

Spring 2018

"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."

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A Letter from our President



Dear Donors and Volunteers,
It has been an extremely cold winter and I am happy to say goodbye to the harsh temperatures! I look forward to nice weather so that our friends on the streets will be more comfortable.

As I watch the sun come up each morning and see the green sprouts starting to pop up through the soil, I am reminded that God is in control and always dependable. I never get ready to go to bed and think, "I hope God remembers to make the sun come up tomorrow", I am not promised tomorrow, but I know that tomorrow will come.

Anyone that knows me would tell you that I am a hard worker, and sometimes I have a hard time asking for help. However, during my recovery from surgery the past three months, that has been out of my control. I have seen so many people step up and work to cover for me in my absence, and I am very thankful to them for that. It has been an eye-opening experience for me to learn that even though I will not always be there, Uplift will continue to be dependable for the people that count on us each night. Just as the homeless depend on Uplift, we depend on our donors and volunteers. Without your generous donation of time and financial help, we would not be able to reach out to so many in need. I am very thankful for every one of you!

It takes so many dedicated and caring people to make Uplift successful. I try to make sure to give credit to everyone involved, but sometimes I feel that we don't give enough thanks to our drivers. Therefore, starting with this edition, we will be having a "Driver Spotlight" article. I hope you enjoy getting to know more about the great people that get us where we need to be each night.

"God does not begin by asking us about our ability, but only about our availability, and if we then prove our dependability, he will increase our capability."

Neal A. Maxwell

God Bless you and everyone you love!

Kathy

Urgent Needs

As we head into summer our urgent needs change. In the summer we need lots of t-shirts, baseball caps, socks, insect wipes, toilet paper, deodorant, tampons and pads and always small toiletries.



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



Spring break volunteers

"Hope Overflow" is an 18 member worship team from Wartburg College in Waverly, IA. Each year during their spring break, they travel around the Midwest to serve and lead worship concerts. This year, they spent the first half of the week in St. Louis and the second half of the week in Kansas City. While in Kansas City, Hope Overflow came to Uplift to work in the warehouse by sorting through clothing and bagging up other items.

Alexis Borcharding

2018 First Quarter Stats



775
number of volunteers



1,365
number of camps visited



4,158
number of volunteer hours



8,236
number of homeless served

Special Thanks

- Smith Fries Foundation
- Greater Kansas City Community Foundation-Truck Fund
- Alpha Energy & Electric, Inc.
- Orscheln Industries Foundation
- Church World Services, Inc.
- Jim Burger
- Network for Good
- Church of the Nativity
- Greater Kansas City Community Foundation

Driver Spotlight

In February I had a volunteer tell me that she was so impressed with the driver of the truck she was serving on. At one of the stops they served a woman that had been in a fire and burned her leg. She was wearing shorts, even though it was freezing rain, because her pants had burned. The driver of the truck was wearing two pair of pants and she witnessed him remove his outer pair and hand them to the homeless woman. I told the volunteer that I was proud of the driver, but it didn't surprise me because that is exactly what any of our drivers would have done. I am thankful to be able to depend on all our drivers!

I would like for you to learn a little about each of them as we go through 2018. We will be highlighting a few drivers in each newsletter.

Norm Burkart has driven for Uplift since 1999. Norm works for Assignment International LLC where he works on Affordable Housing and Solar Energy Supply in various African countries. He also works as an adjunct college professor. He has four grown biological children, and currently acts as American Parent for over 20 international students in the area. He was recruited by Dr. Rick Coronado, who was a driver for Uplift at that time. Norm continues to drive for Uplift because he finds it rewarding to develop relationships with our homeless, especially when there is a positive change in their situations. He is also known as a driver that makes the Uplift volunteers have a more meaningful experience on the route.

Bill Munninghoff has driven for Uplift since 2015. He retired from Rockhurst High School, where he served as Director of Counseling Services along with being a basketball and tennis coach. Bill is married with two wonderful sons and one beautiful daughter-in-law. When Bill retired he was looking for opportunities to serve others and he found Uplift. He continues to drive because there is no greater service than working with the poor and marginalized members of our society. The homeless are some of the most vulnerable in our country. We need to treat them and everyone we encounter in our lives with respect and dignity. We are called to service. Uplift is Bill's way of answering that call.

Mitchell Moore has driven for Uplift since 2011. He is a Porsche Technician at Aristocrat Motors. He has been very happily married to his wife Rachel for 22 years. He has a 14-year-old daughter and ten-year-old twin daughters. He started driving for Uplift because of Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 10:30-37 and 3:10-11; James Chapter 2; Proverbs 28:27, 14:31, 19:17; Psalm 82:3-4, 10:1-18, Proverbs 29:7, 13:7, 19:1; Acts 20-35; Galatians 6:9-10; Ecclesiastes 9:16; and Luke 14:7-24. He continues to drive for the same reason he started.

Jim Crawford started driving for Uplift in 2013. He is self employed and is married with two grown children. Jim was inspired by his first night of volunteering with Jim and Jennifer Schmidt. He could not think of a better way to give back for the many Blessings he has been given. He looks forward to seeing his many friends and continuing to be inspired by them and how appreciative they are for what we do.

Greg Schwarz started driving for Uplift in 2018. He purchases all the material needed to fabricate all the architectural railings for the Livers Bronze Company. Jodie is his significant other and Greg has two sons, Mitch 26 and Cole 20, who have ridden on the truck with him. Greg was recruited to be a driver by Ross Dessert and continues to drive because he truly enjoys providing a service to the folks on the street. It matters not how they got to where they are. It matters that we provide/help them with some basic necessities of life.

Michael Bartkowski has been a driver since 2016. He is in Operations and Technology at the NBKC Bank. He and his wife, Amy, have two children, Michael 16 and Anna 13. Michael started driving for Uplift because he couldn't say no to Kathy. He continues to drive because it is a great way to live out his faith.

Dave Brummel has been a driver since June 2016. He has been married to Denise, who is always riding shotgun with him on the truck, for 41 years. Dave and Denise have 3 children, 4 granddaughters, and are expecting 2 grandsons to be born this year. Dave started driving for Uplift to fill a need to serve the homeless. He continues to drive because the need remains. He feels helping is almost addictive (in a good way).



Valentine's Day Cookies

"This is the 4th year for Valentine cookies for Uplift," said Tonya Gast. "The response was as strong as ever."

Jennifer Garrison had contacted me to ask if her American Heritage Girls Pioneers Troup, KS0138, could provide cookies again for Uplift. The girls, 12-14 years old, were anxious to carry on this tradition.

On Monday afternoon, the girls packaged the cookies that went out to the homeless on the streets on February 14th, Valentine's Day. American Heritage Girls and Good Shepherd parishioners came together to provide enough cookies to fill 260 bags for the homeless this week.

Jennifer said, "As for me, embracing and caring for the "outcast" is always to me like St. Francis embracing the leper. Since I am a professed Secular Franciscan, humility and service to the poor are part of my focus in life. These are the people who much of society fails to acknowledge and to allow the rights of human dignity, which God has given to us all.

"It gives me much joy to remind our brothers and sisters on the streets that I see them and God loves them. Since I don't have as much of the time and energy to do such works of service as I would like, it means a lot to me to touch base with them spiritually and to be that example to my girls when I have the opportunity," said Jennifer.

Charlotte Garrison added, "It makes me feel good to give them something to tell them I know they are there."

In addition, during their Valentine's Day party on Tuesday, Mrs. Hance's 5th grade class made tissue paper flowers to go along with the

cookies. The volunteers at Uplift loved this idea and were sure that the people would be touched by these Valentine gifts. This new idea is sure to become an annual tradition!



1 Timothy 6:18 –
"command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and share."

As I read those words, the faces of so many of the homeless people I serve each week started to pop into my mind. Even if we don't have material wealth, we can be rich in good deeds. No matter how poor we are, we have something to share with someone.

I see that every night that I'm out on the street. When I get out of the truck, I'm always met with smiles and hugs. When I get ready to leave I hear "God bless you", "you stay safe out here". A very special gift to me!

At one of my stops, I frequently join a couple of my best buddies, Kenny and Kurt, in a SWAG dance. We all three look pretty silly, but the joy that it brings to us, as well as everyone watching, is a true gift.

Over the past 15 years of driving the Uplift truck I have been given countless gifts made from items found on the street or in the woods. I received a necklace made from muscle shells from the Missouri River. I have cards, poems, book marks all made with love. They have no material value, but they are priceless to me.

I have seen a homeless man offer his portion of food to someone else when we were running low. And another man gave his blanket to another person that wasn't feeling well and needed extra warmth to make it through the night.

The people we feed depend on us to survive, and I am so thankful to be able to serve them. When I think about what I see each night, I believe that I am just witnessing God's children doing exactly what we are asked to do. Society may see the homeless as having no material value, but what a blessing and a gift they are to me!

Kathy Dean,
Uplift President



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Important Upcoming Dates

Saturday.....	April 14th
9:00 a.m.....	Warehouse Sort Day
Tuesday.....	May 8th
7:00 p.m.....	Board Meeting
Saturday.....	May 12th
9:00 a.m.....	Warehouse Sort Day
Saturday.....	June 9th
9:00 a.m.....	Warehouse Sort Day

Stay Connected...

Uplift Volunteers & Donors can now:

- Visit our website at 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.
- Changes of address should be sent to Kellie McDermott at upliftorg@att.net

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: Pat Thomson at (913) 207-9391 or pthomson43@gmail.com.

Prepare Meals

Cooks are needed to prepare hot meals for the homeless. Each cook needs to cook enough for 60 people. If you would like to help, call or email Margaret Longstreet at (816) 739-4050 or margaret-longstreet@me.com for more information or go to our website at www.uplift.org.

Warehouse Sort Day

9:00 – 12:00 p.m. The second Saturday of every month we sort donations, stock our shelves, fold clothes and have a good old time doing it! See Important Upcoming Dates. If you are planning to bring a large group, please contact us first. Phone: (816) 241-0060 or Email: upliftorg@att.net.