

Recovery to rejuvenation in store for Crisfield

Transfer of brick, symbolic from Sandy work, a sign of more improvement to come

For the Crisfield-Somerset County Times

CRISFIELD — Almost three years ago in the aftermath of super-storm Sandy, a broken brick was picked from the rubble of Crisfield. That brick became a daily reminder for prayer for the leadership team of the Somerset County Long Term Recovery Committee (SCLTRC) as they supervised recovery operations.

With recovery operations from Sandy winding down, that brick has now been passed to the Greater Crisfield Action Coalition as a reminder for prayer by its leaders as the focus for the community shifts from recovery to rejuvenation.

Two days after Thanksgiving Day of 2012, Lutheran Pastors Phil Huber and Thomas Sinnott organized 20 teams of people to survey the damage done to the Crisfield area by the hurricane. During the course of that day, one of the surveyors, Pastor Sinnott's



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Charlotte Scott, president of the Greater Crisfield Action Coalition, receives a broken brick from Pastor Phil Huber. It was picked up in Crisfield by his wife shortly after super-storm Sandy in 2012. It became a sign to the Somerset County Long Term Recovery Committee that Crisfield needs to be restored, and it is being passed to the GCAC which has a new vision for the future. With them is GCAC board member Erik Emely. Both Ms. Scott and Mr. Emely are City Council members, although the GCAC is not a city committee.

wife, Ileana Lindstrom, herself a Lutheran pastor, picked up a broken brick. That brick, which may have once been a keystone brick during a thriving Crisfield, now became a symbol of Crisfield's need for recovery.

Bringing it home, it became a daily reminder for Ileana and the leadership of the SCLTRC of the need to pray for the physical, psychological, and spiritual recovery of Crisfield.

Those prayers have been truly an-

swered. Since that time the SCLTRC has brought \$4.3 million in aid to the greater Crisfield area. Along with countless individuals from across the United States and Canada, the SCLTRC has served 522 households, repairing over 400 homes and building 21 new ones. They worked with people across the community to overcome barriers and to solve problems. They demonstrated the power of an integrated team of citizens of varying races, faiths, riches, and birth places working side by side with businesses, faith-based groups and government to bring about recovery.

In August of this year, a Donor Appreciation Banquet was held in Princess Anne. At that banquet, Pastor Sinnott told the story of recovery and of this brick. He told the audience that the power to repair a community lies inside all of us, and that as a result, Crisfield had experienced both repaired relationships and repaired buildings. He said it was time to give the broken brick back to Crisfield; to pass it on to a new group, as recovery operations wind down.

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Pastor Sinnott entrusted the brick to Charlotte Scott, President of the Greater Crisfield Action Coalition, Inc. (GCAC). Pastor Lindstrom told Ms. Scott: "I'd like to give the brick to you because you have a vision for Crisfield and Somerset County and the motivation to get an action plan off paper and into concrete changes."

Ms. Scott and the GCAC Board of Directors have accepted the brick as a reminder of the legacy of the re-

covery committee and as a reminder to pray for the greater Crisfield area as it moves from recovery to rejuvenation. The mission of GCAC is to transform Crisfield into a vibrant and thriving community where everyone has the opportunity to succeed in an outstanding and meaningful way.

Like the leadership of the recovery committee, the leadership of GCAC is representative of every segment of the community, of various faiths and persuasions; of born here's and come here's; and of community agencies, business, and government. Just as the SCLTRC was able to supplement the efforts of county and city government,

so too will GCAC be able to assist local government by identifying creative solutions and by providing effective program management services to execute those solutions to move the Greater Crisfield area forward in ways that government alone cannot.

The GCAC publically announced its intentions during the 2015 Crab Derby, and according to President Scott, the community's response has been overwhelming. In just three weeks almost \$20,000 has been donated. In addition to funds, community members have been coming forward offering to donate their time and talents as well.

After gaining input from the community this fall, GCAC will finalize goals that will lead to business revitalization, workforce development, tourism, jobs, youth programs and home ownership. The group hopes to mark the third year anniversary of the broken brick becoming a symbol for Crisfield by raising \$100,000 by Thanksgiving. This funding will be used to put staff and programs in place to begin achieving these goals.

Jay Tawes, treasurer of GCAC said, "We trust that this brick will once again take its place in a thriving Crisfield." More more details on the plans visit www.GreaterCrisfield.org.

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