Angels' Place
Nurturing Two Generations

CRIB NOTES

Winter 2026 ❄ Issue #162

Mission: Angels' Place, Inc. provides exceptional family support and quality early childhood education to help parents in need and their children become lifelong learners and create a brighter future.

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DEAR FRIENDS,

While the calendar officially flipped to 2026, we are still feeling the "glow" of everything you helped us achieve last year. We trust everyone's new year is off to a strong start with an array of exciting possibilities presenting hope for the new year.

Time with the children is always captivating and their discoveries about their world fascinating. Recently our children learned a life lesson regarding illness and the fragility of life. While caring for our resident pet we were confronted with a roller coaster of emotions buoyed by the silver lining in even the toughest hurdles.

As I often do in such poignant moments, I am inclined to share the story that highlights the value of life along with the impact of the community that you help build. The tale begins with our good friends from PNC Grow Up Great adopting and sponsoring Penelope so that our children can experience caring for a pet.

Our dear beloved chinchilla Penelope, affectionately known as Miss P., has had a tummy ache since before Thanksgiving affecting her appetite and overall wellbeing. She is a cherished part of our Angels' place family and known for her friendly nature toward everyone who has the pleasure of meeting her. We were concerned about her health, and a kindhearted veterinarian came to our rescue, overseeing her healing and recovery. Dr. Angie is a dedicated "chin" advocate and has generously provided her checkups, medication and supplemental food items. Our team supplies love and support in the disguise of a daily "treat-ment" program. We are focused on building the pep back in Penelope's step by giving the superfood and restorative meds needed. Although she is sometimes an unwilling participant, Penelope needs this regimen to survive. The "Morning Recharge" provides Miss P. with nutrients and energy for the day.

(Good morning Penelope!)

The first ones to arrive in the morning, I begin the feeding ritual with one of our Pre-K friends. Paige and I work closely together to provide Miss P.'s medication and prepare her supplemental food. As we work together every day, I have watched Paige graduate from an inquisitive observer to a knowledgeable, caring and capable assistant. Satisfying her thirst for knowledge, she has collected a great deal of information. I notice that once she memorizes the steps to a particular task, she is ready and willing to test her skills. Paige can measure, mix the supplemental food and fill the plastic feeding syringe. With the gentle assistance of another adult, we use a comforting swaddle to help Miss P. feel secure and prepare for a successful feeding time. As Paige supervises, she affectionately calls Miss P. "Cheeky" as she spits out her food or turns away.

The completion of the process calls for triumphant "pawsitive" high five moments. We chart her daily food intake and elimination – the more the better! The results of her feeding regimen show promising progress. True to the Angels' Place mission we value all life and are committed to ensuring that needs are met.

Having pets in our Early Childhood program enhances childrens' educational experience through hands-on interaction with living creatures. Children learn that pets depend on us for food, care and love, and they can participate in daily tasks like feeding and cleaning. Through these small tasks children learn different skills in a real-world setting such as:

- **Demonstrating commitment**
- **Fostering empathy and compassion**
- **Communicating with peers and teachers**
- **Advancing science and math concepts**
- **Building literacy skills**

Offering children different experiences cultivate continuous learning which was evident in our outcomes. Due to our stellar programming, at the completion of last year, Pre-K graduates mastered 95% of the skills needed for success in kindergarten. Overall, enrolled children met 91% of age-appropriate developmental milestones. Of those children, 61% exceeded skill level or reached advanced skill levels.

Ultimately, with your support, Angels' Place empowers parents and children on their quest to live life to the fullest. Quality has been our guiding light for 40 years, a path we've been honored to walk with truly great people. We are grateful for your presence in our story. Sending our warmest wishes for a Spring that bursts with the energy of nature's rebirth**.**

Warmly,

Beth E. Banas
Executive Director

HONOR ROLL 2025

This issue of Crib Notes is dedicated to recognizing the friends who kindly donated to support our centers in 2025. This installment is our way of proclaiming our sincere and heartfelt appreciation to the generous people who make Angels' Place a reality. It means a great deal to us that you help our children and their student parents complete their education and achieve their life goals. Each gift you share throughout the year is a message of encouragement to the families enrolled, and we hope you feel blessed by the impact of your contributions.

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(Hello, Angels' Place.)

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(Falling is fun too!)

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(Families enjoying the Christmas feast.)

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(I'll help your baby feel better.)

All of us at Angels' Place continue to be grateful for the donations dropped off of clothes, toys and wish list items. These donations put supplies into our programs so we can continue offering free services to children and families. While we wish to be all inclusive in our appreciation there always exists a margin of error. Please accept our apologies if we have inadvertently overlooked any gesture of kindness and know that you are valued.

WORKPLACE GIVING

LIVE UNITED United Way

Support Angels' Place through **United Way's Contributor Choice** program. Designate your contribution to Angels' Place by using code **#1200** *North Side* or **#3977** *Swissvale*.

Many other businesses encourage giving through **America's Charities** (**EIN #: 25-1450489**).

Federal employees can give through the **Combined Federal Campaign**, for which the Angels' Place code is **#44139**. The code for the **State Employees' Combined Appeal** is **#5000-0017**.

COMMUNITY PARTNER: ANGELA B. KEFFER, VMD

Angels' Place is proud to highlight our partnership with Dr. Angela B. Keffer, VMD, who is a veterinarian at Robinson Animal Hospital. A 2002 graduate of the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Keffer has over 20 years of animal care experience both as a technician and veterinarian. She is also a consultant for the Butler County Humane Society Board of Directors. Enjoying all fields of veterinary care, she has a special interest in rodents and rabbits as well as the field of flexible endoscopy.

Dr. Angie is a proud member of the Robinson Animal Hospital's team. The state-of-the-art medical care provided at the hospital nurtures the belief of the human-animal bond and creates a harmonious relationship between people and animals. Recently, we visited Robinson Animal Hospital with our pet chinchilla, Penelope, where we were warmly greeted by the friendly and compassionate staff in a waiting room that was both comfortable and inviting. Everyone working there treated each pet as their own, providing them with loving attention and care. Collectively, they are a group of highly trained, experienced animal lovers who are devoted to giving their patients the best care possible, which has led to them being well respected in the veterinary community.

Dr. Angie has a special fondness for chinchillas. In her spare time, Dr. Angie passionately shared, "My husband and I and have owned chinchillas for over 25 years and we have been breeding these wonderful animals for approximately 20 years." She has been involved in multiple research projects involving chinchillas throughout her years in veterinary school and continues to receive the newest research results from her colleagues at her former universities. She has learned a great deal about these loveable creatures in recent years and will continue to learn as much as she can in the future. In addition to her love for chinchillas, she also enjoys spending time with her dogs, Brielle, Buffy Summers, Cecilia, Darla, Penelope, Leela, and Spike.

(A visit from the zoo.)

(We met an armadillo!)

(Thank you for the gift Santa.)

(Three generations give thanks.)

Dr. Angie has been Penelope's veterinarian since she was born, and she continues to be a source of support while we navigate Penelope's special needs. We as well as many others appreciate the kind and empathetic approach taken by Dr. Angie and everyone at Robinson Animal Hospital in caring for animals as referenced by a client quote, "The vets and support staff are fantastic. So kind, compassionate, and thorough. Dr. Angie Keffer in particular is simply top-notch. I will always recommend them to pet parents." Angels' Place would like to thank Dr. Angie and Robinson Animal Hospital for their devotion to Penelope and all the other animals they serve in our communities.

(Dr. Angie enjoying time with her dogs.)

Robinson Animal Hospital AAHA

ADOPT AN ANGEL: #GIVEANANGELWINGS

MAKE A DIFFERENCE! Join our Adopt an Angel monthly giving program. You are symbolically empowering our little angels and their parents to reach their full potential. Commit today and give an angel wings! Following your first donation, you'll receive a Welcome Package, monthly acknowledgments and updates. If applicable, it is time to renew your monthly giving campaign. Giving levels include:

Friend	Supporter	Champion	Advocate	Guardian
$10 Monthly	$25 Monthly	$50 Monthly	$100 Monthly	$250 Monthly

ADOPT AN ANGEL

I PLEDGE TO HELP CHILDREN & PARENTS GROW.

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

I / WE WANT TO BE A:

☐ Friend	☐ Supporter	☐ Champion	☐ Advocate	☐ Guardian
$10/mo	$25/mo	$50/mo	$100/mo	$250/mo

Visa / MasterCard / AMEX #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Your contribution is tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

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(Good fellowship and fun.)

(Our PNC friends surprised us for the holidays.)

(Snow angels at Angels' Place.)

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: BETH SMALLWOOD

(Beth, her husband and four children.)

What brought you to Angels' Place?

Angels' Place came to me while I was growing up through my mom's involvement in the pro-life movement. She helped many babies make it into this world but then saw a need to assist those parents further after the babies were born. It has been amazing, watching first-hand her vision come to fruition. I was 12 years old when the first house opened and words cannot express how deeply grateful I am to all the supporters who helped keep the doors open more than 40 years later!

What are some goals you have accomplished and hope to accomplish as a Board Member?

It has been humbling to experience a behind-the-scenes perspective as a Board member. Continuing my mom's mission and working beside the people who I've always put on a pedestal is an honor. Our Board, some who have been with my mom since the beginning and others who have joined the cause to keep Angels' Place going, inspire me as they remain loyal and dedicated to the mission. After every meeting I feel overwhelmingly appreciative that Angels' Place continues to thrive and provides a solid, safe environment that is based on the original values. While we remain mission focused, we have grown along with society's ever-changing needs, providing essential services for parents and their children.

What do you feel is most unique or special about Angels' Place?

I feel Angels' Place is unique and special due to their specific comprehensive and compassionate approach of helping single parents continue their education and achieve absolutely amazing things. They are making a difference in their communities, families and workplace! Hearing their inspiring stories firsthand has always been my absolute favorite and most satisfying part of the fall dinners. Angels' Place has been life-changing for hundreds of adults and children and has truly transformed our little corner of the world!

Who is Beth outside the role of Angels' Place?

I am a wife and proud mom of four. I am also a Reading Specialist for the IU2 of Pittsburgh. I enjoy my friend's cabin in the winter and our family's cottage in the summer, where I love spending time outdoors and unplugging with family and friends, especially while doing things like fishing, snowmobiling, swimming, boating and basking in the sun.

Beth and her mom, Mary, founder of Angels' Place.

Any special family memories?

One of my earliest memories is getting tangled up in the cord of our family's landline phone while my mom was getting dinner ready in the kitchen. Since then, some of my favorite family memories have been our annual vacations and the holidays spent together with my sister Suzy's family.

(Look at us, we can put on our own gloves independently.)

(Good friends celebrate together at Moonlite Cafe.)

Join Angels' Place, Inc. for a...

BENEFIT DINNER!

Tuesday, March 10, 2026
6:00 PM
229 S Highland Ave.

Angels' Place | CASBAH

CASBAH will host an elegant four course meal with wine pairings to benefit Angels' Place and our mission.

Cost per person is $150 including gratuity.

All proceeds go to Angels' Place!

(Oh my goodness I hear bells...)

(Friends building blocks together.)

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(Pittsburgh Cultural Trust visits.)

(We cherish babies.)

(Celebrations are wonderful Angels' Place traditions.)

(Learning how animals stay warm in cold water.)

(Thanks for the present Santy Claus.)

(Even teachers have fun.)

(One moment please.)

Angels' Place
Nurturing Two Generations

NORTH SIDE

2615 Norwood Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15214
412.321.4447

SWISSVALE

2538 Woodstock Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15218
412.271.2229

info@angelsplacepgh.org
www.angelsplacepgh.org

WISH LISTS

North Side

- Birthday Candles
- Crackers
- Dish Soap
- Dishwasher Pods or Liquid
- Disposable Gloves
- Dixie Cups
- Dried Fruits
- Fresh Fruit (Apples, Oranges, Bananas)
- Hand Soap
- Jelly
- Ketchup
- Large Trash Bags (30 Gal)
- Napkins
- Parmesan Cheese
- Pasta Sauce
- Plastic Spray Bottles
- Postage Stamps
- Ranch Dressing
- Sidewalk Salt
- Sponges
- Sryup
- Tall Kitchen Trash Bags (13 Gal)
- White Copy Paper (8.5"X 11")

(Here we go Steelers!)

Swissvale

- 100% Fruit Juice
- 39 Gal Trash Bags
- All Purpose Cleaners
- Bagels
- Boxed Cakes and Icing
- Cascade Liquid
- Dishwasher Soap
- Chalkboard Markers
- Cream Cheese
- Crunchy Peanut Butter
- Dessert Size Paper Plates
- Dixie Cups
- Dried Fruits
- English Muffins
- Fig Newtons
- Fresh Fruit (oranges, apples, bananas)
- Fruit Snacks
- Graham Crackers
- Honey Nut Cheerios
- Ketchup
- Kix Cereal
- Life Cereal
- Magnesium Chloride-Safe Ice and Snow Melt
- Mops
- Nutella
- Paper Napkins
- Paper Towels
- Pepper
- Pepperoni
- Postage Stamps
- Rice Cakes (Carmel or Cheese)
- Scrub Brushes
- Sprinkle Parmesan Cheese
- Sun Chips
- Tall Kitchen Trash Bags (13 Gal)
- Toilet Bowl Brushes
- Vanilla Wafers
- Wheat Thins
- White Copy Paper (8.5"X 11")
- Whole Grain Ritz Crackers

100% Tax Deductible

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