

Homeless get help

Roxanne Turnbull

The fourth annual Project Homeless Connect took place Jan. 24 at the Hillsdale Free Methodist Church. The event lets agencies and organizations reach out to the homeless or those in danger of becoming homeless. Each organization addresses a major issue facing the homeless, including food, drug, and alcohol abuse; employment; and housing.

The event makes finding the different organizations easier for those who are homeless because they can gather all the information they need in one day as opposed to a few weeks. Two hundred sixty two people showed up to the event coordinated jointly by the Hillsdale County Community Foundation and the Community Action Agency.

Attendees were given flu vaccinations, coats donated by the Salvation Army, and haircuts offered by local hair stylists. Care packages, a meal, and free family photographs were also offered. Amber Yoder, communications officer of HCCF, said many Hillsdale residents don't understand how wide-- spread homelessness is in the county. "I think the event is most important because people don't think homelessness is a problem here," Yoder said. "It is an issue."

The event would not have been possible without the help of the many volunteers who dedicated their time to the project, she said. Organizations that volunteered included Saga, Inc.; the Salvation Army; and the Pittsford High School National Honor Society. McKinney-Vento provided most of the funds.