

Youth center offers more than just activities

By Lauren Moyer

It is more than just a building, "it is the heart of the community."

So says Denise Kuritz, co-president of the Huntington Valley Youth Center.

Built 10 years ago, the Huntington Valley Youth Center is busier than ever with different community-based groups holding meetings and gatherings, thus making the youth center more of a community center.

Everything from churches to Boy Scouts to swimming teams meet and fill the youth center almost every night.

The center does not charge any group or individual for the use of the building, but does ask for donations.

Due to the large number of meetings, it is important to call in advance if anyone is interest-

ed in scheduling an assembly time.

The youth center, newly painted and furnished, also offers a special after-school program for children grades four through six.

Thursday and Friday after school has been let out, the children are taken to the youth center to enjoy several hours of games, food and fun.

With a '50s theme, the rooms are decorated with pin-ball machines, large leather couches and big-screen televisions.

"It is an opportunity for them to hang out with their friends and have a great time," Kuritz said. "You can see the smiles on their faces as they come in. It's the end of the week, the end of school. They get to relax and let go of some of the stress from the week."

Each year is also filled with

many different special events for the children.

Large-scale Halloween, Valentine's Day, winter and summer parties are held and all are welcome to attend.

Located below the Huntington Valley Library on Red Lion Road in Lower Moreland, the youth center also participates in charity events.

Each Christmas, the children and parents are asked to bring in presents for those involved with Child Abuse Prevention Efforts. About 100 or more gifts are collected for others in need each year.

Sherrie Turetsky, program director for the Parenting Center of Lower Moreland, has been using the youth center for five years as a meeting place for the organization, and said she believes the youth center to be a positive place for the community.

"I think it's a great place for the children and organizations to gather," Turetsky said. "It's warm and friendly, it is centrally located in the community, and it provides a wide variety of opportunities for both children and families."

Kuritz said she believes the youth center makes the community exceptional to any others.

Turetsky said she believes the youth center to also be of help to the parents as well as the children.

"Raising kids today is tough enough, but the youth center gives parents a base to connect with others like themselves," Turetsky said.

Though the center has been experiencing great success, it is in need of several volunteers.

For more information, call 215-947-7694.