

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)*

Greetings with gratitude, dear friends!

August 2012

The Transformation Station: if you've visited the Good Works property, you know this is what we call the big green building completed in 2004. But... both you and I know that our work here in Appalachian Ohio has never been about buildings, programs, or methods. Rather, it's about *people*: ordinary people through whom God can do extraordinary things!

Thank YOU for lending your hands and your heart towards loving our neighbors who are struggling with poverty. I say with a smile: *extraordinary things truly are happening!*

You see, the Transformation Station is both a building *and* our creative sweat-equity initiative. It is our way of helping people access resources they need while they serve others. If you step inside the "TS," you'll get a whiff of gasoline, and see the row of bicycles and a nice-looking selection of furniture. Washers, dryers, and stoves are lined up in the back area next to the food pantry. Outside, several used cars await their new drivers.

"We don't sell the items and we don't give them away," I often say to bemused audiences. "Now...does anyone have any questions?"

Our friend Myra received a car through the Transformation Station. She's one of 93 others who has volunteered their time with us, earned points, and exchanged those points for a thank you gift in the form of a good, working vehicle.

Since Myra drove away with her 1998 Honda Civic, she not only shares transportation with her extended family, but continues to volunteer with Good Works about twice a month. Staff member Terri Woodson, who helps to administrate the Transformation Station, says that Myra, along with several others, often asks when Good Works needs help with assembling a mailing: "It appears they see a need and want to help. They may take a food box or something, but really seem to be coming because they feel like they are a part of what is going on here."

Creating contexts in which people, who society defines only as "needy," are offered a place of contribution and significance is so important to us. This is the kind of atmosphere where people can begin to see themselves as God sees them: loved, with value and purpose.

It's been our joy to invite three successful Transformation Station volunteers into part-time employment with us over the past two years. We provide extra coaching to develop the capacity of these individuals and help them succeed in the job market, despite barriers they may face. Terri states our common belief well: that this experience has "simultaneously given them an inward lift up, to have hope for what can happen, and a place where they feel a sense of belonging."

Your gifts really are empowering us to sustain this environment where people are included, offered ways to meet their basic needs, and dignified with hard work. We are so grateful! Would you continue to help us by passing the word about our need for good, working vehicles? There are 161 people on the waiting list for cars right now.

IN THE NEWS

- As you read this letter, we are in the last stretch of **Summer Service**. Our final Work Retreat group visits this week, and we will bring closure to the Kids' Discovery Club, Summer Lunch and both Teen Internships. Then, our college-age interns will spend a week de-briefing on their summer experience by writing, sharing, and celebrating! We are so grateful to each of you who contributed to make this summer so fruitful.
- We are still seeking applicants for **Appalachian Immersion**— our 9 to 12 month internship for young people who desire to experience service in the context of Christian community. Room, board and a stipend are provided. Do you know someone who might benefit from this opportunity? Have them contact us!
- The Good Works community is planning its first one-day **Work Retreat Seminar**, to be held on Saturday, September 29th. We are inviting people who have participated in a Work Retreat over the past 10 years to come, dialogue and learn with us as we seek to grow in our love for God and our neighbors in need. Contact us for more information.
- In partnership with students from the Ohio University College of Medicine, we are launching year number two of **Health for Life!** On Saturday mornings this fall, Friday Night Life participants and residents of the Timothy House are invited to join a holistic health experience. Each class includes dialogue about relevant health topics, making and eating a nutritious snack, and light exercise. We are excited!
- In the first 6 months of 2012, the **Timothy House** has had to turn away 120 men, women and children experiencing homelessness due to lack of space. This is compared to a total of 142 people in all of 2011. Our city laws prevent us from providing shelter to these people who have nowhere to go. This is very discouraging and we feel powerless in the face of the tension between this flood of people and the city codes that prevent us from helping them. We want you, our supporters, to be aware of this troubling situation.
- A little history... Good Works began in 1981, and formed a board in 1984 when we gained non-profit status. Today, the **Good Works Board** gathers four times each year and uses the Carver Model of Board Governance.
- On our **website** (www.good-works.net) you can... link to the Good Works blog (*Perspective is Everything*) to read reflections on our life and work together, connect to our Facebook page for weekly updates, and give directly to Good Works!
- Are you a part of a church or group that would consider inviting one of our staff to come and **speak about Good Works**? We are looking for opportunities to tell our story! Contact me at 740.594.9000 or goodworks@good-works.net to arrange a presentation.

In closing, I want to thank each of you for believing in us, for your generosity of spirit, and for your care for the members of our community who are vulnerable. I believe the transforming love of God *is* at work in and through us— ordinary though we are!

Love is a verb,



Keith Wasserman