

Answering Your Questions

about

Project Help

The Community Food and Clothing Bank

mail to: PO Box 423
Angola, Indiana, 46703

Ministry Location:
711 E Harcourt Road, Angola
Phone/Fax: 260-665-9697
www.helpprojecthelp.org

June 2009

This booklet is designed for church leaders but everyone will find it to be a good source of information. Because Project Help's ministries are always being refined and redirected to fulfill its mission statement, it is possible that the answers to some of the questions may change without notice.

The questions are not in any order of importance.

◆ **GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT PROJECT HELP'S NEW BUILDING**

The new Project Help Community Building was not designed until we received the generous donation of land. Believing that Project Help's ministry will expand to the space allotted for it, the building was purposely built as large as possible to fit this lot and still meet all parking space requirements.

◆ **TELL US ABOUT THE NEW FACILITY.**

- ◆ The facility is 9,555 square feet, all on one level.
- ◆ It looks like an oversized house rather than a commercial building - aesthetically pleasing with a color scheme similar to most new homes in that area of Angola.
- ◆ It has zone heating and cooling so only the areas of the building being used are heated or cooled
- ◆ Very energy efficient
- ◆ Large, covered receiving and drop off area.
- ◆ Community learning and meeting room for others to use.
- ◆ Small retail store
- ◆ Much larger food pantry

◆ **WHY DID PROJECT HELP BUILD A NEW FACILITY?**

Our previous building was too small to adequately hold, sort, and utilize the huge volume of donations given by Steuben County to the approximately 2,000 under-resourced families served by Project Help. With a new, large facility, we are able to expand into other areas of ministry. Working together with existing social service agencies, Project Help is a ministry that will expand to the space available as it endeavors to meet community needs.

◆ **WHAT BECAME OF THE PREVIOUS PROJECT HELP LOCATION?**

That building is jointly owned by Project Help and Turning Point, Steuben County's homeless shelter. We are deeding the entire building over to Turning Point Shelter and they will be able to expand their ministry as well.

◆ **WHY DOES THE BUILDING LOOK SO NICE?**

The building was not designed until we received the generous land donation at this location. The building is designed to fit into this area of town; to look similar to other buildings and houses nearby. Also, the new building is more than a food and clothing give-away store. It has a retail store, community room, and Compassion Pregnancy Center rents part of the building. It will be used by others in the community in addition to the families and individuals Project Help now serves.

◆ **THE BUILDING APPEARS TO BE EXPENSIVE. IS IT?**

Not really. Through generous suppliers and much volunteer labor, the building was built for about \$40 per square foot. With parking lot and furnishings the total building project was approximately \$550,000.

◆ **WHY DID WE SPEND A LOT OF MONEY ON A NEW BUILDING WHEN THAT MONEY COULD HAVE BEEN SPENT TO HELP PEOPLE?**

About 90% of the money received to build the new building would never have been given to Project Help for other purposes. There are people, institutions, and foundations that give only to causes like our new building; not to programs or direct aid to individuals. It is this group of people that have given us about 90% of the funds for the building. We did not redirect any of the normal donations to Project Help into the building program.

◆ **DID YOU HAVE TO BORROW FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE BUILDING?**

Yes, we borrowed \$150,000 from Farmer's State Bank, Angola, Indiana. Mortgage payments are \$1,800 monthly for ten years. We are praying for generous donors to make our monthly mortgage payments once or many times.

◆ **WHAT NEW MINISTRIES ARE YOU BE ABLE TO DO NOW THAT YOU HAVE A LARGER FACILITY?**

We have a small retail store to sell clothing that is donated. Project Help clients receive vouchers to "purchase" clothing in the store. Others can purchase clothing there as well. We have a beauty salon staffed by volunteers. Project Help clients receive vouchers for hair cuts, others can receive salon services for a fee. Compassion Pregnancy Center is renting part of the building so their ministry is expanding as well.

◆ **HOW DO I "RENT" THE COMMUNITY ROOM?**

Contact Sheri Frank at 316-3435 Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 4 p.m. There is no fee to use the room but your generous donation is appreciated. Any gift over \$25 is a tax deductible contribution.

◆ **WILL YOU STILL DO THE NORMAL FUNDRAISERS FOR PROJECTS AS IN THE PAST?**

Yes, and all those funds will be used for improving and expanding our mission.

◆ **HOW DO WE CONTACT PROJECT HELP?**

Mailing Address: PO Box 423, Angola, IN 46703

Phone and fax: (260) 665-9697

web: www.helpprojecthelp.org

Ministry Location: 711 E Harcourt Road, Angola

◆ **WHAT ARE PROJECT HELP'S OFFICE HOURS?**

Mondays: Farm Wagon at 11:00; office hours 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.,

Wednesdays and Fridays: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

◆ **WHO MAKES THE DECISIONS AT PROJECT HELP?**

Project Help has a four-member Board of Directors. Their primary role is to support the director, Sheri Frank, in the decisions she has to make.

◆ **HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE EMPLOYED BY PROJECT HELP?**

Project Help employs one fulltime person, Director Sheri Frank. The other workers you see at Project Help are part time employees, volunteers or people employed by ABLE Network (an employer of income eligible older adults). As of June 2009, we do payroll for six people, five very part time.

◆ **WHAT IS THE ANNUAL BUDGET FOR PROJECT HELP AND WHERE DO THE FUNDS COME FROM?**

2009 budget: \$142,000, this does not include building fund

19% from churches

9% from the City of Angola

29% from individuals

28% from organizations, businesses, fundraising

15% from FSSA grants (FSSA is Family Social Service Administration - a federal government program.)

◆ **WHERE DOES PROJECT HELP GET ITS FOOD?**

Food purchased, local donations, and government commodities are the main sources of the food at Project Help. Food drives by USPS, Curves for Women, FIST, and the community schools and churches every year are a major source. Most food is purchased from grocers, food banks, and food distributors offered exclusively to Project Help at drastically reduced prices to meet immediate needs. Project Help is a distribution site for Community Harvest's Farm Wagon. Each Monday at 11:15 a.m. Farm Wagon items are given to families.

◆ **HOW CAN I KNOW ABOUT THE ONGOING NEEDS AT PROJECT HELP?**

The best way to stay informed is to volunteer or visit Project Help. We are always looking for regular, weekly, volunteers. Project Help belongs to the community and encourages everyone to stop by and familiarize themselves with Project Help's services and facility, and offer suggestions. You may also go to our website at www.helpprojecthelp.org and sign up for our email newsletter.

◆ **HOW CAN I VOLUNTEER AT PROJECT HELP?**

Project Help is always looking for volunteers for receptionist duties, clerical work, sorting clothing, food pick up and distribution, and to assist with special holiday events. Contact Sheri directly to volunteer (cell phone: 260-316-3435).

◆ **HOW CAN I DONATE FUNDS TO PROJECT HELP?**

Donations for Project Help may be mailed to PO Box 423, Angola, IN 46703. Or you may stop by the facility at 711 E Harcourt Rd. They are open for donations Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Project Help is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your gift is tax deductible. Thank you for your generous giving.

◆ **HOW AND WHEN CAN I DONATE CLOTHING AND OTHER ITEMS TO PROJECT HELP?**

Take your items to the ministry location at 711 E Harcourt Rd Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. or Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. (closed Sunday). Please remember that items must be clean and in good repair. When donating clothes please ask yourself "Why am I giving this away?" If you are giving it away because it is dirty, stained, torn, has a broken zipper or missing buttons, please do not give it to Project Help. Project Help cannot fix clothing. If you are giving it away because you or your children have outgrown it and it is still in good shape, Project Help will gladly accept your donations. Please bring donations only during stated hours to avoid them being left out in bad weather. **THANK YOU FOR NOT LEAVING ITEMS OUTSIDE OUR BUILDING AFTER HOURS.**

◆ **DOES PROJECT HELP ACCEPT DONATED ITEMS OTHER THAN CLOTHING AND FOOD?**

Items such as dishes, pots/pans, bedding, and curtains are always welcomed. We also accept appliances and furniture in good working condition that appear gently used. If an item looks dirty, worn, old, or broken, Project Help will not be able to give the item away and must pay for disposal.

◆ **WHERE DOES MOST OF THE FOOD COME FROM THAT PROJECT HELP GIVES AWAY?**

Miller Poultry donates chicken during holiday times and provides it at reduced price throughout the year. Daisy Dallas initiated the 'Grow a Row' program in which local gardeners grow and donate fresh produce. Day-old bread comes from Scott's / Kroger Food Store and is picked up by a volunteer twice a week.

Occasionally Aldi Foods donates bread.

Pizza Hut bakes unused pizzas after the lunch buffet ends and donates them to Project Help. Hamilton Fish and Game Club has arranged a food rescue program through their facility.

◆ **TELL US OF SOME OF THE SPECIAL FOODS PROJECT HELP CAN USE AND HAS RECEIVED IN THE PAST.**

- ◆ Deer meat in season. If you shoot a deer but don't want to use the meat, Project Help will gladly accept the meat and have it processed.
- ◆ Last year a semi carrying frozen chicken was disabled on the toll road nearby so Project Help received the chicken.
- ◆ We often get calls from truckers whose load is overweight; especially fresh potatoes and melons.
- ◆ Often families donate packaged frozen meat before receiving new for themselves each year.
- ◆ Project Help can benefit from garden items and farm products such as eggs, chicken or meat.

◆ **HOW MANY PEOPLE DOES PROJECT HELP HELP EACH YEAR?**

Project Help has assisted approximately 2000 different families each year for the last five years. Services include clothing and food orders, cleaning supplies, personal hygiene and paper products, bakery, seasonal programs such as Easter dinner baskets, school supplies, and Thanksgiving dinner baskets, direct financial aid and referrals to other agencies/programs (WIC, Vistula Head Start, Children First Center, health care).

◆ **WHAT ARE THE FINANCIAL GUIDELINES USED BY PROJECT HELP TO DETERMINE NEED AND LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE?**

Each client situation is evaluated and help is given to meet the needs of each individual that comes to Project Help. Many families just need resource and referral assistance. Project Help also assists families who experience crises such as fire, natural disaster, high medical costs, health concerns, lack of insurance, domestic violence, job loss, automobile breakdown, and homelessness.

◆ **DOES PROJECT HELP PAY UTILITY BILLS OR RENT FOR CLIENTS?**

Project Help assists families with referrals to help pay utility bills, rent, employment, and medical related needs. Project Help should be the last place a family turns to for financial assistance after their Township Trustee, CANI, FEMA, Salvation Army, Steuben County Cancer Association, Steuben County Diabetes Association, etc. because Project Help can be creative in their assistance plan and is not under strict guidelines as many other programs are.

◆ **DOES PROJECT HELP FIND JOBS FOR PEOPLE?**

No. But occasionally a 1-2 day "job" at certain places in the area is offered to help the client earn the funds needed to pay rent or utility bills.

◆ **DOES PROJECT HELP PAY MEDICAL BILLS OR PRESCRIPTIONS?**

Low cost prescriptions and free medical exams are available on a limited basis in cooperation and coordination with existing services.

◆ **DOES PROJECT HELP ASSIST PEOPLE FROM OUTSIDE STEUBEN COUNTY?**

When a family comes to Project Help for the first time they are helped with basic needs. Sometimes when families are stranded and need help getting to their destination, assistance with repairs, gasoline, and food is given. With the exception of furniture and household items, and as long as donations permit, Project Help assists out-of-county residents once and then they are referred to services in their area since we have only enough resources to help Steuben County residents.

◆ **DOES PROJECT HELP ASSIST EVERYONE WHO NEEDS HELP?**

The answer to this question is both yes and no. Yes, if the need is legitimate and the person is in need due to loss of job, unexpected medical bills, low paying job, etc. No, if the person is not trying to help themselves by looking for work or is just "using the system". Also, if you attend church or have family that is able to help you, your church and family are encouraged to help you first.

◆ **WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR GETTING HELP AT PROJECT HELP?**

The process for receiving help at Project Help is fairly simple. If you have been a client in the past, your file is updated with the appropriate changes. If you are a new client you will be asked to fill out an application. Part of the intake process is asking questions so that your situation is clear. Also, you will be asked to bring in verification of income (i.e.: paycheck stub, unemployment stub, food stamp award letter, child support payment history, etc.), expenses, and verification of assistance from other agencies. The purpose for this request is to document your need. If you are unable to work, then you will be asked to provide the reason (i.e.: doctor's work release). If you are able to work you will be asked to actively seek employment and provide evidence that you are doing so. One good way is to bring in a signed business card from each potential employer. The goal at Project Help is to temporarily assist those in crisis and to network with other programs and agencies in helping families reach self sufficiency.

◆ **ARE POLICE CHECKS RUN ON PEOPLE HELPED BY PROJECT HELP?**

Police checks are not run for Project Help clients.

◆ **SOMEONE IN MY CHURCH NEEDS FOOD AND CLOTHING. DO I SEND THEM TO PROJECT HELP?**

We encourage their local church to be the first place a person goes to get help or referral source to Project Help. However, if their church is not able to provide the needed help, Project Help gladly steps in. Every church is encouraged to partner with Project Help to provide the best services available with the least amount of resources to avoid duplication. Most of the people Project Help works with are unchurched.

◆ **WHAT SPECIAL PROGRAMS DOES PROJECT HELP DO?**

- ◆ Licensed professionals donate hair and beauty services to those in need
- ◆ Back to School with Supplies: school supplies are offered to school-aged children.
- ◆ Thanksgiving and Easter dinner baskets: special meals are given to registered families; Easter baskets are offered to children as well.
- ◆ Adopt-a-Family: In collaboration with Santa's Helpers and Cops for Kids, special meals and gifts are given to registered families with children.
- ◆ Social Service Agencies, churches, and family service organizations from Steuben County are invited to participate in all special events.
- ◆ Medical voucher program offering free acute care to underinsured and uninsured low-income individuals.

◆ **IF I GIVE A DONATION OF FOOD OR CLOTHING TO PROJECT HELP, CAN I GET A TAX RECEIPT?**

Yes, but only if the items are dropped off during our normal business hours: Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and only if you ask for one at the time you drop off your items. We do not give itemized receipts, only general receipts and you and your tax advisor determine the value of the donated items.

◆ **ARE SOME OF THE ITEMS I DONATE TO PROJECT HELP EVER SOLD TO RAISE FUNDS?**

Yes, some items are sold for us through Then and Now Antique Store and at our own retail store. We have an annual garage sale to sell donated items to earn program operating funds.

◆ **WHAT HOURS IS THE RETAIL STORE OPEN?**

With many volunteers we pray to be open Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., closed Sundays.

◆ **WHAT ELSE CAN I DO NOW?**

Pray for us. Pray for the large volunteer group that will be needed in the new facility.

Thank God for those who have already said they want to help

Also, feel free to ask us questions. We welcome your questions.

◆ **IF I WOULD LIKE TO HELP IN SOME WAY, OR HAVE QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED HERE, WHO DO I TALK TO?**

Please contact the Chairman of the Board of Project Help, Norm Fuller or Project Help Director, Sheri Frank

Norm Fuller

Sheri Frank

525 E 200 N

711 E Harcourt Rd / PO Box 423

Angola, IN 46703

Angola, IN 46703

260-665-8402

260-316-3435

norm@fairview-missionary.org

◆ **ALL THE MATERIAL IN THIS BOOKLET AND MORE IS AVAILABLE ONLINE FOR YOU TO DOWNLOAD FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION:
WWW.HELPPROJECTHELP.ORG**

Project Help of Steuben County, Inc. : Description of New Facility

- A. Community Conference Center (1,222 sf): Community conference meeting, training, and event room that can accommodate 40-50 people, has ADA-compliant restrooms and a kitchenette
- B. Waiting Area: New and returning clients utilize this area for intake and updating file information
- C. Office (180 sf): Room for staff to securely store client files and provide clerical and reception services.
- D. Storage (468 sf): Store items for Back to School, Christmas programs, Easter dinner baskets, etc.
- E. Resale (1580 sf): Retail used clothing store with an ADA-compliant restroom and dressing room, an office for record-keeping, cash register, and telephone.
- F. Sorting Room (567 sf): As clothing donations are received, they can be sorted, washed, and dried for distribution in the resale store. Also, household items, including small appliances, decor, and bedding items can be stored here.
- G. Covered Donation Drop with Indoor Receiving Area (150 sf)
- H. Holiday Food Storage (68 sf): This room will hold food for Thanksgiving, Easter, Christmas, and other special events.
- I. Mechanical (92 sf): Heating, air conditioning, plumbing, and other mechanicals.
- J. Pantry (1145 sf): Freezers, refrigerators, shelving to hold food for distribution
- K. Waiting Area 2: Directly across from the Pantry, where clients wait to receive food orders.
- L. Case Management (100 sf): Private conference room to meet with families in need of crisis intervention, resource, and referral information.
- M. Restroom/Shower: ADA-compliant restroom with connecting shower.
- N. Director's Office (160 sf): Office with 1-way window for Waiting Area observation
- O. Other Ministry Space (1166 sf): Compassion Pregnancy Center and hair and personal care salon.