

***God is Good!***

The outreach depot continues to be a blessing to our neighbors in the Lehigh Valley and to needy people all over the world.

We get 5-7 phone calls every day. Every other call is a donor wanting to support our ministry. Others are case workers asking for appointments for their clients. Often we almost are overwhelmed by requests to pick up donations, but fortunately we have a few dedicated volunteers who work very hard to keep things flowing in and out of the depot (and we could always use some extra hands). Every week we get dozens of chairs, tables, TV's, dressers, etc. added to our inventory. You'd think we'd run out of space, but in fact, we find these things go out just as fast as they come in. Since we first opened our doors last April, we've given away more than \$30,000 worth of furniture to more than 150 needy families.

***More Generous Benefactors!***

**Hannabery HVAC**

A few months ago we were concerned about keeping the depot warm during the winter months. We asked several heating contractors to give us estimates to fix an old oil-fired heating system. One contractor, Hannabery HVAC in Quakertown (whose motto is "the company that cares"), came up with a practical (and affordable) solution. They

donated a new 80,000 BTU propane furnace and, bless their hearts, asked us to pay only a fraction of the cost of installing the furnace!

**Shari Noctor—RE/MAX**



Last month we decided to join the Lehigh Valley Association of Volunteer Organizations. Through that organization we discovered Shari Noctor whose Re-Max office has a truck available for use by charitable organizations in the Lehigh Valley! Already we've used the truck to pick up donations from nearly a dozen donors and only had to pay the cost of gas.

**The Fairfield Inn**

Recently the Fairfield Inn (off Airport Road) installed new flat screen television sets. They contacted New Bethany Ministries to see if they could use the old TV sets. New Bethany referred



them to us. Since many of our guests have asked for used TVs, we gladly accepted nearly 40 serviceable TVs.

### ***Disaster Relief Kits***

Since opening our doors, Barbara Reimers and her dedicated group of volunteers have assembled and verified thousands of disaster relief kits. Every so often we organize a convoy of vans to deliver the kits to Mission Central in Mechanicsburg where they are then distributed all over the world. Because



we've had so many volunteers willing to assemble these kits, we find our inventory of kit supplies has shrunk to the point where we won't be able to continue this ministry unless we get more donations of kit components (or even dollars to purchase those components). What we desperately need are receiving blankets, soap, fingernail clippers, combs, 1 gallon plastic bags, washcloths, hand towels, toothbrushes, latex gloves and standard bandaids.

### ***Creative Donations***

Something we encourage everyone to do is to be creative on behalf of the depot. When you visit your dentist, con-

sider asking your dentist to donate toothbrushes and latex gloves.

When you visit your doctor, ask for donations of standard bandaids and latex gloves.

When you're travelling and stay overnight at a hotel or motel, consider bringing home the complementary shampoos, soaps and lotions and donate those items to the depot.

### ***Christmas Shopping***

We've recently added a link on our web site to [iGive.com](http://iGive.com) to raise money for the depot. By using this link you can shop online at any of their 833 participating stores. And when you search the web through [iSearchiGive.com](http://iSearchiGive.com) (a search engine powered by iGive!), you raise a penny or more for the depot every time.

If you should happen to make a purchase through iGive within 45 days of joining, they'll donate an EXTRA \$5 to the depot! With 833 stores in the iGive Mall and the [iSearchiGive.com](http://iSearchiGive.com) search engine, it's easy to find the things you need AND raise money for the depot.

We hope you'll consider using this resource to help us raise money (at no cost to you) to support the depot.

The money raised will be used to pay for utilities, office supplies, kit supplies and other operating expenses. In fact, you can set up your account to receive credit for your charitable donation! Give it a try!

### ***Six months and Counting!***

Some eyes were not only opened, but surprised, a few weeks ago when the Depot opened its doors to Wesley Church's family. They got to see exactly what has been going on and heard how guests are handled and processed when coming to our disaster relief warehouse. They even got to eat lunch at a table that was waiting for a home of someone less fortunate.

The Depot has now been open for six months, but we're already 8 months into our lease! When we signed the lease on March 1st, our landlord agreed to let us use the space for one year at no cost (except for utilities). We said we'd like a year trial period to see if this mission could be successful, after which time we would either 1) close the depot, 2) start compensating the owner for use of the space, or 3) move everything to another location.

### ***You've Heard of the Bartering System! Here's Our Opportunity to Barter!***

Our landlord has seen and been impressed by the willingness of our many volunteers to roll up their sleeves and actively support this ministry. He suggests we might want to apply some of that energy in trade for what he would otherwise charge for rent beginning next March. He's provided a list of tasks that, if we were to complete them using volunteers, he would not have to contract for them and would thus be able to give us a credit for those costs.

The list of tasks includes:

1. Grass cutting
2. Handyman support
  - Replacing ceiling tiles
  - Replacing light bulbs
  - Fixing downspouts
  - Minor plumbing
  - Property cleanup
3. Roof work
4. Office cleaning

We'll be getting more details about each of these tasks in the near future, but each seems to be something that could be done by various people with skills in those areas. That, of course, depends on getting volunteers to step forward.

Any of the tasks could be started at any time, but we'd like to get volunteers in place by the first of the year. If you find yourself are able to help and are willing to commit to working on any of these projects, please Carol Totten or Susan Maticavage, our volunteer coordinators.



***Roof work***

The biggest and most pressing item on the list is the roof work. This should be completed before winter sets in. This task consists of removing and replacing a dozen sections of rotted plywood over the building's loading dock. This work needs to be done as soon as possible to prevent further damage. If you have experience in roofing and find that you can help with this project, please contact Bob Totten.

***Testimony from a Guest!***

*"Friendly, caring staff...A blessing to my family...Everything looks brand new...A lot of things to choose from...Thank you for your kindness...God bless you all"*

***Latest Status on How We're Doing!***

Since opening six months ago, we've been able to touch the lives of 110 families referred by local churches, social service organizations and case workers.

Using Salvation Army donation figures, we continue to track the value of items going to our guests. God has really helped us reach out. We've distributed \$20,000 worth of furniture and household goods since we opened in April.

We also track hours donated by our army of volunteers. At this point we've been blessed with 1,700 volunteer hours!

***Disaster Relief Kits***

Since opening our doors, Barbara Reimers and her dedicated group of volunteers have assembled and verified

more than \$30,000 worth of disaster relief kits.

***"The Hands and Feet of God" can continue with Your Help !***

We all know the power of prayer. The LVOD needs your prayers. As with any business or operation, we are not without challenges. Having a faith family of support can get us through any situation. We would like to hear your ideas and suggestions to help us make this ministry vibrant and growing.

If your neighbor is having a garage sale, let them know there is a place they can donate those items that are left behind.

We also need:

- 1) Furniture (dressers, beds, tables & chairs, mattresses, beds, etc.).
- 2) A panel truck or van to pick up donations. The truck or van could be a loaner, made available on a regular schedule or a used donated vehicle.
- 3) Volunteers to help staff the depot. You can volunteer for 1, 2 or 3 hours a month. We're open from 9 to 3 every Tuesday and Saturday. If you are willing to make a commitment, contact Sue Matakavage or Carol Totten.
- 4) Service volunteers to help offset the cost of leasing the facility in 2011.
- 5) Tax-free monetary donations are NEVER turned down. Donations have allowed us to sustain our costs for utilities, relief kit supplies, office supplies and general operating costs. Donations are always needed and very much appreciated.

### ***A Work in Progress!***

The Lehigh Valley Outreach Depot continues to be an exciting work in progress. God has provided creative new opportunities to assist our neighbors in the Lehigh Valley as well as those suffering from the effects of natural disasters all over the world.

### ***An Army of Volunteers!***

This ministry is staffed entirely by volunteers and we continue to meet caring, active and committed case-workers who refer and bring needy families to our warehouse. Calls come in from generous donors wanting to contribute furniture, house wares, small appliances and their time for volunteering. For those unable to deliver their donations, we try to arrange the necessary transportation and manpower to these treasures. Many of our volunteers have full time jobs but offer their help whenever they can.

Not surprising, God has his own way of creating new “God Moments” for us to experience. In a recent case, a couple arrived at the depot saying they wanted to deliver some items to the depot. We’re used to such visits, but this one was different! Apparently this couple had been wondering what they could do to help our ministry. They opened the morning paper and found that Boscov’s was having a clearance sale on a variety of useful items. They went to the store and bought hundreds of dollars worth of

items – toaster ovens, coffee makers, vacuums, electric grills, pots & pans, sheets, towels and other items!

We were awed by this act of generosity - but not surprised – God is always there renewing our faith in His goodness and His support of our ministry.

Within a half hour after these donors left, a mother of 4 arrived to pick up furniture she had selected last week – a sofa, two chairs and educational toys for her children. She asked if we might have pots and pans she could use. When she was handed a brand new set of pots and pans, she was visibly touched and so very thankful for what we were able to do for her and her children.

### ***Dealing with Guests!***

We find that many of the guests referred to our depot have difficulty communicating their needs. Some are accompanied by case-workers or friends who help them communicate. We’re developing a Spanish version of our web site to improve communication with our Hispanic guests. We’re also working on a “Welcome to the Depot!” handout (in both English and Spanish) to be given to each guest when they first arrive at the Depot. It will describe procedures and spell out the rules we’ve established to ensure our help touches the greatest number of people.



### ***How are we doing so far?***

Since opening our doors five months ago, we've been able to touch the lives of some 73 families referred by local churches, social service organizations and case workers.

Using Salvation Army donation figures, we keep track the approximate value of items going out the door with our guests. So far we've distributed \$14,330 worth of furniture and household goods, or an average of more than \$200 for each family.

We also keep track of hours donated by our army of wonderful volunteers. At this point we've been blessed with nearly 1,250 voluntary hours (including many donated by our youth)!

### **Disaster Relief Kits**

Barbara Reimers and her dedicated group of adult and youth volunteers have, since April, processed and assembled more than \$30,000 worth of disaster relief kits.



**Disaster Relief Kits  
Ready for Shipment**

As kits are assembled and packed into boxes, we need volunteers to take these desperately needed kits to our friends at Mission Central in Mechanicsburg. If you happen to be going in that direction, please consider picking up and delivering some to Mission Central!

### ***What can you do to help us become the hands and feet of God?***

We really need your ideas and creative suggestions to help us continue to keep this ministry vibrant and growing.

Most of all we need your prayers (and know in our hearts, from experience, that God will answer!) We also need:

- 1) Furniture (dressers, beds, tables & chairs, mattresses, beds, etc.)
- 2) A panel truck or van to pick up donations. The truck or van could be a loaner, made available on a regular schedule or a used donated vehicle. Many guests - families who desperately need beds, dressers, etc. - get friends or case-workers to bring their vehicles. Others, however, have no way to move their newly found treasures.
- 3) Volunteers to help staff the depot. You can volunteer for 1, 2 or 3 hours a month. We're open from 9 to 3 every Tuesday and Saturday. If you are willing to make a commitment, contact Sue Maticavage or Carol Totten.

***[www.lvoutreachdepot.org](http://www.lvoutreachdepot.org)***

Our web site tells the story of this ministry and tells our guests and their case workers how to apply for help.

***Lehigh Valley Outreach Depot***  
*A mission of Wesley United Methodist Church, Bethlehem, Pa.*

September 2010

***God continues to bless our ministry!***

***See for Yourself!***

Come see what this mission of Wesley United Methodist Church is all about. We'll be having an open house on Sunday, October 17th following the 2nd service. Car pooling will be available. Look for the sign-up sheet to "hitch a ride". God continues to bless our ministry and we want to share what we're doing with you!

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This ministry is staffed entirely by volunteers and we continue to meet active and committed case-workers who refer needy families to our warehouse. Calls come in from generous donors wanting to contribute furniture, housewares, small appliances and even their time for volunteering. For those not able to deliver their own goods, we forward their names and contact information to our moving coordinators. These, in turn, schedule transportation and manpower to pick up and deliver items to the depot and, if needed, deliver items from the depot to needy families. These volunteers generously give of their time, working around full time employment

and whenever they can. In one case, a donor was so anxious to help out that he agreed to pay the cost of renting a truck to move his donated items to the Depot!

***Dealing with Guests!***

We find that many of the guests referred to our depot have difficulty communicating their needs. Some are accompanied by case-workers or friends who help them communicate. We're developing a Spanish version of our web site to improve communication with our Hispanic guests. We're also working on a "Welcome to the Depot!" handout (in both English and Spanish) to be given to each guest when they first arrive at the Depot. It will describe procedures and spell out the rules we've established to ensure our help touches the greatest number of people.

***What's the impact so far?***

Using Salvation Army donation figures, we track the approximate value of items going out the door with guests and find that, since we began four months ago, we've distributed more than \$10,000 worth of furniture and household goods and better than \$15,000 in disaster relief supplies.

We also track hours donated by our many wonderful volunteers. At this point we've been blessed by nearly 1,000 hours of volunteer adult time, and another 125 hours of volunteer youth time!

## ***Disaster Relief Kits***

Since the Depot opened last April, Barbara Reimers and her dedicated group of adult and youth volunteers have processed and shipped disaster relief kits valued at more than \$15,000.



**Disaster Relief Kits Ready to Ship**

As the kits are assembled and packed into boxes, we need volunteers to take these desperately needed kits to our friends at Mission Central in Mechanicsburg, PA. If you happen to be traveling in that direction, please consider stopping by to pick up and deliver more kits to Mission Central!

***Visit our web site!***

***[www.voutreachdepot.org](http://www.voutreachdepot.org)***

Our web site tells the story of this ministry, tells our guests and their case workers how to apply for our help, and includes "God Moments" - moments where God's hand is obviously at work guiding our ministry in the Lehigh

Valley.

## ***What else can you do to help?***

We need your ideas and creative suggestions to help us continue to keep this ministry vibrant and growing. We want:

- 1) Prayers.
- 2) Furniture (dressers, beds, tables & chairs, mattresses, beds, etc.)
- 3) Use of a panel truck, van or closed trailer to pick up donations from people who don't have the ability to get them to us. The truck, van or trailer may be donated or just made available on a regular schedule. Many guests - families who desperately need beds, dressers and other items - have no way to move what we give them to their homes and need transportation.
- 4) A heating system contractor to inspect and service the furnace and oil tank.
- 5) Volunteers to contact potential benefactors and help staff the depot. Hours for volunteering are broken into two time slots: 9a.m. to Noon; or Noon to 3p.m. two days a week—Tuesdays and Saturdays. If you have the time and can make the commitment, contact Sue Maticavage or Carol Totten.

The wonderful thing about this ministry is that anyone who wants to help can make a real difference in the lives of God's children. How? Besides helping those in the Lehigh Valley, we also play an active role in creating various kits that are used locally, nationally and internationally.



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***Lehigh Valley Outreach Depot***  
*A mission of Wesley United Methodist Church, Bethlehem, Pa.*

July 2010

***It takes a church!***  
***Our church had the vision and is putting it into action!***

The Lehigh Valley Outreach Depot has finally become a reality! It's time for an update on what has transpired since we opened this ministry April 24th.

First and foremost, we thank God for all of you who have contributed to this ministry in so very many ways. Generosity has flowed in the form of prayers, donated furniture, household goods, disaster kit components, volunteer time (cleaning, painting, moving, staffing).

The word is spreading like wildfire! "Guests" have been referred to the depot by local charitable organizations such as homeless shelters, civic groups, churches and individual case managers. Those referred have already selected furniture, house wares, linens and small appliances to help them set up and furnish homes for their families and loved ones. To see their smiles and hear their sincere expressions of appreciation has been both heart-warming and very gratifying.

Last month we were visited by the staff of a local organization dedicated to helping the homeless become self-sufficient and contributing members of the community. One of those staff members, a former homeless person herself, thanked us for the respect we offer our "Guests." While a homeless person, she had had generous people offer her, for example, a chair or table and told that was all that was available. At our depot she was touched by the fact that we offered choices. She interpreted that as a way of treating the homeless with the respect that God's children really deserve.

Using Salvation Army donation figures, we've been tracking the monetary value of items going out the door with our guests and find that, in the first two months, we've distributed more than \$4,000 worth of furniture and household goods and processed more than \$9,000 worth

of disaster relief supplies.

We've also tracked the hours donated by our wonderful volunteers. So far we've recorded more than 650 hours of volunteer time, including both adults and youth!

## **Current Needs**

We continue to have specific needs to help keep this ministry growing. We still need:

- 1) Your continued prayers. Challenges are on-going.
- 2) Donations in the form of usable, clean, like new or gently used furniture; house wares (pots, pans, dishes, glassware, utensils); small appliances and, yes, money to help us stock other items essential to everyday living.
- 3) A panel truck or van—a vehicle at our disposal to pick up goods offered by our very generous benefactors who simply don't have the ability to transport their donations to the depot. The truck may be a donated vehicle (no longer of use to the donor) or one that can be borrowed periodically—on a regular schedule. We also find that many of our guests - needy families - have no way to move their newly acquired possessions to their homes and really need the transportation.
- 4) A heating system contractor—our depot space includes a furnace and oil tank that haven't been used in more than 8 years (since the owner purchased the property). As fall approaches we'd like to know we'll be able to adequately heat this 5000 sq. ft. of warehouse space. The duct work also needs cleaning before we can safely operate the heating system.

- 5) Volunteers to help staff the depot. Can you spare just 3 hours every 2nd or 3rd month? Hours for volunteering are divided/broken into two time slots: 9a.m. to Noon; or Noon to 3p.m. two days a week—Tuesdays and Saturdays. If you have the time, feel the calling, and can make the commitment to schedule time with us, you can contact Sue Maticavage at [sue@lvoutreachdepot.com](mailto:sue@lvoutreachdepot.com); or you can contact Carol Totten at [carol@lvoutreachdepot.com](mailto:carol@lvoutreachdepot.com). You are invited to come take a look for yourself and then determine if you'd like to be a part of LVOD.

### **What else can you do to help?**

The wonderful thing about this ministry is that anyone who wants to can have a part in making things happen. How? Besides helping those locally that are in need of items, we play an active role in creating various kits that are used locally, nationally and internationally. Cleaning Kits help those who are cleaning up after a flood. Birthing Kits help the mother who does not have access to a hospital. Layette Kits clothe a newborn child. School Kits help children continue with their studies after having lost their school resources to a tornado, hurricane or earthquake. Kit supplies are things anyone can pick up at any time—one article at a time or an assortment of articles designated for that kit. Kit items can be brought to Wesley Church and left in designated bins at the Hospitality Table or they can be dropped off at the “depot” any Tuesday or Saturday between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

### **Kit items you can contribute**

Air freshener, cans – 8 or 9 oz.  
Bags, plastic - gallon-size, sealable  
Bags, Trash - 24-bag rolls, heavy-duty, 33-45 gallon  
Bandages - Adhesive plastic strip, sterile (around the finger size)  
Blankets, receiving - flannelette  
Bleach (bottles) - (1-quart or 64 oz.)  
Brushes, scrub  
Buckets - 5-gallon with resealable lid  
Clotheslines - (50 ft. or 100 ft.)

Clothes-pins – wood or plastic  
Combs - large and sturdy (not pocket-sized and not “picks”)  
Crayons - box of 24 (only 24, no more)  
Detergent, liquid laundry - (25 oz. or 50 oz. bottles)  
Erasers - 2 1/2”  
Fingernail file or clippers (no emery boards or toenail clippers)  
Gloves – latex (large size)  
Gloves, work (large size)  
Household cleaner, 12-16 oz. bottle (no ammonia)  
Insect repellent spray, 6-14 oz. cans  
Masks, dust  
Pads (or loose leaf) of 8 1/2” x 11” ruled paper  
Pads, scouring  
Pencils, unsharpened with erasers – (plain)  
Plastic sheeting, 4 mil rolls  
Razor Blades - boxes of single edge blades  
Rulers - 30-centimeter  
Scissors – blunt (rounded tip)  
Sharpeners, pencil - hand-held  
Soap, bath-size bar (3 oz. and up)  
Soap, hotel size bar (1 oz. and up) (not Ivory)  
Soap, dish – bottle, disinfectant, 16-28 oz.  
Sponges  
String, rolls of cotton  
Toothbrushes - single, individually wrapped (no children size)  
Towels, cleaning (reusable wipes)  
Towels, hand - 15” x 25” up to 17” x 27” (no kitchen towels)  
Washcloths

### **The future of this ministry**

The beauty of the LV Outreach Depot ministry is that it continues to involve men, women, youth of any religious or even non-religious affiliation. Groups of well meaning people coming together for a common purpose—to become the active “hands and feet of God” by helping those who are less fortunate. As this ministry continues to grow and to help our community, we see God’s blessings at work!