

MLM VISIONS

Getting to the Doctor—With a Little Help from MLM

MLM recently stepped in to help a U.S. Army veteran and his wife who were practically locked inside their Kansas City home because of his disability and a major transportation road-block.

Manuel Jimenez, who is 83 and chronically ill after a stroke and heart attack, requires regular visits to a doctor and uses a wheelchair and hospital bed at home. Sarah, 80, cares for him but found it increasingly impossible to wheel her husband up and down several steps in order to take him to visit their doctor. Sarah's prayers came true recently when MLM volunteers Leroy Zimmerman and Scott Brosz built a ramp that now allows the couple to easily reach the street and transportation.

"We were blessed with that ramp," Sarah said. "There's no other way to put it. Now we are able to get my husband to his doctors' appointments."

With chronic bronchitis and other issues, Manuel had been missing many of his appointments, so the access issue was becoming a health question as well. "Share-a-fare sent a letter that they could no longer pick him up from the porch," she explained. "I had breast cancer surgery last fall and can't get him up and down the stairs. It was just a struggle to get him to the doctor."

MLM's Leroy and Scott made quick work of the problem, however. "They came here and in less than two days they had put the ramp up," Sarah said. "They did a good job, too. They put that ramp up, and it was incredible. They're hard workers."



Sarah and Manuel Jimenez were all but trapped in their home, unable even to make Manuel's critical doctors visits, until MLM volunteers built a ramp.



Heritage Members Plan To Keep Programs Alive



Jean and Reynold Schwabe: making sure the work will continue.

Reynold and Jean Schwabe have been involved with the area's Lutheran community for just about as long as they can remember, and they have gone the extra mile to make sure key programs will continue after they are gone.

Reynold recently recalled first encountering Metro Lutheran Ministry decades ago when he was with the Lutheran Youth Encounter and later with the Air Force at the Richards Gebaur base.

"My boss and I went to meet Luther Johnson when he moved into Immanuel (Lutheran Church) on Wesport," Reynold recalled. "We partnered on the youth convention in 1974. I've always been impressed with them."

In 1977, they saw even more of MLM's work
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Activities Increase To Meet Growing Needs

If it seems like MLM has become busier than ever, you're right.

A look at the MLM event calendar (www.mlmc.org/news/eventCal.html) tells much of the story. Servant events are occurring with almost monthly regularity, while the hugely successful Breakfast Ministry and Food Giveaways are now weekly or monthly. Youth dodgeball, midnight volleyball, trivia bowls and other fun help increase awareness and raise funds. Even more are being planned for 2011.

Board members and other volunteers are a major reason for these successful stories. But an equally important component that holds all of this together is Suzanne Bartling, MLM's director of Outreach Ministry.

The effect of these service events are important in two different ways. First of all, the area's hungry and needy are receiving more services and help. This is evident in the long lines of people forming to receive food items or a hot breakfast on Saturday mornings. Second, more and more families from all walks of life are volunteering at MLM, which gives these volunteers the opportunity to show Christ's love to those in need.

These fellowship and fundraising events are also important in that they raise awareness of the needs and the different ways to be involved. Plus, they raise needed funds to continue the ministry of MLM. The service events and the fellowship/fundraising events work together to increase awareness, involve-



Volunteers from Redeemer Lutheran Church worked during a May servant event, one of many activities that helped contribute to the growing MLM calendar.

ment and support to those who are struggling in our midst.

POEO To Address Area Needy With Fun Event

An internationally renowned singer will join Metro Lutheran Ministry Nov. 6 for the Power of Each One.

Scheduled for the Kansas City Starlight Theatre stage, the special evening is the major fundraising event for Metro Lutheran Ministry, which provides food and shelter to the homeless and needy throughout the met-



Angela Hagenbach will grace the Starlight Stage at POEO 2010.

ropolitan region.

Angela Hagenbach, a Kansas City native, who sings everything from swinging jazz and blues to Latin jazz, will provide entertainment. A former fashion model, she has appeared at festivals and jazz clubs all over the world.

Several MLM supporters will be recognized, including volunteer of the year, LeRoy Zimmerman.

Power of Each One will be held on the spacious, climate-controlled main stage of the Kansas City Starlight Theatre, 4600 Starlight Road. The 6:00 p.m. welcome reception will be followed by a 6:30 p.m. buffet dinner and entertainment.

Tickets are \$100 per person (\$60 of which is tax deductible), and proceeds will help support MLM programs serving the homeless and needy in greater Kansas City. For more information, contact Jim Glynn at (816) 931-0027 or visit www.mlmc.org.

Heritage Members Plan To Keep Programs Alive

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following the destructive flooding that year along Brush Creek and other waterways. MLM helped needy families whose homes had been damaged or destroyed. Reynold still recalls being impressed with the work.

"That's the thing that struck me over the years," he says today. "They really do deliver help to the homeless and the needy. There's not a lot of overhead. You've been to the building (MLM offices)—it's not fancy. They work to make sure that every dollar possible goes

to those who need it. That's what always impressed us."

Jean Schwabe also has a long experience with MLM programs. She has been active in recent food giveaways and other projects where MLM helps distribute food and other necessities.

All of this and more helps explain why they've committed funds from their estate to help MLM programs after their passing.

The Schwabes are now members of the MLM Heritage Society, living stakeholders who have notified MLM that they

have made a planned gift to MLM. These gifts ensure funding for MLM programs even after the donor's life of support has ended. This provides MLM services a critical continuity, ensuring their lasting help to the homeless and needy of metropolitan Kansas City.

"You see what they do and how they do it," Reynold concluded. "You want to see that continue."

For more information on the MLM Heritage Society, contact Jim Glynn at (816) 285-3117.

Support Comes in Many Forms for MLM Programs

I recently stopped by Metro Lutheran Ministry on my way to work. It was a hot, sticky day, and I rushed from my air-conditioned car to the front door of MLM. As often happens, I was pressed for time and in a hurry.

Walking through the front door, I saw several people waiting to sign in. I noticed people of all ages and races, filling the seats and standing against the wall. Next, I turned to the children's waiting area, with a Noah's Ark mural on one wall and the Holy City on the other. The room was filled with boys and girls, laughing, smiling and enthusiastically playing with toys. While their parents sat anxiously, waiting for help to find food and shelter for their families, the children seemed happy and content in the safety of Metro Lutheran Ministry. I felt uplifted. I knew that by the end of the day, those parents were going to find God's helping hand at MLM.

I worked my way through the crowd and climbed the stairs to Jim Glynn's office. As always, Jim was the calm in the storm. He gave me an update on client requests for help, and then we visited the Dykman Education Center. Clients worked diligently on job applications,

while two beautiful twin girls danced and played with MLM team members. I watched from a distance as MLM's counselors worked to help these clients break the cycle of poverty and provide for their families. That is no small feat in these economic times, with unemployment rates at an all-time high and experts predicting it will climb even higher next year.

A recent *Kansas City Star* featured a story about the increase in first-time visitors to food pantries. Metro Lutheran Ministry was blessed to be part of the story, which included a picture of Metro Lutheran Ministry's food pantry and two first-time visitors who had recently lost their jobs in the home health care industry. The *Star* story noted that calls to the United Way's 2-1-1 helpline increased 23 percent between 2009 and 2010. Metro Lutheran Ministry is the number one referral source given to United Way callers seeking emergency help.

Our theme for this year's Power of Each One event on Nov. 6 is "Serving Neighbors in Need." My recent visit to Metro Lutheran Ministry reinforced this message for me. The backbone of MLM is and will be the thousands of volunteers who support and sustain MLM's food pantry and emergency assistance programs. Whether it is helping with food distribution, feeding the hungry at Saturday breakfasts, working to organize gifts at the MLM Christmas store or helping with minor home repair for elderly clients, our volunteers make an important difference! Many thanks for all that you do! Please continue to volunteer your time and talent – MLM needs you.

I am also asking today for your financial support of MLM's mission. Please support the Power of Each One fundraising event on November 6, by attending



Vicki Westerhaus: MLM is the number one referral source given to United Way callers seeking emergency help.

yourself, and if you can, becoming or asking your employer to be a patron or sponsor. The event will be held on the main stage of Starlight Theatre and promises to be another magical evening, this time honoring our volunteer of the year, LeRoy Zimmerman and featuring jazz singer Angela Hagenbach. All we are missing is YOU!

Vicki Westerhaus,
President,
MLM Board of Directors

Back to School Success

Hundreds of children from needy families are starting school this fall with more than high hopes.

All three of MLM's locations held back-to-school events this year. Wyandotte County's was held Aug. 7 and Clay County's Aug. 11, while a new back-to-school fair was organized for MLM's central office. Increasing numbers of supporting congregations also collected back-to-school items for MLM, helping hundreds of children to begin school with important basics that other children take for granted.



This back to school event was at MLM's Wyandotte center.



Jane and Ella Markley, daughters of Patty and Brian Markley, held a book sale to benefit the people that MLM serves. Held at their Overland Park home, the sale earned a total of \$129. The proceeds were boosted by the efforts of two young neighbors who also held a lemonade stand.

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"with God all things are possible." —Matthew 19:26

MLM Friends Group Forms

Friends of Metro Lutheran Ministry is a new group designed specifically for young professionals and parents of young children who want to be involved in service and fellowship/fundraising events to change the lives of those in need.

On Saturday, May 8, Friends came together at MLM's midtown offices to build shelves for the children's waiting

area and also to help carry food items for hungry families during the MLM Food Giveaway. The Aerni family helped distribute and carry food during the event.

"Our family would really love to continue learning about ways to serve with MLM," Gretchen Aerni said.

Friends will hold another Food Giveaway on Saturday, Oct. 9. For more information on Friends or to sign up for the October event, please call Laura Pace, MLM Board member, at 913-831-2540 or email friends@mlmkc.org.

Vote Now On Thrivent "Choice"

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans has sent letters to eligible members to designate some of its charitable funds. Members vote online or by phone to designate all or portions of their designated "Choice Dollars" for listed beneficiaries, such as congregations, colleges, camps, seminaries, and Lutheran social ministry organizations. Visit www.Thrivent.com/choicedollars or call 1-800-847-4836 to vote for MLM and learn more.



Robb and Isabel Aerni were among the first members of MLM Friends May 8 when they helped with a Food Giveaway. Also in attendance were Isabel's siblings, Tori and Blake.



Nicole Fredman was presented the TeenNick HALO "Do Good in Your Hood" Award by television star Nick Canon during a surprise visit Aug. 14 during an MLM food distribution. The visit was also a surprise for Director Jim Glynn, who received a \$10,000 check for MLM from TeenNick Halo Awards as well!