

Amsterdam shelter named for key organizer

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About three years ago, Sister Danielle Bonetti got serious about addressing the homeless problem in Amsterdam.

"She was kind of the driving force that kept it on everyone's minds that homelessness is an issue," said Janine Robitaille, executive director of Interfaith Partnership. "There was no real avenue in Amsterdam to address the issue."

Bonetti, the vice president of partnership at St. Mary's Healthcare, contacted Robitaille in Albany in 2010, expressing the need.

"They were seeing people in the emergency room and Sister Danielle was persistent," Robitaille said. "She kept saying, 'We need to do something. We need to organize a team.' And she committed herself."

After a couple of years of renting homes, Interfaith Partnership decided to buy a house in Amsterdam to use as a shelter and has operated out of 218 E. Main St. since. But, Robitaille said, they needed Bonetti's initial push and continuous help throughout the years.

When Robitaille learned Bonetti would be moving to St. Louis to fill an elected seat on St. Joseph's congressional leadership team, she knew she had to do something for her.

"She's just such a wonderful person, you want to give something to her," Robitaille said. "I kept thinking, what can I give her? A gift card? Like what do I do? So I thought, you know what, I would like to name the house for her. I think it would be



Alissa Scott/Recorder staff

From left, Sister Danielle Bonetti, executive director of Interfaith Partnership Janine Robitaille, and shelter supervisor Tyler Rush hold a sign announcing the new name of the homeless shelter on East Main Street in Amsterdam. The house was named after Sister Danielle for her efforts in getting it running.

meaningful to her and certainly meaningful for us so that she will always be remembered."

Wednesday afternoon, Robitaille gathered Bonetti and a small group of supporters at the shelter to announce the decision to name the shelter Danielle's House.

"It's been a privilege for me to see how the shelter has grown and developed and it just brings me great joy that it's a stable service in the community," Bonetti said.

Robitaille said they decided to leave "sister" off the name because it creates a religious aspect and might turn people away.

The shelter, supervisor Tyler Rush said, is especially important to the community during the winter months. This weekend,

weather reports suggest temperatures will be below freezing and snow showers are also expected.

"It gets colder and more [guests] tend to show up," Rush said.

Robitaille said the timing also plays a factor.

"Now you're getting to the second week of December and people who get Social Security checks, sometimes they can make it," Robitaille explained, "but by the middle of the month when their food stamps are gone, we see an uptick."

Last year, Danielle's House served 67 guests during the season. The shelter has room for eight individuals and is currently serving three male guests.

The protocol for entry, Rush said, has stayed the same. Guests are asked to make contact with the Department of Social Services before knocking on the shelter's door. If their need for shelter is after hours, arrangements can still be made.

"We contact the sheriff and the sheriff contacts the DSS [worker] on call and they screen the homeless guy or family just to make sure they're the right candidate for the house," Rush said.

From that point, the shelter supervisor — Rush — and the client work together to find a solution and help get them off the streets beyond the shelter.

"We have not had people come back through," Robitaille said. "We have case management and really our goal is to get you placed. Tyler's goal when you come in is to find out why are you homeless, what do you need to do to get housing. It's the client's job and Tyler's job to figure that out."

On top of waiting for clients to come in, Rush also scopes out the abandoned buildings and cemeteries — typical places to find homeless people in Amsterdam — Robitaille said.

"There's so many abandoned buildings around here and on this street alone, there's like 35," Rush said.

"So he leaves a brochure and some food and hopes people will try to get out of the cold," Robitaille added.

Bonetti said she's just glad to see the shelter working as well as she envisioned it.

"I think when you do something for the sake of others," Bonetti said, "God blesses us and it becomes something great."

To contact the shelter, call 842-3762.

Company buys company that bought out Quandt's

HOUSTON (AP) — One of the largest food supply companies is buying one of its key rivals, creating an even larger, global distribution company.

Sysco is buying privately held US Foods for about \$3.5 billion in cash and stock.

When the deal closes, Sysco expects the addition of US Foods to boost its annual sales by about 46 percent to around \$65 billion.

Sysco Corp. has a distribution center in Halfmoon and US Foods has an operation in Clifton Park, both in Saratoga County.

In October, US Foods purchased Quandt's Foodservice Distributors of Amsterdam, one of the region's last independent food service distributors.

Quandt's is scheduled to close its Amsterdam operation early next year.

At the time of the Quandt's announcement, the approximate 110 employees were told by US Foods representatives that employment options could exist for those willing to make the drive to the Clifton Park facility.

Sysco shares rose almost 10 percent Monday and hit their highest point in decades.

Houston's Sysco will pay \$3 billion in common stock and \$500 million in cash. It will also assume or refinance about \$4.7 billion in debt.

That puts the total value of the deal at about \$8.2 billion.

Sysco President and CEO Bill DeLaney said that the two companies have highly complementary core strengths including large product portfolios.

For the fiscal year that ended in June, Sysco's sales totaled \$44.41 billion.

It trucks food and cooking

supplies to about 425,000 customers through 193 locations in the U.S., Bahamas, Canada, Ireland and Northern Ireland.

US Foods' customers include independent and chain restaurants, health care and hospitality companies, and government and educational institutions.

Major stakeholders in the company, based just outside of Chicago, in Rosemont, Ill., include Clayton, Dubilier & Rice LLC and Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co. LP.

Representatives from both of those investment firms will join Sysco's board.

When the deal closes, US Foods shareholders will own about 87 million shares, or about 13 percent, of Sysco's common stock.

The buyout has been approved by the boards of both companies.

Sysco said it expects the deal, which is set to close in the third calendar quarter of 2014, to immediately boost its profit after adjusting for acquisition-related costs and expenses.

It's also expected to create annual cost savings of at least \$600 million after three or four years.

Moody's Investors Service placed all of Sysco's ratings, including its investment-grade "A1" long-term rating, under review for possible downgrade.

Moody's said that while the deal makes sense and the price seems fair, a downgrade is likely given the amount of debt Sysco will assume.

Sysco shares rose \$3.31, or 9.7 percent, to close at \$37.62. The stock peaked earlier Monday at \$43.40, its highest point since at least 1985.

It's up 19 percent this year.



Alissa Scott/Recorder staff

SALE PREP

Pastor Marian Kostyk and Domna Swidersky make pierogies for the St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church's annual Christmas bazaar, which takes place this Saturday on Pulaski Street in Amsterdam from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The annual event will feature a variety of Ukrainian food and art.

Jury finds Northville man guilty of assault

NORTHAMPTON — A 39-year-old Northville man was convicted by a jury Wednesday of third-degree assault for attacking an Edinburg man in April.

A jury found Donald R. Town III of 221 N. Third St. guilty of third-degree assault, a class A misdemeanor. He faces up to

a year in jail and a \$1,000 fine when he's sentenced Feb. 13, 2014.

Town was arrested in April after an altercation in his home when he tackled his victim, causing the man to suffer broken bones, facial lacerations, swelling and bruising.

The case was heard in

Northampton Town Court in front of town Justice John Farquhar. Fulton County Assistant District Attorney Amanda Nellis prosecuted the case. Town, who did not testify in the one-day trial, was represented by Public Defender Michael W. Albanese.

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