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Blue Ridge Chapter of Dream Come True forms

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A new chapter of Dream Come True to serve the local area was officially formed Monday, when Kostas Kalogeropoulos, a Lehigh Valley businessman and founder of Dream Come True, and Eileen Thompson, president of the Blue Ridge Chapter of Dream Come True, signed a charter surrounded by the newly formed board. The signing was held at Pencor corporate office in Palmerton.

Dream Come True is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization, which seeks to fulfill dreams of seriously and terminally ill children in the greater Lehigh Valley.

'My dream is to grow this organization by establishing chapters that will be able to fulfill dreams of children in their local areas,' said Kalogeropoulos.

Dream Come True was established in 1984 and has been fulfilling about 50 dreams a year.

'We currently have 15 children in the local area awaiting dreams,' said Thompson. 'We look forward to the support of the communities involved to help in our fund-raising efforts so that no qualified child will be denied a dream.'

Many of the volunteers of the newly formed Blue Ridge Chapter have been involved with Dream Come True since 1985. The group has now accepted the challenge of raising funds and fulfilling dreams.

The Blue Ridge Chapter has established a Board of Directors and elected officers, with Thompson as president; Fred Reinhard, president of Pencor Services and executive vice president of the new chapter; Nick Hawkey, vice president; Michael Harleman, treasurer; Carl Litwin, assistant treasurer; Timothy Radler, secretary; Harriet Visnosky, corresponding secretary; and David Masenheimer, legal counsel. Other members of the board of directors are Dr. Ed Miller, Kay Nalesnik, Gail Maholick, Frank Stanek and Jaime Mendes.

The Blue Ridge Chapter will serve areas of Carbon County, Eastern Schuylkill County (McAdoo, Kline, Rush and West Penn townships; and boroughs of Tamaqua and Coaldale), Northern Lehigh County (Washington Township and Borough of Slatington), Western Monroe County (Polk, Chestnut Hill, Eldred, Hamilton and Ross townships). There is also a chapter in western Connecticut, serving Fairfield, Litchfield and New Haven counties.

Thompson noted that upcoming fundraisers include the Second Annual Tech-Net sponsored Comedy Night to be held at Penn's Peak on May 8. Portions of the proceeds will be donated to Dream Come True.

A new event to this area for the benefit of Dream Come True is PaddleFEST to be held at Mauch Chunk Lake, Jim Thorpe, on Sunday, May 2. Gail Maholick has spent many volunteer hours organizing this event.

There are more events in the early planning stages, which will be advertised as plans are finalized.

Seriously, chronically and terminally ill children, between the ages of 4 and 18, are eligible for dreams. The children are usually referred by family, friends, clergy, doctors and social workers. Anyone who knows a child who may qualify, may refer them by sending a letter to Dream Come True, Blue Ridge Chapter, P.O. Box 344, Palmerton, Pa. 18971, or for children residing in the Lehigh Valley area, send referrals to Dream Come True, P.O. Box 21167, Lehigh Valley, Pa. 18002.