

I Drive the Truck ... by Bill Boone



I always enjoy driving the truck to the divine appointments that God lays out for me each month. When I pick things up, sometimes I know where things are going,

but more often than not, only God knows where the things are needed. In this newsletter's installment, I would like to share three stories—about a garage sale, Daily Bread, and Ben.

Every May, one of our supporting churches, Southminister Presbyterian, has a rummage sale. They have offered to Servant's Heart their leftover items. This year, when we went to pick up the items, there were several truckloads. While loading the second batch, Starla and Mike offered to take a load for us to save me a third trip.

Once we got to the pantry, Starla noticed that we had appliances. She asked how someone could get a refrigerator. I told her God supplies these things for us to give them away. I asked her if she knew of someone who needed a fridge. She told me that one of the folks from the church was struggling and theirs had just quit working. I told her that the family was welcome to have it. That gal and her husband came the next day to pick it up. You see, it wasn't about picking up the things from the sale. It was about a divine appointment: God putting us in a place to minister to someone we didn't know and serve their need.

I met Laura Pilk in April. Her ministry gathers food and clothing for distribution out of her church, Southeastern Christian Fellowship. They prepare a meal on Thursday nights and let folks choose from what they have each week.

We were connected by a common friend. Laura had come to see our operation, and we shared how each ministry got started. We both were interested in networking to support each other's ministry. During the course of our conversation, Laura shared that her family's stove stopped working. Our common friend had shared with her that we had appliances and that we had an electric stove. When she looked at it, she asked how much. I told her, "No charge." Tears started to well up in her eyes. "God supplied to meet your need," I told her. She wanted to take it home right then but it wouldn't fit in her van. I loaded it in the trailer and dropped it off on the way home.

One Saturday in May, I met Ben. He had taken the bus to within a mile of the pantry and walked the rest of the way, pushing a stroller which he was going to use to haul his groceries home. Ben was the last client of the day so I offered him a ride home. On the way home, Ben had shared that he had lost a good job. He was trying to take care of his wife and new baby. The work that he and his wife can find pays only minimum wage. Ben and his wife are thankful for even that. Ben and his wife don't have a car. They bundle up and walk one hour to get to work each morning. These are the folks we are seeing more and more. They are trying their best. We consider it an honor to serve them with the resources God continues to supply to us.

It is a blessing to drive the truck for Jesus and be His hands and feet.

Scripture of the Quarter

"And my God will meet all of your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:19 (NAS)

The Bean Counter

Statistics for 2011

January – May

- 196 ... First-time visits
- 1,081 ... Return visits
- 34 ... Out of Area
- 3,479 ... Lives touched

Servant's Heart volunteers faithfully keep our food pantry shelves neatly stocked.



Weekly Staple Needs for 90 Families

- 720 Cans of vegetables
- 180 Cans of fruit
- 90 Boxes of cereal
- 180 Cans of soup
- 90 Pasta meals
- 90 Cans of meat
- 90 Jars of peanut butter
- 90 Jars of jelly

\$1,583 ... Staples Cost

An additional \$270 is needed each week to provide toilet paper, shampoo, and laundry detergent for 90 families.

Spring Food Drives

God continues to supply our needs. During the first five months of 2011, several groups hosted food drives for Servant's Heart. We collected a total of **20,524 pounds**.

- April 17:** LifePoint Church food drive netted **4,454 lbs.** of nonperishable food
- April 19:** Boy Scout Troop 107 food drive netted **625 lbs.** of food
- Month-long April:** JFW Industries employee food drive nets **993 lbs.** of food
- Month-long April:** Airtron employee food drive nets **165 lbs.** of food

Stamp Out Hunger Day was a big success. We had volunteers from Grace, Good Shepherd United Methodist, Emerson Avenue Church of God, Boy Scout Troop 107, neighbors, family and friends. Bill and Sondra Belcher led the team at Beech Grove with three generations of Belchers. Larry and Wanda Cooney and Rick Watkins led the team at Garfield Park. There were about 50 postal carriers at both stations, and 40 to 50 Servant's Heart volunteers. It was a lot of hard work, unloading the food in the rain, but God blessed us with **14,287 pounds** of food. This food will keep us supplied for most of the summer. Thanks to all who helped. We need volunteers to help sort the food that was collected. Contact us at 317-788-9433 if you want to help.

Pantry Happenings

- May 17:** Beech Grove Central Elementary Walk of Friendship raised \$370.67

Shoe Boxes: Several weeks ago, we asked everyone to start bringing in shoe boxes. These boxes will be given away to children in the poorer parts of our country. We don't quite know all of the details yet but they will be forthcoming.



We wanted to share with you about five little first-grade girls who came to help us with this project. They were the first grade class of Villa Baptist Academy. Their names were Olivia, Kennedy, Michaela, Mackenzie and Brianna. We asked them to color a piece of news print with their own picture. Our thoughts were to wrap the shoe boxes with the unique paper. After they spent about an hour drawing and coloring, we just couldn't cut the pictures to wrap the boxes. So, we folded them very neatly and placed them in each box with a special card that each girl made to go in the box. We wrapped the boxes with Christmas wrapping paper. The photo shows the girls hard at work.

Hearing God's Call

On Feb. 17, 2011, I made my first trek to Servant's Heart to help at the check-out counters where volunteers record and bag clients' merchandise. It proved to be rewarding ... but something else also tugged on my heart. As is often the case for people who pray, I learned God had other plans for me.

Servant's Heart Vice Chairperson Linda Pea has admirably produced the newsletter in the past, but this remarkable woman has so much on her plate that she had been hoping for someone else to step into the role as the communiqué's editor.

I met one night with Linda and Chairman Bill Boone to talk about their goals for the newsletter. I wanted first to get my arms around how the ministry started in the first place.

Linda warned me: "You'll need Kleenex!"

She was right.

Listening to Bill describe how the ministry was formed was an emotional journey. I regretted I'd worn mascara that night!

Bill explained that he was a member of a local Sertoma Club. One Monday evening in November 2001, members were at a bank, in the basement, where they divided food into piles so Sertoma could assist 14 families.

"The Tuesday morning before Thanksgiving, I got a call from the secretary at Holy Name," Bill recalled.

"My son (Jon) and I went to check with the family to confirm the need. That's when we met Samantha and Cheyenne, ages 4 and 5."

Bill's eyes immediately swelled with tears. He removed his glasses, wiped his eyes, and paused to regain his composure. He continued to tell the story—but didn't get far.

"They hadn't eaten in two days." Bill paused and wiped his eyes again. "We told them we would help them."

Bill and Jon bought two kids' meals at a local fast-food restaurant and drove back to the girls' apartment.

"I guess God wanted Jon and me to go back to the bank and divide the food into another (15th) pile," he explained.

"I got a call from Beech Grove Fire Chief Buckley before I left the parking lot. Chief Buckley told me that he had received a call from ADM Milling that

their employees had collected some food for the holidays. They were having trouble deciding which employee's church to donate the food to."

Bill readily accepted it on behalf of Sertoma.

"Before we got back to the bank, I got another call about another family. Then I got another call from a friend at Southeast Community Center, David Redman, who had several cases of vegetables and other food left over from their Thanksgiving outreach. David asked, 'Could you use our leftovers?'"

"God used us that day and supplied resources in a miraculous way to cover the additional families' needs."

The Sertoma Club chapter folded the following year.

"That's when He called me to feed families year-round, but I didn't know how I was going to do this. My wife (Paula) and I ended up joining another church, where God surrounded us with a group of other couples who helped fill the need for 2002."

It would be another year before the Servant's Heart pantry officially opened—on Oct. 26, 2003, with only 10 volunteers and some 100 pieces of food collected by Grace Evangelical Church.

"We prayed for God to fill the shelves," Bill recalled.

Three days later, he got a call from South Grove Intermediate School. A food drive had netted 4,067 cans of vegetables—all offered to Servant's Heart! It took four volunteers four hours to box and transport the cans to the pantry.

"I knew then that God had affirmed Servant's Heart."

—*Debbye Butler*



It's All in the Bag



Left to right: Servant's Heart Chairman Bill Boone, kids from Beech Grove United Methodist Church, Pastor Mike Hendrix, and Jackie Jacobson

Beech Grove resident **Jackie Jacobson** recently discovered a project on the Internet to help homeless folks: a bed mat.

The bed mat is made from plastic bags. Each mat takes 700 bags and 72 hours of work. Beech Grove school system students collected more than 60,000 bags for this incredible undertaking.

Jackie would love to have additional youth groups partner with her kids from Beech Grove United Methodist Church. She is willing to come and teach your group how to cut bags into strips and roll them into balls. After the bags are tied together, the kids roll the strips into balls that will eventually be "crocheted" into 36-x-72-inch mats.

The mat is waterproof, insulates from the ground, and is resistant to insects.

Servant's Heart plans to partner with area ministries that serve homeless members of our community to distribute mats when they are complete.

SERVANT'S HEART OF INDY, INC.

5602 Elmwood Ave., Ste. 212
Indianapolis, IN 46203

Mailing address:

P.O. Box 805
Beech Grove, IN 46107

Phone: 317.788.9433

Website:

www.servantsheartofindy.org

E-mail:

info@servantsheartofindy.org

Webmaster: Gary McCabe

Editor: Debbye Butler

Upcoming Summer Events

Here's a look at special events that are on tap (so far!) for June and July:

- **June 18:** Fuller Center yard sale fundraiser
9 a.m.–3 p.m.
3939 S. Emerson Ave.
Need volunteers for the Servant's Heart information booth.
- **July 9:** Annual pitch-in picnic for Servant's Heart volunteers.
We'll announce the **Volunteer of the Year** at this fun day of food and fellowship.

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Bill Boone	Chairman
Linda Pea	Vice Chairman
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