

How Hope Gospel Mission Conserves Resources

January 2010



We make use of many things —cords and batteries and lights for recycling

The opening sentence of Hope Gospel Mission’s purpose statement says “Hope Gospel Mission is a Christ-centered rescue mission for people whose lives are in need of rescue and are seeking life changing help.” We invest a lot of resources to rescue, rebuild, and renew the broken lives of the men and women we serve. And as part of that effort, and in keeping with biblical teaching, we also seek to be good stewards of the physical resources entrusted to us. Here are some of the ways we are conserving natural and physical resources.

Over one third of all landfill material in the U.S. comes from construction related waste; it is our goal to salvage much of this reusable material. Our 39,000 sq. ft. Building Hope store is the largest Re-Use center in Wisconsin. Donations and customers come from approximately 20 Wisconsin counties.

Building Hope employs homeless individuals in six-month transitional employment positions. The operation of the store includes a practical, large scale system to recycle building materials, office furniture and appliances. The warehouse at Building Hope is often full to overflowing with items that would otherwise fill up Wisconsin landfills. The only way this program can succeed is if the residents from our shelters working as interns, utilize large box trucks to pick up items from our donors.

One successful large commercial project was the deconstruction of a fitness center where Building Hope (providing job training to men from our shelter) salvaged 8,000 sq. ft. of maple racquet ball court flooring, two dozen desks, dozens of pieces of exercise equipment, two dry saunas, 400 lockers and thousands of pounds of copper, aluminum, and steel.

Our **Bargain Center** contains a modern classroom where homeless program participants spend half of their day for six months learning reading, writing, math, and job skills such as work ethics and interpersonal communications. The other half of the day, program participants work in hands-on job training positions where they are evaluated weekly on progress. The Bargain Center recycles over 400,000 lbs of clothing, 50 automobiles, 40,000 lbs of books, unusable pots and pans, cardboard, cell phones, batteries and many other items per year. At this social enterprise we also utilize two box trucks; one is a 2001 with 160,000 miles and one is a 2005 with 29,000 miles. The 2005 truck was purchased a year ago and represents the ideal truck for our fleet.

After the six months of training at the Bargain Center, program participants are hired in internship employment positions at Building Hope and comprise the majority of the staff at this Re-Use center. Upon completion of the internship, the program participants seek and obtain employment in local businesses, or in one of our businesses, as they become productive members of the Wisconsin workforce. A current obstacle to the ongoing success of our program is that the two high-mileage trucks we use are nearing the end of their useable life span. We do not need brand new vehicles to replace them and we do not want to purchase ten to fifteen year old trucks that will be constantly breaking down. We are in need of one or two good used trucks so we can continue to pick up donations, do deconstruction, and provide training for our residents.



Ruth House residents pricing clothing.

From the Director: Gary Steward



Gary Steward welcomes guests to our Christmas Dinner

In this issue of our newsletter we cover some of the lesser known aspects of our ministry. Many of you have donated goods to either our Bargain Center or Building Hope store as well as shopped in the stores and seen the vast variety of products we offer. What you may not know is what we do with all the products, including those that are not fully useable or that may not sell in our stores. And you may wonder how the residents in our shelters benefit from our stores.

We feel a great responsibility to make the best use of all the resources God has entrusted to us. So we are diligent to look for ways to practically use products as well as the time of our staff, residents, and volunteers. Our stores provide a way for people to donate items they no longer have a need for, but that others deem very valuable and are delighted to purchase and use.

The appliances that are donated to HGM are inspected (and repaired if feasible) before being displayed in our stores. Products that are not saleable are utilized for recycling and scrap metal sales as well as other uses in order to reuse as much as possible and keep them out of landfills. We have also implemented many energy saving programs in our buildings to be more efficient and to reduce costs.

Many of our customers say how pleased they are with our stores and the products they find and use in their homes, rental properties, and businesses. In fact our businesses are destination stores in that people plan shopping trips to visit them. This brings people to Eau Claire and to other local businesses and enhances our economy. Customers are blest as they meet our residents who work in our stores and hear how God and our programs have helped them overcome addictions and issues related to homelessness.

I encourage you to read the articles in this issue to see some of the ways we help keep our community and Western Wisconsin green and clean while helping some of our most disadvantaged neighbors. I invite you to think how you can partner with us in our efforts. If you have any ideas or would like more information on what you have read, please give me a call at 715-552-5566.

Meet the Staff: George Yarber

George Yarber comes from a Racine, Wisconsin family of thirteen children and is a middle child in the birth order. Perhaps that is part of the reason why he loves people. And people love George. A person who has volunteered at Hope Gospel Mission for years describes George as “personable, caring, outgoing, and an all around nice guy who always has time for you.”

George has a long history of caring for people. At age eighteen he joined the Marine Corps and served for six years – over three in Okinawa. For most of his working life he has served physically and mentally challenged people in Wisconsin. In southern Wisconsin he managed a building that housed 64 residents and had a staff of 24.

He has been married to his wife Marge for 35 years and they have six children, fourteen grandchildren, and four great grandchildren. George and his wife used to drive by the Bargain Center and he would wonder what was in the building. One day he stopped in and someone talked to him about volunteering. George had retired early and started volunteering and then was offered a job at the Bargain Center.

Now George is the Volunteer Coordinator at the Bargain Center where he works with people who volunteer, those doing community service, and students doing service learning. He also works in processing the many donations of products that come to the Bargain Center.

In previous jobs George has worked with people who used very vulgar language. In contrast he says “We are doing something super constructive. Helping people and working as caring, highly motivated people.” He tries to nurture a culture that represents Christ. He works to cheer people up and build them up and is people oriented and seeks to resolve issues.

George relates how the residents from our shelters work in the store and observe the staff and how they interact with the customers. The residents learn good work habits and how to interact with people and they take this with them when they leave.

As a young man George once guarded prisoners in Okinawa, then he cared for physically and mentally disabled people, and now he cares for our customers, volunteers, residents, and staff. We salute him for his faithful service!





Trucks are used to pick up building material and appliances

What's In a Truck?

If you have lived or worked in Eau Claire very long you have no doubt seen one of Hope Gospel Mission's trucks on the road. And you may have wondered what they are doing.

Our trucks are used every working day in a variety of ways. The men and women from our shelters are actively involved in our two stores. They receive Christ centered instruction, job training, internships, employment and are contributing members of our local economy. In fact you possibly have met one or more of them as they pick up goods, make deliveries with our trucks, or help you in our stores.

Hope Gospel Mission's fleet of four box trucks is an essential part of the programs to help our residents. We could not provide the services of doing deconstruction of buildings, moving used items to and from our stores, or make available the great amount of goods to our customers without them. Over 80% of the re-use items recycled at Building Hope must be picked up by our box trucks as the donors often have no ability to transport the items they want to donate.

Area businesses, hospitals, universities, public housing facilities, and homes all have items to recycle that must be picked up by our transitional employment trainees using our two aging trucks. Our 1994 and 1999 Isuzu NPR trucks both have nearly 200,000 miles on them. The 1999 truck is developing serious engine failures and the 1994 truck is incapable of accepting a lift gate (making it harder to load and unload donations) and is also developing serious mechanical problems. Building Hope needs one or two good, used box trucks to replace our aging vehicles.

Building Hope is a member of the Building Material Re-Use Association and the Chippewa Valley Home Builders Association. We have been recognized as a leader in sustainable re-use on the cover of the *Builder's Journal* trade publication. Our two re-use stores are among the largest in the U.S. and many other stores come to us for advice. We are making an impact in preserving our environment and enabling previously homeless people to rebuild their lives through Christ and be self-sustaining.

Because of the important services we offer to our residents and to the community (with a very small profit margin), we are launching a **Truck Replacement Project** to upgrade one to two trucks in our fleet. The ideal truck would be a good, used Isuzu NPR or GMC W5500 type truck at an estimated cost of \$30,000 per truck. Building Hope will contribute part of the funds needed and we are looking for individuals, businesses, and grants from foundations to contribute the remaining funds. Tax deductible donations can be made out to Hope Gospel Mission, designated for the **Truck Replacement Project**. Questions can be referred to John Ailie (Stewardship Director) johna@hopegospelmission.org, phone 715-552-5566 or Craig Pedersen (Director of Business Operations) craigp@hopegospelmission.org, phone 715-271-4673.

Feinstein Challenge

Hope Gospel Mission is participating in the **2010 Annual \$1 Million Giveaway to Fight Hunger**. Alan Shawn Feinstein, Rhode Island philanthropist, is offering \$1 million to be divided among hunger-fighting agencies. Any donations (monetary or food items) received during March and April qualify for a portion of the giveaway. The amount we receive depends on the contributions HGM receives in March and April. The more you give, the greater the impact we can have in **helping the homeless and the needy**. Contact us if you need more information or go to: www.feinsteinfoundation.org.

Hope Gospel Mission

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(715) 834-4000

Bargain Center
2511 Moholt Drive
(715) 839-9498

Auto Sales
2615 Moholt Drive
(715) 830-0155

Building Hope
2108 Western Avenue
(715) 838-2084

Visit our website at: www.hopegospelmission.org



Residents working at Building Hope

Would you like to **volunteer** at Hope Gospel Mission?

You can in just 3 easy steps:

1. Go to our website: (www.hopegospelmission.org)
2. Click on "volunteer application" in the upper right corner.
3. Fill out the application and we will contact you.



Hope Gospel Mission is an AGRM member.
www.agrm.org

Visit our website at:
www.hopegospelmission.org



Hope Gospel Mission's Auto Program – helps those in need.



A recent graduate of the Hope Gospel Mission Program with his automobile.

Hope Gospel Mission's Auto Program sits on the west side of the Bargain Center complex. The program accepts donated autos, trucks, boats, and motorcycles. The donated vehicles provide a number of tangible benefits to residents in the shelters as well as to the public. When a man or woman graduates from the two year Renewed Hope Program, they receive a free used vehicle, because not having reliable transportation is a huge barrier to obtaining and keeping a job.

Craig Pederson, Director of Business Operations, says "When we give this amazing gift of transportation, we know our graduate's chances for continued financial success increase greatly. Also, when we give your used automobile to one of our residents, use your van to transport the residents in the program, or sell your vehicle to a needy person, you get full private party Blue Book write-off value on your taxes."

Vern Anderson, who graduated in August, received a 1997 Chrysler Concorde from the Auto Program as a graduation gift. Vern had not owned a car or had a driver's license for 20 years due to alcoholism. By God's grace he is now sober and employed full time at the Bargain Center and greatly enjoys being able to drive to work, go shopping, attend church, and see friends and relatives with his car.

By donating a used auto, you can help residents like Vern receive a good, used auto when they graduate. Donated autos are also sold at a reduced price to people who are struggling financially and need a helping hand. To learn more how you can make a difference, contact Craig Pedersen at 715-271-4673 (HOPE) or by email: craigp@hopegospelmission.org.



Thanksgiving Dinner

Hope Gospel Mission hosted its annual Great Thanksgiving Feast on Thanksgiving Day. 221 meals were served to guests who attended this special gathering. Bags of groceries were available for those in need of food and a toy was given to each child. We greatly appreciate the 111 people who volunteered in decorating, preparing the food, and serving. Thanks to the individuals and businesses who donated food for the meal. Several single people who attended expressed thanks as they would otherwise have been alone on Thanksgiving Day.

Serving together in Jesus's Name

Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?" The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me". Matt 25:37-40



Christmas Dinner

Hope Gospel Mission hosted its annual Christmas dinner put on for the public on Saturday, December 19th at its downtown location. With 285 meals served this year's attendance was the largest ever for any of the three seasonal dinners (Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter) Hope Gospel Mission offers each year. 82 people from the area volunteered over three days to help prepare and serve at this event. Stuffed bears and candy were available for each child who came as well as bags of groceries for the families in need of food. Thanks to everyone who had a part in this special event.

Lives Rescued. Rebuilt. Renewed.



Mail to



PO Box 1127
Eau Claire, WI 54702-1127

Please use my gift to house, feed, and care for those who want to turn their lives around in Western Wisconsin!

Here is my gift of : \$ _____

- \$100 \$50 \$25 \$10 Other \$ _____
- I would like to volunteer.
- I would like a tour.
- I would like information on donating a car or other goods.
- I would like to schedule a speaker.

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Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail address _____