

Stokeys donate office building worth \$100,000 to local telethon

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The Rainbow Connection of Tuscarawas County is getting a new office thanks to the generosity of Sue and Mike Stokey of Dover, longtime supporters of the agency. Accepting the gift were (from left) Rick Pipes, board president; Carmel Haueter, executive director; and board member Brad Zimmerman, far right. The Stokeys are in the middle of the photo.

The Rainbow Connection this spring will move its corporate office from a rental facility on S. Wooster Avenue to a rent-free house in New Philadelphia, thanks to the generosity of a Dover couple.

The house, located at 119 Third St. NW, was donated free of charge by Mike and Sue Stokey of Dover. Mike Stokey is executive vice president of Allied Machine & Engineering Corp. of Dover, a long-time corporate sponsor of the Rainbow Connection telethon.

Carmel Haueter, executive director of the Rainbow Connection — formally known as the Tuscarawas County Society for Children and Adults Inc. — was delighted.

“It’s a great place,” Haueter said of the house. “It will be wonderful, especially come telethon time.”

The Rainbow Connection telethon, held Sunday, raised a record \$200,000 in cash and pledges.

Haueter noted that the Rainbow Connection’s current office in Dover is small and lacks storage areas. The building in New Philadelphia, on the other hand, is a two-story, brick structure with five bedrooms and two baths.

The Rainbow Connection took possession of the house in late December, and Haueter said one room is already on its way to being filled. She said the remaining bedrooms also will be used for storage, and to bring everything together under one roof.

Before the agency can complete its move, however, Haueter said renovations to upgrade technological capabilities have to be made, and she will be looking to local foundations for financial assistance.

Rainbow Connection funds from the telethon must be used to assist disadvantaged and disabled county residents.

Stokey said he and his wife had owned the New Philadelphia house for about two years. It previously was used as an office and apartment building.

“My wife and I decided it would go to a better use if we donated it to the Rainbow Connection,” he said.

Stokey, who estimates the house is worth about \$100,000, said they began talking to Haueter in late October and made the donation in December.

“We just decided it would be a lot better knowing that something good came out of it,” Stokey said.