

If anyone serves me, let him follow me; and where I am, there my servant will be also.” -Jesus (John 12:26 NKJV)

Hello fellow servants,

God is moving at *Here to Serve*, and we've had a busy summer: sprucing up and setting up the new office; completing Backpack Project 2010; kicking off the Operation Christmas Child season; and collecting and distributing supplies to ministries and organizations.

We thank everyone who has toured the office; donated time, items, or finances; and prayed for us every step of the way. In this newsletter, we'd like to share an update about the things God is doing at *Here to Serve*, give you a preview of some upcoming events, and invite you to partner with us. If you or your group would like to volunteer, please e-mail us at carthage4jesus@juno.com.

Thank you for your love and support.
Stephen and Della Bergen
Here to Serve



backpack project 2010

Everyone can afford paper and pencils, right? Unfortunately, that's not always the case. While many of us have these and similar supplies in surplus, low-income and at-risk students often lack the basic items they need for school, let alone a bag to carry them. Family grocery lists take priority over

school supply lists, bills trump backpacks, and, as a result, students struggle.

During her four years teaching at Carthage Junior High, Lyndse witnessed firsthand how many students go without adequate supplies. So, after praying for God's direction concerning this need, Della and Lyndse began an annual backpack project to provide school bags and supplies to local students.

They began buying clearance items in early Spring, and by late July, had accumulated 40 backpacks for girls, 8 for boys, and a good-sized inventory of purchased and donated items. On July 31, a team met to sort the supplies and pack the bags. They were able to fill each backpack with the required and suggested items from the district school supply list, as well as other items many junior high students need to complete work at home. They also donated supplies to fill 6 backpacks the school had received from another organization and gave the counselors extra supplies and *Here to Serve* business cards to distribute as needed.

In addition, the day before school began, Della received a call from a family who had just relocated from a different state and had no school supplies for their five teenagers. We were able to give each of them a backpack with the items they needed.



Here to Serve will continue to provide supplies throughout the year and will also offer free tutoring on certain afternoons. Students will be able to visit the office and receive the help they need. Please pray for God's provision and direction for the this project, specifically, for His guidance on the number of backpacks to prepare and for continued financial support.



Precious Moments Gives Nearly 1,000 Items to Operation Christmas Child

Precious Moments, Inc. recently donated 945 items from its *Precious Girls Club* collection for Operation Christmas Child (OCC) shoebox gifts. *Here to Serve* will use the

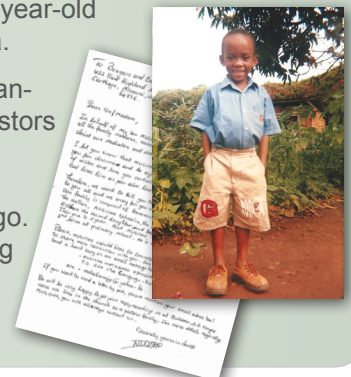
donated books, jewelry, friendship bracelets, and T-shirts for two OCC events. At the September Countdown Event, some of the items will be awarded to attendees for their shoeboxes, and the rest will be used in the Community Packing Party in November.



A Letter from Rwanda!

Though it's encouraging to know that every OCC shoebox gift blesses a child in need, it's especially exciting to receive letters from the individual kids who receive our boxes: most recently, from eight-year-old Mugisho Matabaro from Rwanda.

Mugisho is the oldest child of Jean-Paul and Christine Matabaro, pastors serving the cities of Cyangugu in Rwanda and Bukavu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We look forward to corresponding and building a relationship with the Matabaro family.



Count Down Event

Here to Serve will host the Joplin area's 1st annual Operation Christmas Child (OCC) Count Down Event on September 24 at Forest Park Baptist Church.

We have invited over 150 pastors, project leaders, community group leaders, and business people. Each church and community group represented will receive promotional materials and a Packing Party Kit while businesses will learn how they can partner with OCC and see how their donated and discounted items are used.

Please join us in prayer as we kick-off this Operation Christmas Child season.

You're Invited to the Party!

Join us for an afternoon packed with fun and purpose at the **2nd Annual Carthage Community OCC Packing Party** on Saturday, Nov. 6 from 1 to 4 p.m. at Fairview Christian Church. Last year, we made over 500 boxes and expect between 600 and 1,000 this year.

Each attendee should bring a multi-pack of either toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, washcloths, combs or hard candy (no Tootsie Rolls). We'll see you at the party!

2010 National Collection Week

- » National Collection Week: November 15-22.
- » Joplin Area Goal: 4,500 shoebox gifts.
- » Joplin Relay Center: Forest Park Baptist Church
- » **New** Lamar Relay Center: First Baptist Church

To find other Relay and Collection Centers or learn more about Operation Christmas Child, visit the web site, www.samaritanspurse.org.

Care Packages for Deployed Soldiers



This Christmas, we'll be shipping care packages to deployed soldiers. We are collecting fun items—snacks, cards, letters, and hats—and ingredients for homemade treats. We'll also be sending magazines donated by Mane Innovations of Carthage, Missouri,

and miniature Christmas trees donated by Dollar General. The packages will be distributed by Sgt. Joshua Bergen, who is serving in the Middle East.

Jail and Prison Ministry

Our friend and fellow servant, Stephanie Workman, ministers to inmates at the local jail and takes the Gospel to prisoners throughout the U.S. with Bill Glass Ministries. Thanks to donations, we were able to give her hundreds of envelopes, index cards, and pencils, which the inmates use for Bible studies. We're collecting additional practical items: socks, underwear, paper, and paperback books. For more details, contact *Here to Serve*, and for more information on prison ministry, visit www.billglass.org.

High Tower Ministries

www.hightowerministries.net

Mark and Rhonda Benz's High Tower Ministries provides a refuge for the most vulnerable in Cambodia: orphans. Bykota House, the Benz's home, offers not only shelter and sustenance, but a real home and family to more than 25 children. Mark and Rhonda also provide education through School of the Nations.



Here to Serve is blessed to partner year-round with High Tower by collecting much needed supplies, and we'll be sending the next shipment with Mark and Rhonda's daughter, Kati, when she travels to Cambodia at Christmas break.

We've already collected 1,000 Kool-Aid packets, which give the kids a dose of vitamin C and improve the flavor of the water. We still need children's cold medicine tablets or strips, chewable fever-reducing tablets, and children's vitamins with extra vitamin C or calcium. We are also praying for a donated suitcase able to hold 50 pounds of supplies.

Here to Serve Joins the Carthage Chamber of Commerce

In August, *Here to Serve* established itself more prominently in the local business community by joining the Carthage Chamber of Commerce. At the end of the month, the Chamber announced our arrival to the 331 other members and encouraged them to watch for our float at the...

...44th Annual Carthage Maple Leaf Parade

We'll be promoting Operation Christmas Child at this year's parade with a giant shoebox float, a booth, and promotional items. If you're in the area, we invite you to attend and join in the fun. For more information about Maple Leaf events, visit www.carthagechamber.com/mapleleafhomepage.html.

THANKS to...

- » **Radio Shack of Carthage** for donating an ASUS netbook!
 - » the **local church** (wishing to remain anonymous) that gave \$250 for the Backpack Project.
 - » the **Precious Moments Foundation** for donating 240 stuffed animals for the Operation Christmas Child Packing Party.
 - » the **U.S. Census Bureau** for donating 100 gym bags for the Backpack Project and highlighters, pencils, erasers, paper, stickers, bookmarks, and sock caps for the Operation Christmas Child Packing Party.
 - » the **businesses and soldiers** who donated 76 empty ink cartridges and toners to purchase supplies:
 - **Sergeant Marquita Bergen** and the **3rd Battalion 518th Infantry Regiment** of South Carolina
 - **Audio Input, Inc.**
 - **Joplin Paint Center**
 - the **Jasper County Public Administrators Office.**
 - » **Lowe's of Carthage** for donating 5 gallons of paint
- Reminder: We are still collecting empty ink cartridges and toners to purchase additional school supplies.

Please send your financial donations to Nation to Nation International, PO Box 1607, Joplin, MO 64802 or donate online at www.ntni.org. All contributions are tax deductible when checks are made payable to Nation to Nation Int'l. Stephen or Della's names cannot appear on the check. Simply write #777 in the memo line and your donation will be sent to them. This contribution is made with the understanding that NTNI has complete control and administration over the use of the donated funds and that your designation is advisory in nature.

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