



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)*

Dear friends,

April 2012

What an amazing privilege I feel it is to receive your gifts...each day, each month, each year: *I am so grateful.* This provision is enabling us to sow the goodness and mercy of God into the lives of so many people— some we have just met for the first time, and others we have grown to care deeply for over the years. On behalf of all of us at Good Works, thank you for your trust and friendship!

This past month, winter hibernation gave way to full-fledged spring: Friday Night Life moved to our outdoor location on Luhrig Road, the Hannah House filled with volunteers eager to serve, and we powered up numerous lawn-mowers!

Since mid-February, we have hosted 10 different churches and civic groups for Work Retreat experiences. Three of these, including a class from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, shared a whole week with us. This class's course topic? Appalachia: its history, people, land, and future. During their time in Athens, the fifteen students served with several local organizations, as well as working hard on the Good Works property and doing home repair for a woman named Violet and her daughter, Cassie.

The team from Good Works spent four days at Violet's home, and what a highlight it was! Picture this: Staff member Ken Weinkauff is repairing the bathroom floor with the help of several students from Wright State. Meanwhile, a Transformation Station volunteer fixes Violet's siding, and Russell, who is in our supportive employment opportunity, is doing indoor electrical work. To top it off, the group power washed her house!

Violet first learned of the Good Works initiative *Neighbors Helping Neighbors* (formerly Samaritan Projects), through an insurance agent. Reflecting later she shared, "They are like little angels; I feel so blessed to have found them. They were all very kind. Ken was wonderful—the perfect man to be on the job!" Violet says she has been overwhelmed with taking care of her daughter, who has a long list of health problems. But throughout the week, Violet was encouraged as her and the visitors formed a warm friendship. "We had a prayer together a time or two," she added.

This family has been through a particularly difficult season and we were humbled to have the opportunity to serve with them.

Through *Neighbors Helping Neighbors*, we focus on caring for older adults, particularly those who are widowed or those facing physical disability along with economic hardship. Over time, we've deepened our relationships with a number of folks we first met through this avenue by pairing individual volunteers with seniors who are interested. The volunteers visit their senior friend regularly, just for the purpose of enjoying each other's company. We've seen so many beautiful friendships blossom out of this opportunity!

Sara Lee, a senior citizen who lives in Athens, and Mel, her volunteer match, have known each other for about a year. Mel describes her experience:

“I first became involved with Senior Friends as a student wanting to become more involved with the Athens community. I never imagined the impact it would imprint upon my Ohio University experience. I look forward to my weekly visits with Sara Lee and her adorable Miss Kitty so much that I couldn't imagine my week without them.”

Through your support, we are continuing to connect people from all walks of life with people in poverty...so that the Kingdom of God can be experienced. It is happening!

IN THE NEWS...

- **Beginning on June 10th**, Good Works will embark our 17th year of Summer Service! With the leadership of up to eight college-age interns, we hope to host seven groups for a weeklong mission experience here in Athens County. In this season, our capacity to offer help to our friends in need through Neighbors Helping Neighbors heightens greatly. Further, in partnership with The Plains United Methodist Church, we plan to hold our every day Kids' Discovery Club, which runs Monday through Friday and concludes with a hot, nutritious meal that is free and open to broader community. We are also making preparations for two paid internships for local teens: one focused on agriculture and personal development, and the other for teens who desire to grow in their love for Jesus through serving others. We are very excited about this season of generosity and growth as we participate in what God is doing here!
- **Do you have teeth in your smile?** Thanks to a unique partnership with a local dentist, several former Timothy House residents now do! The free and reduced-price services this dentist has offered have been such a huge blessing this past year, because *so many* people we know cannot afford dental care. Lack of preventive care can lead to losing teeth, which results in poor nutrition. At times, visually noticeable dental problems can also affect the type of job an employer is willing to offer someone. So, you'll understand why seeing these friends with teeth in their proud smiles is such a joy!
- **Good Works is on FaceBook**, and I'd like to invite you to stay connected with us in this way! We are posting photos and brief updates every week. To find us on FaceBook (even if you don't have an account), go to our website at www.good-works.net and click on the link at the top of the page.
- **Homeless by Choice:** This past Easter Weekend, I spent two days living on the streets of Louisville, Kentucky. This was my 10th experience of being "homeless by choice." I was again reminded of the very harsh conditions people without homes must endure and how the very systems and organizations which exist to help people in homeless situations can often be a powerful force of dehumanization. I felt like my experience from a "one of them" perspective was another window into this traumatic aspect of poverty in America. I'd be grateful to come and share with a group about my experiences of being homeless by choice over the past 20+ years. You can reach me at (740) 594-9000 or goodworks@good-works.net.

In closing, I want to thank you again for standing with us! Your gifts and prayers are a source of deep encouragement, and we receive them as grace from God.

Love is a verb,



Keith Wasserman