



Recruiting, training and supporting Christian volunteers for nursing home ministry

Special Treasures



Over the years I have spotted items on people's tree lawns that apparently lost their value and were being left for garbage collection. Since I have a mechanical and carpentry background I know how to repair and put to good use some of these unwanted items. I have saved significantly on several items that needed only minor repairs and cleaning. Though it was a bit humbling to stop and load up someone else's throw-aways, I considered my "Tree Lawn Specials" a blessing from God.

Some examples are: a \$150.00 vacuum cleaner needing only a \$3.00 belt, a \$125.00 gas grill needing only an \$8.00 igniter. (It was actually free because another grill being tossed had a good igniter) a desk that needed a shelf repaired and reinforced with \$2.00 worth of supplies. One of my favorites was the lawn mower that needed only the fuel bowl cleaned. I ran that thing for over 5 years.

Yes, one man's unwanted trash can certainly be another man's useful, and even special, treasure.

Not all, but more than a few, of the people who reside in our nation's care homes are like those items left on the tree lawn. They appear to have no value and so they are discarded from mainstream society.

Clarence was one such man. His life was filled with brokenness and losses. At the age of 55 he had a stroke and was placed in a nursing home. This is where I meet Clarence and we became close friends. God allowed me to share the

Gospel with him and He opened his heart to receive Jesus. For almost ten years God worked in and through Clarence, helping him to repent of past sins and to forgive those who hurt him. He had very few visitors, but he became a friend to many lonely residents, encouraging them to come to the weekly Bible fellowship hour. He would also go around in his wheelchair at night saying "good night" and "God bless you" causing the people to know someone cared. Clarence has been gone for a few years now, but I still miss his friendship and look forward to spending eternity with him.

Jesus is happily picking these treasures up, repairing their souls and giving them a place in His house. He is not embarrassed about their condition and He wills that none be left behind. I count it a privilege to partner with Him in His renovation business. B.G

Since God Cares Ministry was started in 1994, over 30,000 residents have been ministered to by nursing home missionaries who serve like the Good Samaritan. God is pleased that you pick up and minister to those who are left to die. I sincerely believe that He wants to use many more of us to minister to millions more over the next 20 years.



Peace
On
Earth



Thanks be to God

This year for Thanksgiving we had a special service where we asked the residents to pick their favorite songs from the Sonshine hymnal. After we got a list of several songs, we started playing and singing them with the group. Between songs, I asked our friends if they had anything for which they could give thanks to the Lord. We had over 30 people in the room and at least 15 of them gave thanks to God for something in their lives. One lady particularly touched me when she shared her story. "I was going in many directions in my life and I really didn't know where I was going. There was some good, but also some bad. When I heard about the Bible study here at the care center, I decided I would try it. God really got hold of my heart and he has begun to change everything. I am so thankful for this place, for this Bible study, and for God to help me." We too are thankful to God who has allowed this 82 year old woman to hear His voice and begin a personal relationship with Jesus. B.G

We Appreciate You!

On a most beautiful autumn evening last month, some of the most beautiful servants of the Lord came together at Bay Presbyterian Church for the 11th annual power night banquet given by God Cares Ministry. These people, so beloved of their Lord, go faithfully, courageously, and lovingly into some of the most forgotten places in our country to minister to some of the saddest and loneliest people in the land. They bring themselves - their kindness, their smiles, their words of hope and life, their prayers, their warm and loving presence, and even more importantly, they bring Jesus -with them and in them. In fact, they go *because* of Jesus in them, telling them that if they want to minister to Him they can do this by "visiting the sick." They are obeying His command to "go and make disciples." You, our dear volunteers, give your precious time, energy, and effort on behalf of those who appear to have so little to offer in return.



Most of you don't recognize yourselves for who you truly are. You minister in places not generally regarded as exciting, rewarding, highly visible and valued. You think perhaps no one notices what you do, how much you do, how difficult it is, how much effort and sacrifice it takes, how challenging it can be sometimes, and how sad it is when you see your friends decline, grow more feeble and die. But we see, and we know. And far more importantly, Jesus knows.

And people who don't visit nursing homes don't realize the *blessings* that you receive from ministering there. They don't see the smiles you bring to lined and worn faces, they don't see the peace of Christ settle upon souls laboring under regret and grief and loss and fear. They don't feel the grateful touch of a thin and feeble aged hand, they don't see the way eyes dimmed by age light up when you walk into a room. They don't feel frail bodies relax into the warmth of a gentle hug from a treasured friend and visitor.



Board member, Fran Palffy



We at God Cares understand all this, and this is why Power Night is our favorite time to gratefully express our admiration and appreciation for all the volunteers and supporters in nursing home ministry. We so want you all

to know how much we recognize and honor you for your service. We know that nursing home ministry can be overlooked and unrecognized by many people even in the church and we want to single you out for special recognition on this night every year.

We hope this banquet gave the 155 participants a slight glimpse of the feast to come when Jesus Himself smiles at you, throws His arms around you, takes your hand and says, "**Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you...**" (Mt. 25:34) Next year we hope to see even more of you there so that we can personally greet and thank you for all you do. *A.R.S*

In Loving Memory



Mary Doran

From Bill Doran Sr

Lucille Ewing

- **Happy Birthday Mom** -

From Roberta & Ed Kiesel
Barb & Larry Pack

Mary Ann Goodrich

From Marilyn Godshall

Anna Thomay &

Eleanor Varga

From Bob & Rosemary Thomay

Corea Keener

From Jutta Czachorowski

Nikos Halkiadakis

Bill Goodrich

John Palffy Jr

From Jim & JoAnn Rettinger

Sonchu Malak

From Ann Floyd

Genevieve Matras

From Paul & Fran



"...making a list, checking it twice."

Bridging the Gap



Last month at our training program in Madison, OH, I was greeted by Alicia. She is gifted with the ability to do sign language. She has offered to visit in care homes where a person may need this form of communication. If you know someone in a care home, on the east side of Cleveland, who would appreciate a visit from a Christian friend who can sign, would you please contact our office so we can help bridge this communication gap. *B.G*

Dear Friends, I hope you will consider giving a charitable donation to benefit our friends in care homes. Throughout the past two years we have been poising ourselves to multiply our services to all care homes in the USA. The more finances we receive, the more missionaries we can equip to help nursing home residents find peace and hope in Jesus. It costs us about \$20 per year for each resident reached by those we train and support.



We appreciate how some have given donations in lieu of gift exchanges at Christmastime. Thank you for doing what you can. Our Lord Jesus promised that He Himself would repay us for our kindness given to those who cannot repay us. Luke 14:12-14

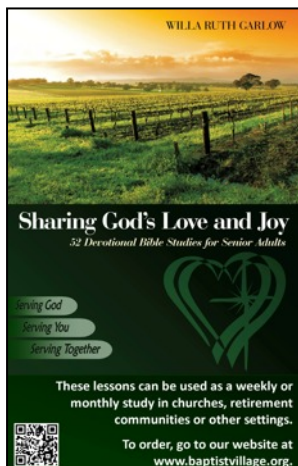
In Christ's service with you, Chaplain Bill

PS: We have enclosed an envelope for your convenience, or you may contact our office, or use our website for credit card donations.



Blessed Assurance

I began to visit Isabel, and had invited her to our Bible Study. If she was not at the service, I would go and visit her afterwards in her room. Pretty soon she started to come to every service. She enjoyed the old hymns we played and the Bible lessons. I noticed that she had a tape player in her room, so I took her the tapes from SonShine so she could listen to them. One particular Saturday, I did not see Isabel at service, so I went back to her room to see how she was. She was fine--she was lying in bed with her favorite pillow--(which our church had made for the residents.) I told her that I missed her at the service, and that the service was about the Joy of the Lord. I asked her if she would like to have a "mini version" and she said yes. When I was finished she said, "I would like to have the Joy of the Lord you are talking about." I asked if we could pray--I led her in a prayer of reassurance of Salvation and the Joy of the Lord. We had several visits afterwards which she shared her appreciation and joy. Jesus has now called Isabel home, and I am looking forward to meeting her on the Streets of Gold in Heaven! *By Jane Strauss*



A New Resource

Our good friend Chaplain Chris Finley of the Baptist Village Communities, sent us a copy of a new devotional, **"Sharing God's Love and Joy"**, by Willa Ruth Garlow. This book contains 52 Bible studies written for senior adults and their families, with hymn suggestions and a weekly activity. It highlights seasonal holidays when applicable, and incorporates Biblical principles into the activities. If you lead a weekly Bible study in a health care center, you will find this a valuable resource. Each session is a complete guide for your Bible fellowship hour. May be ordered at www.baptistvillage.org.

God Cares Ministry exists to equip Christians to help meet the spiritual needs of people in long term care homes.

Serving the care home mission field since 1994.

Visit our website:

GodCaresMinistry.com

You will find easy access to:

- ◆ Current and past newsletter articles
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- ◆ Order nursing home ministry books and training videos
- ◆ Full details & registration for upcoming training programs
- ◆ Large Print Scripture portions
- ◆ Post your nursing home visit testimony



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*“Let there be kindness in your face, in
your eyes, in your smile, in the warmth
of your greeting...Don't only give your
care, but give your heart as well.”*

Mother Teresa

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GOD CARES NEWS is the official newsletter of God Cares Ministry; edited by Founder and President, Bill Goodrich. It is published bimonthly to encourage, instruct and inform Christians who are interested in nursing home ministry. You may contact our office for a free subscription (email or US Mail) or permission to copy.

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BIG NEWS

National Recognition for our friends in nursing homes

One of our prayers for 2011 has been that God would allow the nursing home mission field to become more visible. By His grace He led *Christianity Today* magazine to highlight, not only God Cares Ministry, but several other ministries to the elderly. I am, of course, honored to have God Cares recognized in this article, because it is insightful, compassionate, and cutting-edge. It gives a very timely overview of the enormous challenges facing our country and the church as our population ages. I highly recommend that anyone involved in senior adult care read this article and share it with others. I plan on giving a copy to my own pastor and a few other leaders as well.

We would like to thank CT & journalist, John W. Kennedy for speaking up on behalf of our dear friends confined in the care homes. The increasing importance of the church's role and responsibility in this great mission field must be proclaimed. B.G.

Let us continue to pray that the Lord of the Harvest brings forth more workers for the Harvest field. (Luke 10:2)

(A copy of this article is available on our website)



Learning Opportunities

January 23, 2012, at 6:30PM

Our friend Elaine Edkin will be leading a learning and discussion group for those involved with nursing home ministry. The focus for this session will be "Understanding Dementia". Elaine, an RN, has years of experience working with those effected by Dementia and leads a few care teams at Bay Presbyterian Church. For registration you may contact Elaine directly: e.edkin@oh.rr.com or 440-937-8486

March 12-15, 2012

Chaplain Bill Goodrich will be sharing several training sessions at the OCEA's Christian Ministry Conference. We will also have a full display of ministry resources available for purchase. Details will be in our next God Cares News or see www.ocea.org