

# \$7,883 donation boosts soup kitchen



JESSE BAKER PHOTO

Bunny Perry, Tom Donovan, Ethel Jarvis and Jan Bunnell hold a hand-fashioned check to represent the \$7,883.90 authentic check that was presented to the soup kitchen Friday by Bunny Perry from the estate of Howard J. Elgar.

By KYLE JARVIS  
Staff Writer

The Claremont Soup Kitchen got some good news last week when Newport resident Bunny Perry told kitchen officials she would be donating nearly \$8,000 to the organization.

Perry, active for years in multiple social efforts in the community, said the money came from **Newport** "the residue of my brother's estate."

"We're old-time country people," she said of she and her brother, Howard Elgar, who passed away two years ago this April. "I think he'd be happy to know where his money was going."

According to Perry, Elgar wanted his money to be given to various organizations he'd been involved with over the course of his life.

"That's what I've tried to do," said Perry. "I gave some to the Lions Club to help with all of their wonderful work with vision and eyesight. Some went to the Newport Senior Center where I do a lot of work with Meals on Wheels. In all, I gave money to about 16 different organizations, mostly local, some national, like OxFam."

Her donation to the soup kitchen totals \$7,883.90.

"I've always wanted to make sure people have the basics," she said. "Food, shelter, clothes, those sorts of things.

I've been volunteering my time to the Newport food pantry for more than 10 years now, and now more than ever there's a need for helping people who can't make it."

Perry said she also donated a portion of the money to the Manchester food bank.

"They help out all the local pantries and kitchens so that was something I wanted to do also," she said.

Soup kitchen board president and state Rep. Tom Donovan, D-Claremont, was on hand Friday afternoon at the Newport food pantry to receive the donation from Perry, as was longtime soup kitchen director Jan Bunnell and board member and county commissioner Ethel Jarvis.

By early summer, the food kitchen hopes to be in its new home.

"We've signed a three-year lease with an option to buy," said Donovan. "Right now we're working with an architect and we're taking bids from contractors to get the place renovated."

The planning board approved the site plan for the kitchen's soon-to-be new location, the former Knights of Columbus building just down the street from its current location, the former convent building on St. Mary's campus.

"We're hoping to be in the new spot, if all goes smoothly, by early June," Donovan said.

See **DONATION** - Page A8

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**DONATION** FROM PAGE A1

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Perry said there are no restrictions on the donation and that the kitchen "can use it for whatever they need."

The kitchen will use this donation to kick off a capital fundraising campaign, for which it will send letters to all of its previous donors to ask them if they'll donate again.

"Fortunately, a number of people have stepped up already," said Donovan. "Thank God for people like Bunny."

After 25 years in Claremont, all in the con-

vent building, St. Mary's began asking the kitchen to vacate the building three or four years ago based on the parish's desire to demolish the building.

Elgar, who was living in Manchester at the time of his death, was born in Hillsborough and spent many years of his life in the Upper Valley area, mostly spent working on various farms.

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PG 2 of 2