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Non-Profit Org  
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Summer 2015

*"We, who acknowledge God's providence and fidelity to his people, especially those in poverty, do dedicate our efforts toward the support of those who are homeless. Our goal is to deliver to the homeless those basic human needs, care and compassion that is not usually received from other organizations."*



# NEWS

"Taking care and compassion to the homeless."

## A letter from our President



Dear Volunteers and Donors,

Thank you to all who have given of their time, money or donations in the second quarter of 2015. With your help we continue to meet our goal of being on the street with all three trucks every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday night.

Our numbers have grown to the highest we have seen in twenty-five years, which makes our needs even greater. Due to the increase in numbers, we need more food to serve each night. We are looking for groups that would like to come to the warehouse and prepare meals. Also, we need more t-shirts and other clothing items to meet the demand.

This has been an extremely wet spring making it harder for everyone living outside. We desperately need insect repellent (spray or wipes) to help keep everyone more comfortable and healthy. When insect bites become infected there is danger of MRSA. Keeping the insects away will help stop this problem.

I am thankful for every one of you, and for everything you do to help us continue reaching out to those in need. I wish you could see how much the homeless appreciate and need our help. I am so blessed to be able to look into their faces and feel their hugs of gratitude. I am always aware that if you didn't do what you do, we couldn't do what we do. Thank you from every one of the homeless on the streets and from me!

**"Dare to reach out your hand into the darkness, to pull another hand into the light."**

**Norman B. Rice**

Have a happy and safe summer!

God Bless you!

Kathy Dean

### Important Upcoming Dates

Saturday..... July 11  
9:00 a.m.....Warehouse Sort Day  
Saturday.....August 8  
9:00 a.m.....Warehouse Sort Day  
Tuesday.....September 8  
7:00 p.m..... Board Meeting  
Saturday..... September 12  
9:00 a.m.....Warehouse Sort Day

### Stay Connected...

Uplift Volunteers & Donors can now:

- Visit our website at [www.uplift.org](http://www.uplift.org)
- Sign up to receive our newsletter and blog updates via email – go to our website and click on Blog to subscribe
- We hope you enjoy the new look of our newsletter. If you have articles or comments, please send them to the editor: Pat Thomson, [pthomson43@gmail.com](mailto:pthomson43@gmail.com).
- Changes of address should be sent to Jennifer Schmidt at [jimschmidt29@gmail.com](mailto:jimschmidt29@gmail.com)

### Volunteer Opportunities

#### Outreach

Help deliver meals to the homeless. Uplift trucks "roll out" at 6 pm on Mondays and Wednesdays. 5pm Saturdays. The average route takes 4-5 hours. Please call in advance to schedule your participation. Contact: Jo Bustamante at (816) 524-0024.

#### Prepare Meals

As warm weather approaches our numbers dramatically increase. Cooks are needed to prepare meals for approximately 30 to 60 people. Call Margo Yerk at (816) 516-1304 for more information or go to our website at [www.uplift.org](http://www.uplift.org).

#### Warehouse Sort Day

9:00-12:00 pm. The second Saturday of every month we sort donations, stock our shelves, fold clothes, and have a good old time doing it. If you are planning on bringing a large group please contact us first. (816) 241-0060 or Email: [uplift.org@att.net](mailto:uplift.org@att.net)

### 2015 Board of Directors

Jim Burton  
Jo Bustamante  
Jim Carson  
Jim Crawford  
Angela Cunningham  
Kathy Dean  
Andre Logan  
Trinidad Molina  
Dan Schipfer, Chairman  
Jennifer Schmidt  
Jim Schmidt  
Samantha Shannon  
Pat Thomson  
Margo Yerk

### 2015 Officers

Kathy Dean, President  
Samantha Shannon, VP Administration  
Jennifer Schmidt, VP Internal Operations  
Jim Schmidt, VP Outreach Operations  
Andre Logan, Treasurer  
Margo Yerk, Recording Secretary

### Urgent Needs

As we enter Summer our numbers increase and so do our needs. We are especially in need of deodorant, bug spray, sun screen, toothpaste, canned meat, beef stew, tuna, peanut butter, and canned fruit. We always need t-shirts, baseball hats, socks, used/new tennis shoes, men's/women's underwear and jeans, especially men's waist sizes 32 – 34. If you can help, please call 816-241-0060.



A non-profit organization may elect to apply for the federal tax exemption status under 26 USC § 501(c)(3). An organization receiving a 501(c)(3) status gains certain privileges and obligations. It is exempt from paying federal income taxes (but still may be required to file annual income information). Additionally, all people and organizations that make contributions (money or property) to a 501(c)(3) organization can claim federal income tax deductions for their donations (to the extent allowable under, 26 USC § 170(c)(2).



Search for Uplift Organization Inc. page to stay current with Uplift happenings!

## Cooks - Kind and efficient

Margaret Longstreet grew up serving the poor, working with her father, Leo Frigo, who ran a food bank after his retirement in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Upon moving back to the Kansas City area Margaret wanted to get involved as a volunteer. Jeanne Gordon suggested that they use their talents to help Uplift. Margaret has her Masters in Food Science and has managed restaurants for seven years. Margaret and her group from St. John LaLande Catholic Church, have become a regular part of the hustle and bustle of the Uplift warehouse. It is fun to watch the group of ladies march into the kitchen and do their magic! There is no mistaking the fact that they all know exactly what they are doing. Margaret leads the group coming up with recipes and then assigning a task to each person. There is no explanation needed, only a job handed to each cook and away they go. In a matter of a couple hours they have completed an amazing meal for 200+ people.

We are always looking for people to come and help cook. If you are interested please call 816-241-0060.



## Special Thanks

- Julie Joslin Memorial
- David Brummel
- SMW Lady Vikings Soccer Club
- Mothers Refuge
- The Global Project Management Group, LTD.

## My Brother's Keeper Quilt Group



From left to right: Gina Keane, Betty Heintzelman, Pat Moulden, Margaret Liebeno, Janice Finan, Luise Kelly, Mary Oliver, Elvia Monaco, Ellen Hustings, Eleanor Sowder, Rose Qualley, Ann Hrenchir, Stella Christ

"My Brother's Keeper" Quilt Group, Sacred Heart - St. Casimir Church located in Leavenworth, Kansas has been such a blessing to the Uplift Organization.

"My Brother's Keeper" quilt group was started by Fran Thibodeau, a military wife, and a small group of fellow parishioners at Sacred Heart - St. Casimir Church in early 1996 after seeing a pamphlet for a grassroots system started in Pennsylvania for helping the homeless. The goal of the group is to make simple sleeping bags and quilts from recycled fabric, bedding, and men's neckties and donate them free to homeless people. Donations of materials have come from many in the Leavenworth and Kansas City areas, and also from Ft. Leavenworth, the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, and the Kansas State Penitentiary. The sleeping bags and quilts are not always pretty but are made to be warm and sturdy to ease the lives of the homeless. A roll up prayer is said after completing each bag/quilt: "Lord, take the work of our hands and bless it; and in Thy Name let the person who receives this gift know that they are loved. Amen."

At varying times the donations have gone to the Leavenworth Assistance Center, Catholic Community Services in Leavenworth, Birthright, St. Joseph Church (Leavenworth), St. Aloysius Church Outreach to the Poor (Kansas City), Wyandot Community Behavioral Mental Health Center (Kansas City), "Care of Poor People" (Kansas City), the Leavenworth Veteran's Administration, and the Uplift Organization in Kansas City. From the time the group began in 1996 they have completed and donated 2,053 sleeping bags and quilts. Since September, 2001 a total of approximately 1,150 sleeping bags and quilts have been donated to the Uplift Organization.

For many years the sleeping bags and quilts have been delivered from Leavenworth to the warehouse by Keith Hustings. I am always so appreciative of the delivery and he never fails to remind me that his wife Ellen and the quilting group are the ones that work so hard creating them, and that he merely delivers them. We are thankful to EVERYONE involved in this wonderful mission to help the homeless.

## 2015 Second Quarter Stats



## Volunteer Spotlight

Most of us are familiar with the phrase, "The family who prays together stays together". Those families who volunteer regularly at Uplift take this truth to the next level, exemplifying families who put prayer into action. Uplift runs solely on donations and over 2000 volunteer hours per month. Each of those volunteers has a story and I'm honored to be allowed this opportunity to highlight some of them.

One of the facets of volunteering at Uplift that enhances the experience is meeting the variety of people who join in the effort. Volunteers come from all walks of life and traditions. We are enriched not only by the work, but by the new associations we forge with other volunteers.

If you've volunteered on a second Saturday sort day in the past few years, you've probably seen Mark Myzer and three of his five children, Max, Eli and Luke, ages 13, 10 and 8. The boys

rather than all the other choices, such as playing in the yard, playing with neighbors, watching TV, reading, etc. Personal participation by a parent highlights the importance to the children by devoting time. Making a difference as a family lets us accomplish something together - to work and win together if you think of it that way - and builds the bond of family."

Mark also shared this personal reflection on how volunteering at Uplift has enriched his own faith

"I believe charity (love) is essential to Christianity. Volunteering is love in action, in deed not only in word. This is a small but vital way of living out our faith.

Through the work we see tangible evidence of the privations, sufferings, and needs of our homeless brothers and sisters versus the plenty that we enjoy without a thought. Even candles



Max, Luke, Eli and Mark Myzer

have become experts at rolling socks, marking canned goods and pouring pet food into baggies for distribution. When asked what their favorite activity was at Uplift, eating donuts won hands down.

Mark and his wife Therese are parishioners at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Overland Park. They have been active in various ministries in the parish and like many of us became aware of the Uplift Organization through Frank Fiorini, whose dedicated example of faith in action led so many of us to the Uplift warehouse.

Mark was gracious in sharing even more time to answer my inquiry for this article. When asked, "Why do you believe it is important to volunteer as a family?" Mark's response was thoughtful and reflective of his deeply held values.

"Volunteering as a family highlights the importance of the ministry by taking time for this

show man's need for light - something we take for granted we can get by just flipping a switch but is a struggle for many.

Just seeing the donations shows the outpouring of generosity, and receiving donation drop-offs warms the heart.

Experiencing the heat and cold of the warehouse increases our solidarity with the homeless, who can't just adjust the thermostat when they feel slight discomfort but endure the full brunt of the seasons.

And we can perform the corporal works of mercy: as we shelve canned food, we help to feed the hungry. As we ball socks, we help to clothe the naked.

Finally, there also is a unitive aspect of the work: we come together in common purpose as a community of caring and compassion and strive together to make the world a little warmer."



## Camp Cleanup

On a crisp, sunny April morning volunteers from Uplift, the Salvation Army and Taking It to the Streets joined forces to clean up a predetermined number of homeless camps in the Kansas City Metro area. Volunteers started arriving at 7:30 a.m. in the Salvation Army's parking lot on Truman Road and Troost. Coffee and a light breakfast were provided by the Salvation Army. At 8:30 a.m. each group was assigned the camp locations to be cleaned. Approximately 60 Uplift volunteers packed into the Uplift vans and their personal vehicles as they made their way to the first stop at 22nd and Gillham Road.

Volunteers were attired in old clothes and working/gardening gloves. Trash bags were provided to each volunteer as they made their way into the camp. It was obvious that the camp had not been used for some time. The terrain was difficult as the camp was located on a steep hill that descended to the railroad tracks below. The volunteers worked tirelessly for approximately 3 hours and produced over 500 bags of trash. The trash was carried to the nearest street where the city trucks came by and picked it up. Enough trash was collected to fill three city waste removal trucks. Uplift was supposed to proceed to another smaller camp, but didn't make it there because of the magnitude and size of the first camp.

All volunteers returned to the Salvation Army parking lot around noon where they were feed a hearty lunch by Uplift. Needless to say we had all worked up a huge appetite by then. The hamburgers and brats along with a wonderful hot bean casserole and chips really hit the spot.

A big thank you goes out to all who participated in the cleanup, from those who cooked, to those who cleaned the camps and to the Salvation Army, Taking It to the Streets and Uplift who organized the event. We'll keep you posted as to when the next big cleanup day will be.