

Good Works, Inc. — A Community of Hope

Celebrating 36 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."

Dear Friends,

September 2017

Hello from Athens, Ohio! The heat and rain have yielded an abundant harvest in many gardens, and we enjoyed an excellent crop of interns this season. All of the local teens and college aged Summer Service interns who joined us for the summer put their whole heart into their work and bore fruit! While it is easy to see the potential in young people like these, we also want to be ready see the ability and goodness in the people who first approach us for help. A common prayer around our community is that we could help one another see people as God sees them—worthy of love, capable, created with dignity, filled with purpose and fashioned for relationship.

Creating and sustaining a community where men and women who came to us in need can experience love, grace and guidance to carry responsibility and lead others, is very important to me. This month, we want to share with you brief stories of those who came to us when they were without a home, and who now provide leadership for different aspects of the ministry God has trusted us with:

Sherilyn Weinkauff came to Good Works in need of a place to stay in 1996. As our Office Manager, she is our longest serving staff member. Sherilyn says, "I stayed at the Timothy House for something like 96 days with my two young children. After I came on staff, I told people that I benefited so much from being a resident that I thought everyone who worked here should become homeless for a while to develop compassion. My job is like the spine of the body. I do a lot of behind the scenes work that is necessary and helps to support the staff, but I'm not in the forefront of anything. I work with the groups who sponsor Friday Night life, oversee our mailings and work with our financial books. I have been on staff for 21 years and I still love my job!"



Left to Right: Sherilyn, Buddy, Jim, Terri

Jim Todd came to Good Works for shelter with his wife and sons in 1996. He has been on staff for 12 years as the Transformation Station Manager. About Transformation Station volunteers, Jim says, "The only currency I have is valuing them. We say thank you to each other and it's genuine. I'm not looking at them expecting anything from them, but I am expecting *me* to cherish them as better than myself. I tell them 'Thank you very much for helping me in what I need to do every day.' A big smile spreads across their face and they say, 'Thank you for letting me be here.' It's that language of thanksgiving that helps them navigate across their doubts and fears."

Terri Woodson also came to Good Works as a resident of the Timothy House in 1996. She has been on staff for 18 years and serves as support staff in the Hannah House. Among other things, Terri schedules and orients new Transformation Station volunteers. She says, "I just mesh with these folks automatically. There's just this almost familial feeling, like 'I know you.' I tell people, 'You may be coming here to get a material need, but you're also going to give. You're either going to provide a service to someone in their home or on this property, which helps this ministry be sustained.' Nine times out of ten they will say, 'I love to help people. I'll do whatever it takes.'"

Buddy Ballard stayed at the Timothy House in 2009 with his daughter. He has served in the area of Neighbors Helping Neighbors for two years. Buddy says, "I was once the guy who had lost it all. I had lost hope at succeeding in anything! Failed marriage, failed business, failed at raising my kids. Most of all I thought I had failed God and that I was of no use for him. I was hopeless! Now I go out to people who are struggling with different kinds of poverty. God uses these bits of my story, all these different storms I've been through. Every neighbor has a story. Every neighbor has a hurt. God uses the weaknesses and storms from my past to give them hope. As I share with them about God restoring these things in my life, it is life-giving."

A person is not their greatest need, their biggest mistake, or their most difficult circumstances. As a welcoming community, we want to take the compassionate view of these things, but if we are to maintain hope, we must have vision that goes beyond hardship to see all the *possibility* inside a person. It helps to have the strength of those who have been there and know the way through.

IN THE NEWS

- **Summer Statistics** only tell some of the story but are worth sharing because they offer perspective of the scope of our ministry. Here is one aspect of the summer: **2,081** = the number of healthy/nutritious meals provided to adults and children through Summer Lunch prepared by Darlene Wasserman and her team of volunteers. **88** = the number of volunteers from the community who provided 36 presentations to the Kids Discovery Club on subjects ranging from bees to fitness. **54** = the number of local children who registered for Kids Discovery Club with an average of 27 coming every day! **15** = the number of interns who participated in Summer Service. **7** = the number of week-long Work Retreat Groups during Summer Service. **16** = the number of gardens we were able to plant and cultivate this year with and for our neighbors struggling with having enough healthy food.
- We are seeking a group willing to do a food drive for Good Works this fall. Contact us for more information. Good Works provides 21,000 meals each year primarily from food donated to us. Can you help us?
- We are all looking forward to a full season of weekend (and weeklong) Work Retreat Groups scheduled for this fall. Maybe you know of a community who might want to schedule a visit with us for the Spring of 2018?
- The Transformation Station has provided 162 cars to families. We have 200+ people who are willing to work and serve in exchange for a vehicle. Can you pass the word through friendships, newsletters, or any social media you use? To learn more about donating a vehicle, call us at 740.594.3336.
- We're making plans for another **GOING DEEPER** day-long conference in the Hope Center on Saturday November 11th. Several Good Works staff will be teaching and presenting workshops of topics related to loving and serving people in poverty. We will have more details in the next newsletter and on our website. Please consider coming!
- We have also begun planning the 16th annual **Good Works WALK** scheduled for February 24, 2018.

Most of you are aware that giving and donations go down in the summer months; this has been the case with Good Works. If you are not already doing so, would you join us as we extend ourselves into the lives of the people of rural Appalachia? Good Works is entirely a donor-based organization. We rely upon friends like you to provide the resources we need to carry out the vision we've been trusted with to "*make the widow's heart sing, take up the case of the stranger and be a father to the needy.*" Thank you!

Love is a verb,



Keith Wasserman