

The Perfect Fit



by Pastor Jim Bennett

In several of my churches I had made furniture for our parsonage. As news got around, I also began repairing furniture for parishioners. When I moved to my last pastorate, the church gave me some space for a shop in the church basement. But someone suggested we make that shop a place for the men of the church to work as well. So we created a ministry to our community, repairing furniture free of charge.

Upon retirement, the urge to continue that work never left me. Finally, I discovered Mission of Deeds, a perfect fit for my desire to serve. It wasn't long before someone here recognized that I could build furniture. Because space is limited where many of our clients live, they are often not able to use the leaves of large dining tables. So, it was suggested that I make them into coffee tables. I've been doing that ever since. I have been able to refine the process so that my goal is to create at least two per week. So far, I have completed nearly 100 tables and even that does not keep up with demand.

My day in the Mission of Deeds wood shop is Thursday. But, the staff has been gracious to me, allowing me to load my Jeep with table leaves to take home to my shop in my basement. I work on tables there in my idle time and bring them back to Mission of Deeds on Thursday.

What keeps me going is an image I was blessed with one day. I saw a woman run through the warehouse and disappear down one of the aisles. This is unusual, because the showroom and loading dock for our clients are on the other side of the building, out of view of the warehouse and shop. Curious, I waited to see what was happening. Soon she reappeared, running out the door to the loading area with one of my tables clutched in her hands. That image keeps me going. That is why I do what I do.

In the shop at my last church, our inspiration was that God is like a master carpenter who created us for His designed purpose and who sent Jesus to restore us like we restored people's furniture. I learned that Tony Triglione founded Mission of Deeds in the same spirit of spiritual service. That's why, for me, Mission of Deeds is the perfect fit.

In Their Own Words

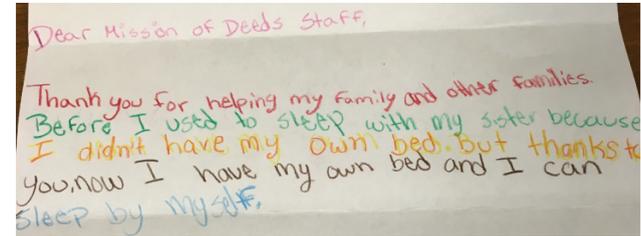
We often receive letters of deep thanks from our clients, many of whom describe Mission of Deeds' services as life altering. Our clients' experiences have affirmed time and time again our belief in the power, necessity and goodness of our mission. Their words tell the story best.

A formerly homeless family wrote, "We can't begin to express the gratitude we have for the gift you gave us - the gift of a new life."

A client wrote, "I am a grandmother raising two grandsons and our funds are very limited. Please know you make a difference in people's lives."

A single mother of three, coming from a shelter for abused women explained that she "was so stressed, anxious, and embarrassed when [she] first arrived, but everyone made it easy to relax, making this a very pleasant and joyous experience."

An elderly man wrote, "I had been in a nursing home for two and a half years and was finally able to move out. I had absolutely nothing in the way of household items. When we arrived, we received much more than furniture, we received love and dignity."



A veteran wrote, "Thank you so very much for furnishing my new beginning. Everyone was so kind. I feel so fortunate to finally have a place to call home."

A client told us several years after receiving our help "I have a job, my life is coming together, thank you."

Got Picasso?

New Art and Collectibles Program

by Reed Pugh

Last December we started a program to accept donations of art and other valuables with the intention to sell them and use the proceeds to fund our bed program. To our pleasant surprise, the program has helped to fund over 110 beds (\$10,000) in just 10 months. We would like to extend our thanks and gratitude to many of our existing friends who have donated items, as well as our new friends who have supported this program. New beds are critical to our mission of helping families, and this program provides needed support to our growing demand for beds.

We have sold paintings, oriental rugs, silverware, jewelry, china, fine pottery, a brass kaleidoscope, a Chinese 4-panel screen, a vintage manual typewriter, an antique (1914) manual sewing machine and many other items. These items have been purchased by buyers locally or as far away as California, and one large watercolor was even shipped to Australia. Right now we even have a beautiful and almost new 9' Brunswick pool table for sale, a pair of hand-knotted Bokhara rugs from Afghanistan and a number of other interesting pieces.

We hope that you would consider the Mission of Deeds when looking to dispense with your valuables, collectibles and art. You can take a tax deduction for your donation as we are a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization, and you can be assured that 100% of the proceeds will be used to purchase new beds for families in need.

If you have questions about the program or would care to donate items, please e-mail reed.pugh@missionofdeeds.org.

Why We Donate to Mission of Deeds

By Paul and Dotty Burstein

We have given to a number of charities over many decades, but the standout is Mission of Deeds (MOD). Here are some of the reasons:

1. The mission of MOD is clear and unambiguous: getting people, many of whom are living on the edge, settled in housing, with furniture, linens, pots and pans, and all the accoutrements required to make a home.
2. MOD is incredibly efficient. Just think of all that is required to perform the mission: picking up donated furniture and other household items in a truck, buying things like mattresses that must be new, sorting/fixing/storing everything until the clients can choose what they need, and packing up and arranging for delivery. Most of the labor gets done by an army of volunteers; the few who are paid, including Director Bruce, have salaries that are quite modest. The last time that we checked, Mission of Deeds total cost to furnish a complete household, free of charge to the client family, is less than \$500, which would not cover the moving cost anywhere else, let alone the total cost.
3. MOD changes people's lives. Without a stable home, parents can't find jobs, their kids can't feel secure in whatever school they happen to be attending at the time, and the future is a big question mark. MOD allows its clients to think past today, to plan.

We know of no other organization where contributors can get that much bang-for-the-buck or have the potential for such a high return on the human scale.

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MISSION of DEEDS, Inc.
*Transforming Generosity into Hope,
Providing Beds & Furniture for People in Need.*

WINTER 2016

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A Message from Our President "Their First Beds"

There are times at Mission of Deeds that are so moving, so much at the heart of the work we do, that we wish every one of you could experience them. One of these happened earlier this year.

A family arrived for their appointment. Mom and Dad brought with them their four year old daughter, the oldest of three children. The parents were among the friendliest and most gracious people we have met, and their little girl was very outgoing and seemed happy. She entertained our volunteers by singing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" and said she would soon start kindergarten "and then go to college". Although the family did not look prosperous, from their demeanor you would never know they had major problems.

We gave them ten pieces of furniture, several beds, bags of linens and boxes of kitchen items. Off they went to set up their new furniture.

The next afternoon our office received one of the most emotional thank you calls Mission of Deeds has ever experienced. The Mom said she was eternally grateful to our charity. The children, ages two, three and four, had slept through the night for the first time in their lives. That morning they had wanted to make their own beds, they were so happy to have them. Why the excitement? These were the first beds they had ever had.



"Angels on Earth" by Paula Goss



One recent fall day, I answered the phone at Mission of Deeds to hear a woman softly sobbing. She explained that she had been a client of Mission of Deeds a few hours earlier and as she sat in her apartment unpacking the household goods that we provided to her, she noticed a full set of beautiful dishes with delicate flowers that even included sugar and creamer bowls.

"You don't understand how important this is to me. I asked for just two plates and your 'angels on earth' gave me this wonderful set. They even found a heart shaped serving bowl with the same type of flowers on it. By giving me such pretty dishes, the ladies made me feel so good about myself. They also gave me a smiley face mug that is making me smile and I will think of them when I use it. I wanted to call and let them know how happy they have made me."

Kathy and Ruthie are two retired schoolteachers and best friends who volunteer on Fridays. They were just doing what they happily do best each week...helping clients get a new start on life and providing them with much needed dignity.

A Message from Our Executive Director “Hollywood Comes to Mission of Deeds!”

“Action” is a constant at Mission of Deeds, but the “Lights, Camera” part had been elusive. That changed in September when a professional video crew from New Media Associates spent two long days at our facility.

It really was like a movie set for those two days. Powerful lighting, special screens, a boom microphone and movie-quality cameras captured every aspect of what we do. One of our mattress carts even doubled as a platform for a cameraman to take a moving picture of volunteers at our long lunchroom table.

The video project grew out of discussions among our Board of Directors and Development Committee about how we can better get the public to know about Mission of Deeds. So many of you support us, for which we are deeply grateful. Yet, there are many more people who do not know us, or may know of us, but not be clear on exactly what we do. We believe the video will spread the word and clarify our mission.

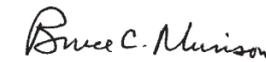
The video will be on our website at www.missionofdeeds.org in December. It is short and we

hope you will visit us on the web to view it. We also want to hear your ideas about how we can get more people to watch it, through web links, speaking engagements and more. Please contact Beth or me with your ideas.

From the outset of the project it was exceptionally important that the cost of the video be paid in keeping with our standard of good stewardship. Thus, members of our Board of Directors made special donations, above and beyond their regular support, to cover the full cost of the video. Not one penny of your generosity went to fund this project. As they might say in Hollywood, “no donor’s funds were harmed in the making of this video.”

The video stresses our gratitude for the extraordinary support you give us. From financial support, to volunteer time, to donations of furniture and household goods, you make our work possible. We are grateful, as are our clients.

As always, you have our thanks.



Bruce C. Murison
Executive Director



STEM Education at Mission of Deeds

Ever since Tony Triglione founded Mission of Deeds in 1993, the sole purpose has been to give beds, furniture and household items, without charge, to people in need. Yet the question has sometimes occurred to us: is there something else we could do to help?

This question especially occurred to Tony’s son and daughter-in-law, Art and Jan Triglione, who have a strong interest in doing more to help children. With Art and Jan’s inspiration, and the creativity and research of longtime volunteer Joe Blundo, the Mission of Deeds educational funding initiative has been born.

The purpose of the program is to pay the tuition for qualified low income students, especially the children of our client families, to attend special afterschool and summer programs in STEM subjects

– science, technology, engineering and math. The program’s focus is on STEM because that is where the jobs are and on middle school students because that is a crucial time to set children on the right path. The program’s ultimate objective is to help children break the cycle of poverty.

Early results are promising. This summer, eight students from Woburn attended Acera School in Winchester, thanks to Mission of Deeds funding. Each spent an intensive week of hands-on learning in areas such as robotics, forensics, engineering and computer programming. They were excited to learn from “real scientists”, several of whom are associated with both Acera and MIT. All our students completed their courses with flying colors.

Over time, we expect to expand this program to more communities and more STEM schools. Our focus on

beds and furniture will never change, but we have high hopes that this initiative will combine with our furniture program to give families additional promise for their futures.

Initial funding to launch the program came from Art and Jan, as well as a generous donation from Reading Cooperative Bank. Future support for the STEM program will come from STEM-specific foundations. Your unrestricted support of our general operations will provide the overall organizational structure under which the STEM program, as well as the beds and furniture program, will both thrive.

Who knows – maybe the next Bill or Melinda Gates will sleep in a bed provided by Mission of Deeds and be inspired to pursue their field through a course funded by this program.



Meet the Thursday Ladies

Volunteers make the Mission of Deeds hum. Their energy, spirit of selflessness, caring for others, friendships formed and joy as they go about their work, are wonders to behold every day. On Thursdays, all those qualities are on special display.

Working in the linens and kitchenware areas, the Thursday Ladies are an inspiration to everyone who meets them. Except for small children, we tend not to give ages in this newsletter. Let us just say that, except perhaps for one, these ladies were children a long time ago. (No matter how he words that, the writer knows he will be in trouble next Thursday.)

Barbara, Carol, Ellie, Rita, Arlene, Nancy and Erin came to us through all sorts of ways – as donors, through churches or through newspaper publicity. Another Barbara, who recently “retired” after almost 20 years here, came to us through her church and we believe Posy, who is on temporary medical leave, heard about us from a little birdie. Some of them have been here through Mission of Deeds growth from a tiny organization and have remained loyal despite early working conditions that can only be described as primitive.

The friendships they have formed here are remarkable and they care for each other not just on Thursdays but throughout the week. They share each other’s joys, are there for each other through ups and downs and in every way have become one family. Last year there was a Thursday Ladies Christmas party at one of their homes.

Of course, that party was not held on Thursday. Nothing gets in the way of their service here on that day, as their families and medical providers are regularly told. Over the years they have serviced hundreds and hundreds of Mission of Deeds clients and have folded sheets and packed dishes so numerous that it would take a supercomputer to tally them all. Each week we see the ladies pushing convoys of shopping carriages out to the client loading area, the items in those carriages having been chosen with the same care as if they were giving them to their own children.

No mention of the Thursday ladies would be complete without mentioning laughter, since these ladies *definitely* have a sense of humor. During their coffee break and at lunch, as well as at other times, the laughter is absolutely deafening and must carry all over Reading. Betty White would be right at home here on Thursdays.

Loyal, selfless, fun, caring and kind – all those describe our Thursday Ladies. But most of all, in everything they do, they show the joy of the sisterhood of the eternally young.

Meet Cindy Silvey

If you call Mission of Deeds to have us pick up your furniture, or for any other purpose, chances are good that the pleasant voice answering our phone will be Cindy Silvey.

Cindy heard about us from her close friend Janice Triglione Weiner, our founder’s daughter. Cindy began as a volunteer in the linens area and moved to the phone desk a few months later. Her quiet competence, diligence and compassion impressed everyone. It was a natural progression that Cindy joined the staff as Phone Desk Coordinator when that position became open in 2013. Cindy has been the principal voice of Mission of Deeds ever since.



Cindy handles many hours on the phone herself and also coordinates the rest of the phone staff, who are all dedicated and experienced volunteers. These are key positions, because everything from furniture donations, to clients and caseworkers seeking appointments, to inquiries from potential volunteers, starts with a phone call. All the calls need attention to detail and many of the calls require special care, especially from clients experiencing the stress of life’s most difficult transitions.

Cindy enjoys the challenges of her job and appreciates the tireless efforts of Mission of Deeds volunteers. Of course, there are times when the work is not easy, especially if the schedule does not allow timely scheduling of clients and donors. (Sometimes it’s enough to cause Cindy and her phone crew to wish they could drive the truck!)

In addition to her duties at Mission of Deeds, Cindy is dedicated to her family, including her husband ,Ed, their three adult children and their seven year old Cavachon named Mia.



A Story of Fresh Beginnings

by Nancy Hodgkin

I have always heard of the great reputation that Mission of Deeds has for caring for the practical needs of the community. I had first hand experience earlier this month when I had come in contact with a refugee family. I first met this family with two young children and a baby in a shelter in Lynn. They shared their story of indescribable horror escaping Iraq and fleeing to Jordan for medical treatment. They later came to our country through an arduous process as a refugee and lived in various shelters for two years. Shortly after I met them, they were able to move into an apartment with only a few bags of clothing and absolutely nothing else.

I called Mission of Deeds, explained their plight and set up an appointment to receive some household furnishings. We drove up with our U-Haul truck with this young family and an interpreter to assist in the language barrier. The need was daunting and the list was long and we were not sure what to expect.

Donna, Bruce and their team graciously guided the family through the process of picking out furniture. Meanwhile, a new crib and beds were being wheeled out to the truck. Bags of essential household furnishings were packed by a team behind the scenes and magically appeared ready to go. They were attentive to how Iraqi families love colorful items and went the extra mile to provide those items that would help them feel at home.

Being treated with respect and compassion, I saw dignity and hope restored in the faces of these weary parents and smiles from the children with books and stuffed animals to take home.

In one hour, everything was packed on the truck and ready to go. It has been a month since this young family has settled into their apartment. They smile as they welcome me and proudly show me their home. They have been touched by the kindness of strangers and are very grateful.

Who is the Mission of Deeds?

Tony Triglione founded Mission of Deeds in 1993 to provide beds, furniture and household goods, without charge, to people in need.

Tony had grown up very poor, then became highly successful in business, but never forgot what it had been like to be poor. His vision was that Mission of Deeds be a place where people would receive needed items while being treated with kindness and respect.

People like you donate furniture and housewares to us and we buy the mattresses and box springs from your financial donations. We receive no government or United Way funding – it’s all neighbors helping neighbors. Thanks to your generosity and the hard work of our volunteers, Mission of Deeds has furnished the apartments of many thousands of the previously homeless, survivors of domestic abuse, displaced veterans, the abandoned elderly and others in great need.

With Tony’s vision as our guide, we look forward to serving the community for years to come.