



I Drive the Truck ... by Bill Boone



God's Timing, God's Provision, and Divine Appointments

We were all over the place during last quarter's travels. From food drives to Aldi's, from churches to hospitals, from picking up purchased presents to picking up donated pies, the longest trip the truck took was to Winchester, Ind. For hundreds and hundreds of miles, God's hand was on us all the way. He was going before us every step of our path, including supplying a grant from CERF just as we were ready to transfer funds to meet expenses.

Mike Kelly of the LifePoint Missions team called me 1 week before I was to pick up our turkeys for our annual Turkey Drive-Thru. He told me that LifePoint would cover the cost.

One Tuesday evening, Linda (Pea) and I were trying to determine whom she should shop for, who

would need to go to the Santa Shop, and how much money we had to work with. Good friend Bob White and his wife Kim called that evening. They were going to bring money for our Christmas program.

Earlier, Bob had contacted some of his business connections about helping us. When he handed me the envelope, I just about fell out of my chair. The envelope contained \$7,000. God sent this money 1 day before our final scheduled shopping day.

We also were blessed with lots of volunteers for shopping, wrapping, and distribution. When distribution day concluded, we cleaned and swept the gym and headed to the pantry to drop off all the leftover presents and paper. Christmas 2011 was finished.

Remember Paul Harvey? Now I will tell you the rest of the story.

On Monday, Dec. 19, we got a call from Shirley Folks, the Beech Grove Schools supervisor of the home schools advisors. She asked if we could help one more family for Christmas. I don't know why this family didn't get Christmas, but Shirley was hoping that we could help. Melissa Keeley, South Grove home/school advisor, was putting together the details for the family so we could shop for them. I picked up teacher Nancy Wilson, and we met my wife at Kmart to shop for this last family. South Grove principal Tonya Reid and her office staff wrapped feverishly to get the presents ready. The presents were delivered on Tuesday. The mom was overwhelmed.

Now Christmas was finished. Or so I thought.

On Wednesday, Dec. 21, I went to the pantry to get the truck so I could make a pickup at Midwest Food Bank. I originally wasn't going to go because the pantry was closed for the rest of the year. As I was warming up the truck, I noticed a couple of gals digging around in the dumpsters for scrap metal.

"Do you have a Christmas dinner?" I asked.
"No."

I told them to meet me back at the pantry at 11:30, and they did. I showed them where the grocery carts were and told them to get whatever they needed. When I was sacking their groceries, the phone rang. I answered it. It was a young mom named Jessica. She asked if we still were doing Christmas. I said no, that our program ended last Saturday.

"You just helped my friend yesterday."

Turns out that her friend was the mom that Shirley told us about on Monday.

I sensed desperation in Jessica's voice. Her story: She has a 5½-year-old daughter who requires 24-hour care because of a terminal birth defect. (Most children with this birth defect don't live past their first birthday.) This young

mom also has a 4-year-old son. She said no one would help them.

I got her address and told her I would come to see her. First, I called the school to ask the staff if they knew anything about this new family. They did not, and they thought as I did, that she may have been a troller, someone fishing for free assistance from various resources like ours. So I asked God for discernment and I went to their home. Jessica greeted me at the door and I met her little girl, Kaylianna. I got some info on the kids' sizes and told Jessica that I would be back. Before I left, I asked her where her son was. He was at his grandma's because he thought Santa wouldn't come to their house.

I asked, "Why?"

"Because we have no Christmas tree."

I said we would find her a tree. When I got back to South Grove, I told the gals what I saw. It tugged at my heart that this might be this little girl's last Christmas. So, the gals got their coats and we headed to Wal-Mart.

Scripture of the Quarter

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

—Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)



Wrapping party volunteers pray over Christmas gifts for 553 sponsored Servant's Heart children.

Christmas 2011: It's a "wrap"

Let your mind wander back to Christmas past, when you were a child filled with anticipation and excitement about what you would find under the tree on Christmas morning. With your inner child awakened, now imagine that morning, getting up extra early and racing to the Christmas tree ... only to discover that the only things under it are a few decorations that had been knocked off its branches. No gifts, wrapped or otherwise.

For many families today, the second scenario is the sad reality. Thanks to the generosity of individuals and businesses alike, **553 local children** had the kind of Christmas worth remembering. Servant's Heart received **\$14,800 in cash donations** to use for the purchase of gifts, and **another \$18,000 in pre-purchased gifts** for families sponsored directly by community residents and businesses.

Servant's Heart thanks every community member—individuals and businesses—who helped ensure that children up to age 13 in these **236 families** would have Christmas 2011. Here are just some of "Santa's helpers":

- **South Grove Intermediate School:** Conducted a brown paper sack decorating contest (spearheaded by 6th grade teacher Nancy Wilson). Every student (aka elf in training) in all 23 classrooms (grades 4–6) turned these ordinary lunch sacks into customized "stockings." Every sack was unique. Contest winner Jack S. (last name withheld for privacy) received a gigantic candy cane. (Servant's Heart volunteers stuffed the "stockings" with a variety of small items, including candy and gender-appropriate small toys, such as cars for boys and nail polish for girls.) South Grove also financially sponsored 43 children, and provided the gym for Servant's Heart's annual Christmas gift-wrapping party one evening, and the Santa Shop and gift distribution (next day). The school also donated its decorated Christmas tree to one of the families.
- **Ted Polk, manager of food service for the University of Indianapolis:** Fed all estimated 100 volunteers at both events. The feast included a beautifully presented spread of cold cuts, cheeses, vegetables, breads, condiments and beverages. Servant's Heart volunteers made the meal extra sweet by adding several homemade desserts.
- **Central Indiana Woodworkers:** This group of talented woodworkers worked all year long in members' garages all across the Indianapolis area to make toys for Servant's Heart (and other non-profits). You name it, they probably made it. Their imaginative gifts included wooden guitars, airplanes, trucks, cars, cellphones, jewelry boxes, interactive games and more.

Thank you to everyone for helping Servant's Heart wrap up another great Christmas for families in need.

I Drive the Truck *(continued from p. 1)*

Before we left the school, however, Gina had the staff take down the Christmas tree in their lobby to give to this family. We bought a sleeve of unbreakable balls for the tree. The shoppers took the gifts back to the school to wrap.

On my way back to the school, I got a call from the KFC on Emerson. The manager said they had done a food drive and had a box of miscellaneous food and two frozen turkeys. Did I know of a family that could use it? I picked up the food. By the time I got to the school, everything was ready for pickup. I was so blessed by the South Grove staff for their help. My wife, son Mike, and I delivered those gifts to Jessica and her kids. Jessica wept. What a blessing to share God's love with this family and to give this young mother hope when no one else would help her.

Just think about these dots:

- Shirley Folks phoned about helping one more family after Christmas.
- I wasn't originally supposed to go to Midwest Food Bank.
- The scrapper gals needed a Christmas meal.
- I was standing at the pantry counter within a 10- to 20-second window to hear the phone ring.
- Jessica's friend was the one we helped.
- South Grove staff was available and willing to help. (Last year they were already gone on Christmas break.)
- KFC phoned about having extra food.
- Financial resources covered two additional families.

Only God could lay out such a plan to connect all these dots. I am honored to drive the truck and to be the hands and feet of my Savior.

A Rookie's Perspective: Thanksgiving Drive-Thru

“Give me a C!” “Give me a B!” the men, women and kids called out to one another.

They were like cheerleaders. God's cheerleaders, that is—working at Servant's Heart's 2011 Thanksgiving Drive-Thru. You have to see something like this to fully take it in. This was my maiden voyage, and what I witnessed and experienced was nothing short of life-changing: my life.

The event got officially underway after founder Bill Boone led the estimated 100 volunteers in prayer: “Let us be the feet and hands of Jesus.”

Afterward, the traffic directors opened the winding pathway to the cars that were lined up practically bumper to bumper—many of them arriving an hour before the event even began. (I had even seen a man push a bicycle, its handlebar draped with plastic bags, to the event.)

During the next 2 cold, rainy hours, more than 400 vehicles pulled up single-file to the food distribution area. An estimated **\$16,000 in donations** fed **446 families (1,723 people)** with complete Thanksgiving meals. Each windshield had been coded with a big yellow letter from A to E before the cars reached the food staging area. The letters represented the number of members in a family so volunteers could

load the correct boxes filled with yams, instant mashed potatoes, stuffing mix, corn, green beans, cranberry sauce, gravy and more—all the traditional Thanksgiving meal items—along with a turkey, rolls and pumpkin pie (with whipped cream, thank you very much!).



The Beech Grove Fire Department came, as it had every year, to light the night with its huge spotlight. Volunteers of every age worked side by side, many of them holding hot coffee or hot chocolate to wend off the chill as they worked their stations—the turkey truck, the bread and dessert tables, the area stacked with the labeled boxes.

The night's nonstop drizzle didn't dampen a single volunteer's spirit. At age 13, Dominic R. (last name withheld for privacy) is a 3-year veteran Turkey Drive-Thru volunteer.

Still, he proclaimed, “This is awesome!”

Mary Veal framed her face tightly in the furry hood of her coat. She volunteered to support her 16-year-old daughter, a high school sophomore.

“Nicole has a smile on her face that never comes off when she is at Servant's Heart!”



Turkey Drive-Thru volunteers greeted and served 446 families.

Paula Bridge came to work with her granddaughter.

“It's important to set a good example—and that includes grandmas!”

Even the Chick-Fil-A mascot dropped by to say hi, shake hands and pose for photos. (He is thrilled that Thanksgiving centers on fowl, not beef!)

Lisa Harmon, sporting a wide, bright pink headband, enthusiastically greeted each vehicle's passengers as if they were old friends dropping in for the holiday.

“Hi! Happy Thanksgiving!”

I observed warm smiles and heard several “God bless you's” coming from inside the passing vehicles.

One of my most humbling discoveries was learning that five men from Wheeler Mission came to help—they themselves clients of a ministry that serves people in need. When a vehicle overheated, one of these men came to the rescue, knowing just what to do to get the car restarted so the family could head back home.

Other volunteers, such as Don and Barb Andry, participated in another, less visible but equally important way—making home deliveries to **43 families** who had no transportation. Another **70 families (280 meals)** were served hot meals at Tuxedo Park Baptist Church. And let's not forget all the prep work done days and weeks earlier. It's impossible to calculate the people-hours involved.

From start to finish, the Servant's Heart 2011 Thanksgiving Drive-Thru left an indelible impression on my heart, reminding me not only about how many local families are quietly struggling in this economy, but also about how humbling and rewarding it is to serve others.

And isn't that what we are on Earth to do—to love and help one another?

—Debbie Butler

www.servantsheartofindy.org

Hearing God's Call ... by Debbye Butler

Bill Hurt has always been a numbers cruncher. He knew in high school that he wanted to teach math. He pursued that dream first by earning his bachelor's degree from Ball State University (called Ball State Teachers College during his tenure), and a master's degree from Indiana University. His first stint as an educator lasted 7 years and was at Decatur Central High School in Marion County. Hurt retired some 32 years later (total of 39 years in education) from Greenwood Community High School, where he taught everything from basic math to advanced senior math and served as athletic director and then technology director.

"I guess that I have always liked and been fascinated with numbers and numerical operations," says the treasurer of Servant's Heart.

Hurt came to the organization in summer 2006, after a friend from his church's Sunday school class approached him about volunteering and serving on the board of directors. That friend, Glenn Gossage, was treasurer of Servant's Heart at the time.

"After meeting with the board and being asked to join, I agreed to become a board member," Hurt notes. "At that point, I was still feeling my way around and worked on Tuesday evenings, cleaning up, stocking shelves, and doing minor lamp repairs. The deciding factor was that it seemed like a good group of people to work with.

"As I look back now, I know God had a plan for me. I just didn't know it yet."

When Gossage announced that he could no longer serve as treasurer, Bill Boone approached Hurt about taking the role. Initially, he said no.

"I didn't feel qualified. I had been a math teacher, high school athletic director, and a technology director, but none of these positions included accounting ability," Hurt explains.



"Someone else took the job, and after 6 to 8 months, gave it up. Bill sent out an e-mail asking for volunteers. I had a feeling that maybe I should give it a try—shall we say a 'gentle push' from God."

He told Boone he would try if Gossage would train him. More than 5 years later, Hurt continues as treasurer, accounting for every donated penny that comes in and goes out, be it for paying bills like rent, phone service, and utilities or purchasing the thousands of dollars of food for clients each year.

"We have to depend on what I have come to call 'God's Math,'" Hurt says. "Like the parable of the loaves and fishes, we seem to have enough to take care of what we need. As an example, for the first 10 months of 2011, we spent more than we took in every month. We had started the year with a good solid bank balance.

"As we approached September, I started to talk to the board about how we could cut back. We did not have enough money to cover expenses for the rest of the year, let alone Thanksgiving and

Christmas."

Servant's Heart founder Bill Boone continually answered the concern with, "Trust in the Lord for He will provide."

And He did.

"Not only did we pay all the bills, feed over 500 families at Thanksgiving, and help 250 families at Christmas, but we also have more in the bank to start 2012 than we did to start 2011," Hurt notes.

He says it adds up to only one explanation—God. (Read more about that in this edition's "I Drive the Truck.")

Looking to what the future holds for the Servant's Heart ministry, Hurt sums it up with the confidence that whatever it is, God will let the board members know in His time and then will provide what the ministry needs to accomplish it.

"Bill [Boone] says he 'just drives the truck,' and I guess I could say that I 'just count the beans.' But it is God who supplies our needs."

SERVANT'S HEART OF INDY, INC.

Board of Directors	5602 Elmwood Ave., Ste. 212
Bill Boone, Chairman	P. O. Box 805
Linda Pea, Vice Chairman	Indianapolis, IN 46107
Bill Hurt, Treasurer	Phone: 317.788.9433
Jess Albright, Secretary	Editor: Debbye Butler
Jon Albright, Volunteer Coordinator	Webmaster: Gary McCabe
Nita Rich, Member at Large	E-mail: info@servantsheartofindy.org
Anna Williams, Member at Large	

The Bean Counter: Year 2011 Stats

- 542 ... First-timers
- 2,769 ... Return visits
- 88 ... Out of area
- 9,721 ... Lives touched