

HELPING OTHERS

Foundation for Pops opens location in Melvindale

Nonprofit honors a legacy of service and compassion

By Susan Thwing
For MediaNews Group

What began as a tribute to a beloved grandfather has grown into a vital lifeline for veterans, families, and individuals experiencing homelessness across Wayne County.

The Foundation for Pops, a nonprofit organization named in honor of Vietnam veteran Lloyd “Pops” Matthews, officially opened its permanent location at 17500 Dix Road in Melvindale on April 24 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by local officials, community members and supporters.

Founded by DQS Solutions & Staffing CEO Josh Morris in memory of his grandfather, Pops, the foundation embodies the values of compassion, resilience and second chances.

“This new space is more than just an office; it serves as a hub for transformation, housing stabilization, and empowerment,” said Morris during the event. “Foundation for Pops is committed to helping individuals and families navigate their journeys toward stable housing, meaningful employment and long-term success.”

For Executive Director Lakesha Hancock, the new location represents more than bricks and mortar—it’s a beacon of hope.

“Our presence in the community will represent hope, resilience, and a renewed commitment to building pathways to economic mobility and housing stability,” she said. “For those who are hopeless, who don’t have a hand up—we are that hand.”

Though the office is located in Melvindale, the organization’s reach spans all of Wayne County, with a particular focus on the Downriver community, where the need for housing and economic support is especially urgent. Services offered include workforce



Lakesha Hancock

development programs, transportation assistance, emergency shelter, and Pops’ Closet—a resource room filled with clothing, toiletries, and essentials for individuals preparing for job interviews or transitioning into stable housing.

The daily mission of the foundation is rooted in Pops’ own story. After returning home from Vietnam, Lloyd Matthews faced immense challenges including substance abuse, unemployment, and periods of homelessness.

“You know, there were so many things that Pops needed that would’ve afforded him the opportunity to have a sustainable and enjoyable quality of life,” Hancock said. “What drives us is the belief that if the resources we now provide had been available for him, his story could’ve been rewritten.”

One of the foundation’s most moving recent success stories involves a single father and veteran with a prosthetic leg who reached out for help while living in his vehicle with his three children. The Foundation for Pops immediately provided emergency shelter, food and employment assistance.

“Although he has a prosthetic leg, he can work,” said Hancock. “They are on the path to total wellness. We are helping him save money, and by June, they’ll be moving into permanent housing—with our support covering the first year of stability.”

That type of life-changing assistance is sustained almost entirely through community support.

“We don’t currently have a grant helping us house these people—



PHOTO COURTESY OF FOUNDATION FOR POPS

Foundation for Pops assists veterans, families and the homeless in Wayne County.

we are doing this with funds we’ve raised,” Hancock explained. “We’re actively housing three families right now, and we pay about \$400 a week to make that possible.”

Community members can help in several meaningful ways: through monetary donations that go directly toward housing those in need; by volunteering at upcoming events like the 2nd Annual Swing for Change Charity Golf Outing on June 20 at Lakes of Taylor Golf Club; and by contributing to Pops’ Closet with much-needed items such as shoes, toothbrushes, toothpaste and personal hygiene products.

“This work is about so much more than getting people a stable place to live,” Hancock said. “Our pillars of total wellness—financial solvency, access to housing and benefits, and workforce development—give people a real path forward.”

The new Melvindale location also hosts life-skills classes and professional workshops, reinforcing



PHOTO COURTESY OF FOUNDATION FOR POPS

Executive Director of the Foundation for Pops Lakesha Hancock, CEO of DQS Josh Morris,, and Melvindale Mayor Nicole Shkira were on hand for the new location’s ribbon cutting.

the organization’s commitment to long-term solutions. A key goal is to acquire a 15-passenger van to expand transportation assistance, further reducing barriers to employment and services.

As the Foundation for Pops continues to grow, the spirit of Lloyd “Pops” Matthews remains at its heart. His memory fuels every outreach effort, every family housed and every job found.

“Foundation for Pops is the legacy he deserved,” said Hancock. “It’s the future he never had—but we can make sure others do.”

To learn more, donate, or volunteer, visit foundationforpops.org.

REGION

Motor City Radio Club joins Amateur Radio Field Day June 28-29

Event demonstrates science, skill and service

By The News Herald
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The Motor City Radio Club is participating in the national Amateur Radio Field Day exercise on Saturday, June 28 and Sunday, June 29 at Riverview Young Patriot Park, 14300 Sibley Road, west of Fort Street.

Field Day is the core of emergency preparedness for amateur radio. It is a simulation of a situation where all circuits are down, a tornado or other natural disaster has occurred. As if there are no utilities and power.

“What we use is generators,” said club member Bruce Menning. “We run our radio equipment off emergency power, and communicate with other ham radio operators across North America, also running emergency power.”

Since 1933, ham radio operators across North America have established temporary ham radio stations in public locations during Field Day to showcase the science and skill of Amateur Radio. This event is open to the public and all are en-

couraged to attend. For over 100 years, Amateur Radio—sometimes called ham radio—has allowed people from all walks of life to experiment with electronics and communications techniques, as well as provide a free public service to their communities during a disaster, all without needing a cell phone or the internet. Field Day demonstrates ham radio’s ability to work reliably under any conditions from almost any location and create an independent communications network. Over 35,000 people from thousands of locations participated in Field Day in 2024.

The Motor City Radio Club was founded in 1932 by local amateur radio operators and has over 120 members from the metro area. Using Amateur radio, hams can communicate not only down the street, but around the world, sometimes using less power than a flashlight. Hams can literally throw a wire in a tree for an antenna, connect it to a battery-powered transmitter and communicate halfway around the world. Hams do this by

using a layer of Earth’s atmosphere as a sort of mirror for radio waves. Members of the club train each year as official weather spotters, and report tornadoes and severe weather to the National Weather Service. Some members communicate with other hams by bouncing signals off the moon, using satellites in space and communicating with astronauts on the International Space Station.

The term “ham radio” goes back to the early days of the hobby, before World War I. No one knows for sure just how this term came to refer to amateur radio operators.

“It’s easy for anyone to pick up a computer or smart phone, connect to the Internet and communicate, with no knowledge of how the devices function or connect to each other,” said Sean Kutzko of the American Radio Relay League, the national association for amateur radio. “But if there’s an interruption of service or you’re out of range of a cell tower, you have no way to communicate.

“Ham radio functions completely independent of



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MOTOR CITY RADIO CLUB

Taylor resident John Czaplowski holds a VHF/UHF antenna that can be used to contact low Earth-orbiting satellites.

the internet or cell phone infrastructure, can interface with tablets or smart phones, and can be set up almost anywhere in minutes. That’s the beauty of amateur radio during a communications outage.”

In today’s electronic do-it-yourself environment, ham radio teaches about electronics, physics, meteorology, and numerous other scientific disciplines, and can be an asset to a community during disasters if the standard communi-

cation infrastructure goes down. Anyone may become a licensed Amateur Radio operator. There are over 725,000 licensed hams in the United States, some as young as five years old.

Setup for this year’s Field Day is Friday, June 27, starting at 2 p.m. The club will be setting up antennas, the radio equipment, and temporary shelter. Communications with other hams will run 24 hours from 2 p.m. Saturday to 2 p.m. Sunday. All are welcome to visit.

Ham radio license exams will be available at the Field Day site on Saturday morning at 10 a.m. Pre-registration is required. The Motor City Radio Club meets at 7 p.m. the second Thursday of every month (except February and August) at the Wayne County Community College in Taylor. For more information or to register for licensing, visit w8mrm.net/education

—Submitted by the Motor City Radio Club