

Good Works, Inc. — A Community of Hope

Celebrating 32 Years!



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Keith Wasserman, Founder/Executive Director

*"I made the WIDOW'S heart sing, I took up the case of the STRANGER, I was a father to the FATHERLESS."
(Job 29:12-13)*

A warm hello from us to you!

September 2012

You are an important extension of this *Community of Hope*, and this month I want to share just a piece of the *good* that is happening as a result of your faithful generosity. We see your gifts, combined with those of others, accomplishing much in the kingdom of God!

As you may know, Good Works began in 1981 when Keith Wasserman began inviting people who had no place to go into the basement of his home on Elliott Street in Athens. He writes:

"The first person ever to stay at Good Works in my basement was Carole. She stayed several weeks and I am certain we learned more during her time with us than she ever learned from us. This took place during the time when we only had one room in the shelter and it was either for men or for women. Carole was our only resident and we focused our attention on her while we attended classes at Ohio University. After she moved out, I did see her from time to time. This was the era when Barbara Beavers and I collaborated and invented much of the initial foundation for Good Works that is still in place today."

Now, 32 years later, we are still providing the only shelter—a home—to people who are without homes in 9 counties here in Southeast Ohio. Last year, we served 156 different people through what is now called the Timothy House. James was one of them.

James came to stay with us in July of 2011 during a difficult season of his life. After several months, we invited him to consider participating in Life in Transition, our long-term care-community based out of the Hannah House. Current Hannah House Manager, Steve Rogers, describes this as an opportunity to "literally share life" with a person transitioning from homelessness.

For the next 6 months, James came to live with Steve and several other Good Works interns. While maintaining employment in the Athens area, James formed trusting relationships inside the community and always found ways to contribute, from mowing the grass to taking part in weekly game-nights. We watched him gain confidence and share himself, his gifts, and his prayers with us. One of those gifts was a scarecrow James built of his own initiative for the Good Works garden!

Through Life in Transition, we intentionally care for and empower people through a personal relationship with them. "We were able to show James how much God loves him, and how much we love him. We were able to be an encouragement to him during a hard time in his life," reflects Steve.

We call this live-with approach "life on life mentoring," in which both the person in transition and those seeking to support them experience personal and spiritual growth. The members of the household work together, at times sacrificially, to create a safe, caring environment in which a person transitioning from homelessness can experience belonging, accountability, and healthy relationships.

Healing through Christian community: this has been our vision since the beginnings of the Hannah House in 1994. Thank you again for your support, which is continuing to make this vision into a reality!

— Dawn Tobin

IN THE NEWS...

- Since I last wrote, we saw a sweet ending to **Summer Service 2012**:

Under the leadership of Emily Axe, Summer Kids' Discovery Club was a huge success, with approximately 30 children participating! In partnership with The Plains UMC and many other generous individuals and organizations, we were able to provide more than 1,800 meals for children and adults through the Summer Lunch. In the Teen Agricultural Internship, we nurtured 7 local teens and 16 gardens! Our first-ever Kingdom Internship, also for teens, turned out to be a delightful adventure in service and discipleship. Many thanks to the 6 Work Retreat groups who literally became "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" at the homes of our friends in the county. We couldn't have done it without our 8 Summer Interns who poured their lives into loving God and their neighbors with such excellence! And...we could not have done it without YOUR help, backing us up. THANK YOU!

- The ministry God has trusted us with is about people, not buildings or techniques or methods: ordinary people through whom God does extraordinary things. Last month, we welcomed **3 new staff members!** Meg Bruno is heading up our efforts in health and nutrition education, and Kara Stricker is offering leadership to Service Living. We are also saying goodbye to Chip Guyton, who has invested five years developing Hope and Possibilities. New full-time staff member Steven Barth, who started August 16th, is picking up the torch in his stead.
- Good Works has started the 4th year of **Service Living** in partnership with Ohio University. We will have 7 weekly Transformation Groups, which introduce students to the people, history, values, needs and beauty of rural Appalachia through service. Doug Schmaltz, who also oversees our Agricultural Initiatives, is teaming up with Kara Stricker to lead Serving Living, including the weekly meeting on campus.
- This month, we embark on our fall **Work Retreat season!** We are gratefully anticipating the partnership of 13 different congregations to help us continue serving our friends who are senior citizens or experiencing a disability. Last year, 450 different people collaborated with us to love their neighbors through this Good Works initiative.
- On Saturday, September 29th, we are hosting a seminar called **Going Deeper** for anyone who has participated in our Work Retreats over the past 10 years. Contact us for more information!
- We are currently planning the next **Good Works WALK** scheduled for Saturday, February 23rd, 2013. We will have five different WALK experiences to choose from, and hope you will make plans to participate! More information to follow....

In closing, I want to invite you to come and visit us this fall! Come to Friday Night Life or for dinner at the Timothy House; come and join us on a Work Retreat or visit during one of our staff gatherings. If you must travel from a distance and would like to stay overnight, we are happy to provide you and your family with accommodations in the Hannah House. Know that we are grateful for you!

Love is a verb,



Keith Wasserman