Lewisburg Prison Project (LPP) and got people designing and writing holiday cards for delivery to state and federal inmates. Locations for the card writers included Bucknell and Susquehanna universities and at the Community



Matt Farrand/Standard Journal  
**Carolyn Ziembo**, of Lewisburg, spent part of ‘Giving Tuesday’ illustrating and writing holiday cards to inmates at nearby correctional facilities.

The names and locations of the inmates were on pre-printed labels, but the cards had to be hand



Matt Farrand/Standard Journal

Calvin Chang, a Bucknell University sophomore and Sean Turpin, CommUnity Zone volunteer, wrote and illustrated holiday cards Tuesday to inmates at nearby state and federal prisons. Regulations prohibit many materials used for commercially available cards from entering institutions.

## LPP

◆ Continued from page 1

made and without certain materials, explained LPP Outreach Coordinator Alex Skitolsky.

"The state...a couple of months ago...put a notice out to state inmates saying that they wouldn't be receiving any holiday cards this year," Skitolsky said. "It puts too much stress on the correctional officers to have to inspect all the materials that come in."

Layers of material, attachments, glitter and the like could be means by which drugs are smuggled into institutions, Skitolsky admitted.

"Luckily there was enough response from inmates and particularly the family members of inmates that they said they will allow them," he noted, though it was with some conditions. "They have to be in completely white envelopes; there can't be any glue; there can't be any paint; there can't be any crayons."

Federal rules are more flexible, Skitolsky said of the cards going to USP Lewisburg and USP Allenwood.

Most of the recipients were men, but inmates at the women's institution near Muncy would also be sent holiday greetings. From 75 to 100 labels were sent to each location for the Tuesday night event.

Writers wrote their wishes to inmates, illustrating the cards with colored ink drawings, rubber stamped snowflakes, snowmen and the like.

Calvin Chang, a Bucknell

said as he wrote cards he tried to imagine what life inside a facility was like.

"I just hope what we are doing here might make their day, or...brighten up their holiday season," Chang said. "It is probably beneficial to them to think that there are people there who are thinking of them."

Carolyn Ziembo of Lewisburg said prison inmates are a forgotten part of the population.

"It is nice to do a little bit to reach out to them," Ziembo said. "Hopefully they will realize they are not completely forgotten."

Sean Turpin, CommUnity Zone volunteers similarly said he hoped the effort could restore an element of humanity to institutions.

"Hopefully this helps to remind (inmates) of their own humanity, maybe make them feel a little softer than they have to be on a regular basis to survive," he said.

All agreed prison realities are harsh and will likely change any person exposed to them.

Donations to the Lewisburg Prison Project and information about volunteering is available at [www.lewisburgprisonproject.org](http://www.lewisburgprisonproject.org), by writing P.O. Box 128, Lewisburg, PA 17837 or by calling 570-523-1104.

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### Local 5-Day Forecast

Thu 12/3	Fri 12/4	Sat 12/5	Sun 12/6	Mon 12/7
<b>49/35</b>	<b>50/30</b>	<b>52/30</b>	<b>53/30</b>	<b>51/32</b>
Cloudy skies early, followed by partial clearing. High 49F. Winds WNW at 15 to 25 mph.	Plenty of sun. Highs in the low 50s and lows in the low 30s.	Abundant sunshine. Highs in the low 50s and lows in the low 30s.	More sun than clouds. Highs in the low 50s and lows in the low 30s.	More sun than clouds. Highs in the low 50s and lows in the low 30s.
Sunday 7:14 AM	Sunday 7:15 AM	Sunday 7:16 AM	Sunday 7:17 AM	Sunday 7:18 AM