

Mary Sturdevant

From: Mary Sturdevant <sturdevant.mary@swbell.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2018 1:44 PM
Subject: January What's Happening at Tomball Emergency Assistance Ministries?



We want to be sure you continue to know what is happening at TEAM! Please feel free to share any sections of this newsletter with your congregation in your church newsletter and/or bulletin you so choose. Please also help us by forwarding this email to others in your church who would be interested and let me know if this should go to others on an ongoing basis.

The Tomball Benevolence Network is now active in our community!

TEAM is pleased and excited to announce that the Tomball Benevolence Network (TBN), a new TEAM initiative to partner with churches, schools, non-profits, and businesses to more comprehensively provide services to those in our community in need, is now active. TEAM hired Karen Guiles as the TBN Community Liaison starting November 1 and she brings a wealth of service experience and a passion for service to this new role. She is already meeting with organizations to plan how each can be TBN service providers. Here are two examples of this collaboration in action:

- A leader in the Tomball community called asking if we could take care of a family he knew of for Christmas: a single mom with 3 handicapped boys: one has MD, one is nonverbal autistic, and one is mentally challenged. Besides Christmas gifts, she needed a special car seat for the child with MD who is 9 but weighs only 40 pounds. We used medical grant money to buy the car seat and took it to her: she was thrilled! Then Jackie Thomas, the Chief Strategist at Lone Star College (Karen, Becky, and Rocky Alexander, TEAM's Board president, recently met him), came in to adopt 4-5 families for Christmas. He happily agreed to take this special family. We contacted the mom after Christmas and she said her kids were so happy with their gifts and she felt blessed!
- A family showed up at Salem Lutheran Church on Christmas Eve who had been in their car for 4 days. A Salem minister helped them first and then called a TEAM caseworker he knows. TEAM was closed for Christmas, but the caseworker got 3 nights in a hotel for them plus food and gas cards. Then when TEAM opened, another caseworker bought a tent for them plus we gave much more food and another gas card. Fortunately, the father had found a part-time job in Tomball by then. They had a blessed Christmas!

Work is currently going on testing the Version 2 of GRACE, TEAM's new client management software, which will enable TEAM to communicate seamlessly with these TBN (Tomball Benevolence Network) partners.

The Miracle Next Door ...continued

Last month I shared two stories describing "The Ministry Next Door" and my equation that Ministry = Relationships + Healing. I also described the components of those relationships as inclusion, acceptance, kindness, and unconditional love. I then told two stories of how "ministry" happens every day at TEAM on the

other side...the ReSale Store. This month I'd like to share two more stories about precious lives that have been touched and changed by the "Ministry Next Door."

Melissa is part of a special program at Magnolia High School that works with mentally and/or physically challenged students to prepare them for life after high school. Melissa has Down Syndrome and she was first brought to TEAM in hopes of helping her to improve her socialization and work skills. When she started at TEAM, she came only one day a week, was shy and non-communicative, and was under the constant supervision of her teacher. But that was in late October. By November, Melissa was working two days a week, was on task, and actually beginning to make a real contribution to the team. She was straightening shoes, keeping the dressing room in order, and making sure clothes racks were tidy. She was also slowly beginning to communicate and respond to invitations to join the group for lunch. By December she was working three days a week, not because she *had* to, but because she really *wanted* to. She wanted to come to TEAM to be with her *friends*. During her Christmas break from school, she missed TEAM so much that she insisted to her mother and teachers that she be allowed to come during her break, unsupervised, three days a week. Which she did. Melissa has become a full-fledged part of the TEAM team and everyone loves and accepts her just where she is. The other day when I was at TEAM, Melissa came up and gave me a big hug. And, you know, there's really nothing quite as special as getting a big heartfelt hug from a special needs kid!

Josiah has been serving as a volunteer at TEAM for well over a year now. He was brought to TEAM by one of our volunteers who knew him from church. Josiah is 31, has many serious and visible health issues, and just as many that are not visible. And his life for so long had been listening to music on his earbuds, and sitting in front of the TV set day in and day out. Roberta, the volunteer who brought him in, knew that what he really needed was to get out of that stagnant environment, be as active as possible, and develop friendships. So she brought him to TEAM in hopes of just that. Josiah is a large guy, about 6'3", and was very unsure of himself at first...where to stand, what to do, how to talk to people. But several of our wonderful volunteers took him under their wings and made him feel at home. Our warehouse manager trained him to do intake and Johnny, our retired youth pastor, gave him rides to and from work and had long conversations with him. Josiah is now as much a part of the TEAM as anyone and he faithfully comes to work every day and makes a *big* contribution. And as Josiah has successfully taken on more and more, he has begun to gain self-confidence. And as he has gained self-confidence, he has begun to open up. And in opening up, we have discovered that Josiah actually has a wonderful sense of humor! Just a few days ago he found a Batman mask that had been donated. He put it on and swooshed up to Delton, our warehouse manager, announcing that he was Batman. Delton laughed and asked him if he could be his sidekick Robin...or even better, the Joker. Towering over Delton, Josiah put his hand on his hip and thought about it a moment. Then he said, "No, you can't. But you can be Alfred!" So apparently, *Josiah* is the one that's the Joker! And to us, he's not just "special needs," he is a very special person who is loved very much by his TEAM family.

Of course, a lot of ministry is done on the "Ministry" side of TEAM. But I've thought for a while now that the "Ministry" side may have some pretty stiff competition from The Ministry Next Door!

Blessings for a wonderful New Year,
Becky Loving, Executive Director TEAM

TEAM is grateful for support from these generous people:

- **Blackshear Elementary scouts:** These neat scouts from Troop 115211, Blackshear Elementary, brought some wonderful food donations to TEAM on Saturday, 12/16. They had a tour of the facility, learned how food donations worked, how the Resale store supports TEAM's ministries in so many ways and met Mary McCoy, the wonderful volunteer who matches Christmas gifts (including the ones from Blackshear Elementary) to kids' wants and needs in preparation for the gift distributions next week.



- **Mary McCoy and Melissa Kamerbeek:** Mary, Melissa, and their merry band of elves Laura and Wendy, are the hardworking volunteers who matched up the Christmas wish lists of needy families with the toys and gifts that were donated to TEAM.



These ladies sorted, organized, matched and distributed everything from dolls and toy trucks to games to cookware and crockpots. None of this would have been possible without donations from our community and a team of dedicated volunteers.

- **Christmas food helpers:** Here are some wonderful folks who were on hand at TEAM to give out Christmas meals to clients: Members of the Wehmeyer family (Barbara and her children David, Katie, and Cole) come into TEAM every Christmas for this. They worked alongside Dewayne Godfrey who is with one

of our partnering organizations, Men Who Set Trends, a Tomball area non-profit that mentors children who don't have fathers:



- **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints:** The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Tomball donated generously to our Christmas food program: They provided more than 50 turkeys and hams, 75 dozen eggs, and many bags of fresh fruit that were given to families for their holiday meals.



- **Glenna Wagenschein:** Glenna made a generous donation of \$2,500 to TEAM
- **Klein High School Student Council :** These great kids collected toiletries such as washcloths, feminine products, travel size soap, shampoo and toothpaste, packaged them in individual bags, and gave us several boxes of these toiletry bags to give to homeless individuals and others in need. What a blessing!



- **National Charity League Wildflower Chapter:** These thoughtful ladies donated 2,000 lbs. of sugar to TEAM. They divided bulk packages of sugar into these family size portions which will now be given out in TEAM's food pantry.



TEAM participated in Families Feeding Families

Each year, ChristBridge Fellowship Church hosts Families Feeding Families, a community wide sharing of Thanksgiving dinner for those needing this special meal on the day before Thanksgiving. TEAM participated again this year providing kids’ jackets, cleaning supplies, and diapers to diners. This year Mayor Gretchen Fagan chose Families Feeding Families as Citizen of the Year!

Follow us on social media:    And when you see posts from TEAM, please like and share! And check our website: <http://www.teamtomball.com/>

Many churches deliver to TEAM non-perishable food collected from their congregation. TEAM has been blessed with many, many donations of non-perishable food items, but it is all quickly going out to storm victims and others in need in Tomball and elsewhere. Please consider have a food drive if you don’t currently. Here is information for your Newsletter/Bulletin/church communication timed with your next food collection:

TEAM In-Gathering

[insert date], is our next TEAM in-gathering. Please remember to bring some non-perishable food items for our collection in support of TEAM's (Tomball Emergency Assistance Ministry) food pantry. Especially needed at this time are dried pinto beans, crackers and quart sized plastic zipper bags (used for dividing products among clients).

Thank you for your generous support to those families in our community currently suffering food loss from the floods, food scarcity and other hardship. Your help makes a difference, especially at this holiday time!

These Special Volunteers are still needed:

TEAM is looking for individuals to fill these special volunteer leadership positions:

Volunteer Development Coordinator

A Volunteer Development Coordinator is needed to visit churches and recruit resources, to support the department leads in coordinating with the volunteers. Through the use of media, social media, visits to churches and other organization, or other creative means, this person will promote volunteer opportunities available at TEAM; and will develop a working knowledge of all the volunteer opportunities available. The ideal candidate will have a working knowledge of social media, have initiative, be available to respond to volunteer inquiries on a regular basis via phone, email, and on-site tours, and have good communication skills. The position will require approximately 15 hours per week.

Fundraiser(s)

The individual(s) will plan and assist in the implementation of fundraising initiatives both large and small that can include one-time and annual events; will be able to develop good working relationships with other volunteers, staff, and board members; will be creative, dependable, adaptable, organized, and have the ability to think outside the box. Experience with social media preferred. Time requirement will vary depending upon project(s).

Grant Writer

A volunteer Grant Writer is needed to research grant opportunities and draft grant applications with direction from the Executive Director. The hours for the position will vary from week to week, but would average to approximately 15 hours per week.

Please contact Becky Loving at becky.loving@teamtomball.com or 832-221-6572 if you are interested or know of someone who could fill any of these positions, thanks!

Shop at Amazon and help TEAM!

Please pass the word on: Support TEAM by shopping Amazon's charity link, at no cost to you! *Amazon Smile* will give a portion of your purchases (some exclusions apply) back to TEAM, and it doesn't cost you a penny! Remember to always start your Amazon shopping through this special link: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/76-0195526>. Thanks!

Everyone at TEAM hopes all of you had a blessed Thanksgiving celebration and will have a Holy and joyful Christmas! Thanks so much to all of you for supporting TEAM during 2017!

A big THANK YOU to every one of you! We appreciate your being one of TEAM's backers and for all you do to support TEAM in our community!

Please let us know at TEAM if you have questions about our ministry services or if you have needs we could support. You can contact TEAM at 281-255-6967 or visit our website at <http://www.teamtomball.com>.

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