

Bishop Sullivan Center

NEWS & REFLECTIONS

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PROJECT ELDERCOOL PROVIDES AIR-CONDITIONERS TO LOW-INCOME ELDERLY *HEAT RELATED DEATHS AMONG ELDERLY PLUMMET*

In the summer of 1999 in Kansas City, there were about 25 elderly people who died due to heat related causes. That tragedy is what gave birth to Project ElderCool the following summer.

We decided that, when it's really hot in Kansas City, a fan is inadequate. So, for the past seven summers we have been providing a window air-conditioner to any indigent elderly person in the Metro area who needs one. Over the past seven summers we have installed 2500 air-conditioners. Our goal is that seniors would have at least one room in their house that they could go to for cool refuge.

A common question we are asked is, "But can they afford the increase in their electric bill?" The answer is that we put \$50 into their electric account, and they are told if they need more we will help with that.

Since starting this program, it is now rare that you read about an elderly person dying of heat in Kansas City. This program is entirely funded by individuals, like you, who are sympathetic to helping these seniors.



Some elderly would look at our installers suspiciously when they arrived at the front door. So, we had t-shirts made to clearly identify who they are. Seen here are Ben Keech(l) and Patrick Steuve (r) before an installation for this elderly man.



NINE YEAR-OLD BOY HAS UNUSUAL BIRTHDAY WISH *EMPATHY COMES EASY TO MANY YOUNG PEOPLE*



Forrest Roudebush knew what he wanted for his ninth birthday: nothing!

Forrest did not want anything for himself; rather he wanted to give to others in need. So, he told his friends whom he had invited to his birthday party that any gifts they brought would be given to less fortunate children.

Forrest said he got the idea from a friend who had done the same thing. Forrest added, "I like being generous."

A few adults who heard of Forrest's generosity were likewise motivated to make financial donations.

Left: Forrest with his younger sister Bridget hauled in the loot from his birthday party. Forrest's gifts were given out to low-income children.

NEW SERVICE LAUNCHED: PROJECT ELDERCUT CENTER OFFERS FREE GRASS CUTTING TO INDIGENT ELDERLY



For so many low-income seniors, their meager social security check is just barely enough to pay for the basics: food, utilities and in some cases, still a mortgage or rent. Paying for home repairs or basic upkeep can be out of their financial reach.

One such item is a mowed lawn. For many seniors, they no longer can physically do it themselves, or there is no family member or neighbor who can or will, and payment for such a service can be relatively high. For all of the above reasons, we have launched Project ElderCut this summer. We will offer to cut the grass – free of charge – for any indigent elderly person who cannot afford to do so.

Artis Guess (l) is grateful for the free grass cutting job from Dustin Wright.

BURDENED WOMAN HAS ONE PRAYER ANSWERED AND ANSWERED FAST

A young mother with two children recently took refuge in a local shelter for abused women. Her ex-husband had abused and threatened her with bodily harm. We have been helping her with various needs the past few months.

We visited with her recently and she told us some of the tragic stories of her abuse. She said she had marks on her body from the beatings. Her oldest daughter recently was in a car accident. Fortunately, the girl was not hurt in the accident. The car was not so lucky.

“We told her that this was a sign that God was paying attention to her.”

Without a car, the mother has not been able to work. She’s poor and feels trapped: can’t work without a car,

can’t buy a car without work. We told her we would try to get her a car. She thanked us and left.

Within 30 minutes of leaving, the phone rang; it was a man who said that he had a car he wanted to donate. We knew immediately to whom we would give the car.

On the way to pick up the car, we said, “Let’s hope this car is not a clunker, as this lady needs something reliable.”

When we arrived, before we could explain to the man to whom we were going to give the car, he said in these exact words, “I want you to know this car is not a clunker.” And it wasn’t. It was probably one of the best used cars we have ever had donated.

We called the young mother to tell her the good news. We told her that this was a sign that God was paying attention to her.

the largest food pantries in Kansas City.

GOOD SAMARITAN ARTWORK REVEALS PARABLE'S MESSAGE "LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR" EASIER SAID THAN DONE

By Thomas Turner

Jesus says you can boil His message down to two things: Love God and love your neighbor. So, like the scribe in the Gospel of Luke, you might ask, "Just who is my neighbor?"

We typically use the word "neighbor" to describe those people who live near our house, usually on the same block. If someone we like lives just a few miles away, we would probably refer to him or her as a "friend," but not as a "neighbor." Neighbor implies physical proximity.

So, when Jesus says we are to love our neighbor, the scribe wants a clarification. Does Jesus mean we just have to love those who are on our block?

Jesus answers the question with the parable of the Good Samaritan. The story is about a Jewish man who was mugged, robbed and left for dead. A Rabbi and Levite pass him by and it's a Samaritan who helps him out. So, in answer to the question, the Samaritan is the neighbor.



To understand the punch-line of this parable you have to know that Samaritans and Jews related to each other as Sunnis and Shiites, as Tutsis and Hutus, as the Hatfields and McCoys, as Rosie O'Donnell and Donald Trump. For Jesus, the one you are to love is the one who is most different than you. There's the ultimate challenge of Christianity.

Is there an individual, or group of people, who really bug you, or even have it in for you? That's the neighbor to love.

This parable has been the subject for many artists. The two works of art portrayed here give two different interpretations of the story, both of which are instructive.

The one above is a picture of a stained glass window at Our Lady of Peace Church at 10th and Bennington. In this work of art, the man who was beaten and robbed is postured to look just like Jesus after being taken down from the cross. The message here is to challenge us to see Christ in the one who is most needy, or, in the one who is most different than us.

The work of art, pictured to the left, was painted by the Frenchman Eugene Delacroix in 1850. Here Christ is portrayed as the Good Samaritan. You can see him straining to help the poor man up on his horse. The message here is that it is tough to help those who are different than us. It's a struggle.

Jesus' command to love our neighbor sounds easy, but it's really not.



Since January, Bishop Sullivan Center has assisted 2,476 families from its two food pantries and on average has served 169 people a night at its soup kitchen.

WANTED: VOLUNTEERS FOR OUR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

HELP PEOPLE HELP THEMSELVES

We are looking for a few volunteers who can help with clients who are seeking employment. Once a week we conduct an orientation session for job seekers. We give them tips on job seeking, interviewing, resume writing and more.

Many employers require applicants to make their application on the company's website. Many of our clients are not computer savvy and need help navigating the Internet for potential jobs and filling out forms on-line.

Currently we have a couple of volunteers who combined donate about 6 hours each week. We could use a few more volunteers. We are looking for people who know how to "surf the net" and who have a desire to help folks who are struggling to find work. A short orientation to the program & training will be provided. If you are interested please contact Kathleen Kennedy at 816-231-0984.



Joan Rockers (l) helps a young job seeker fill out an application on-line.



DAYLILY SALE BENEFITS CENTER

BEAUTIFY YOUR YARD AND HELP OTHERS



John and Sandy Mitchell have an incredible backyard. It's filled with a wide assortment of daylilies. There's a footpath that winds around their extensive garden where you can view the flowers. There's even a babbling brook.

Over the past few years the Mitchell's have generously sold their flowers to benefit the needy served by Bishop Sullivan Center.

There are over 1200 varieties of daylilies. The prices range from \$7.50 to \$200 with special \$100 packages that include bonus plants. You may request your color preference. Plants will be available for pick-up and planting in August.

The dates to come and pick out your daylilies are: Saturday, June 23rd, Sunday, July 1st and Saturday July 7th. Come between 9:30am to 3:00pm.

Their garden is in the backyard of their house located at 6104 Lockton (two blocks east of Mission Road) in Fairway, Kansas. If you get lost, call them at 913-677-4021.



For those who donate to United Way, please consider designating Bishop Sullivan Center as the recipient.

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