



So Much More Than Just a Food Pantry

"I had no idea you offered that here" is a common phrase around the Samaritan Center. People for the most part realize the center is a food pantry offering energy assistance, but that is where the knowledge of services often ends. While food always has and always will be our primary focus, there are a multitude of facets to the Samaritan Center that people are unaware of.

Clothing is another area of assistance offered at the Samaritan Center. Donated clothes are inspected, then cleaned or mended as necessary before they are placed in the free clothing room. Our clothing is sorted and hung for those in need to look for. While we do watch for misuse, we do not place limits on the persons coming for clothing. Volunteers assist in preparing the clothes and in selection if needed. A tape measure is always ready to help someone find the right fit. This service of clean, wearable clothing helps maintain the dignity of our clients. No one likes to wear worn out, dirty clothing. It hurts their self esteem if clothes are unavailable and prevents them from helping to better themselves. It is hard to get a job wearing torn jeans and an old t-shirt. Also available through the clothing program are house wares and small appliances.

Furniture donated to the Samaritan Center does not stay around long. Many, many people have very limited furnishings in their homes, almost always there is a family member sleeping on the floor or the children are all crowded into one bed. Furniture is picked up from donors by volunteers who also deliver the items to those in need.

The Legal Care department is a growing service at the center. Volunteer attorneys meet with clients in need of legal assistance. There is a prescreening process before the clients are contacted by an attorney to insure their case is qualified for our program. Most cases relate to child custody or family issues, others deal with leases and extorting practices that so many in this social-economic are fall prey to. There are restrictions on cases taken, for example no speeding ticket cases are accepted. Tax Credits are an easy way to increase the income of those in poverty. Quite often they are entitled to money back from the IRS and have no idea. The tax credit program helps to bring these much needed funds to those in need by properly filing their taxes for them. One focus of the plan is the Earned Income Credit; this is the most frequently qualified for and has brought refunds to clients in amounts ranging from \$50.00 to \$2,950.00.

In addition to the EITC, property tax credits, and child tax credit are filed for some individuals. Research into tax history has found incorrect filing on past taxes where refunds were not awarded. One individual received \$455.00 for 2003, \$324.00 for 2002, and \$304.00 for 2001. All of that individual's refunds were property tax credits.

In addition to the tax assistance there is also financial counseling available to clients. This places them in a one on one relationship with an advisor who helps to put their finances in the right direction through counseling of spending habits and building an effective and reasonable budget to live by.

Samaritan Center is making a growing commitment to medical well being. The Ossman Free Medical and Dental Clinic has continued to grow with the accompanying need. The medical clinic is open from 4-6 on Thursday evenings. Patients with varying ailments are seen by volunteer doctors, nurses and nurse practitioners. No persons with insurance or eligible for Medicaid/Medicare are seen. All others are seen and assisted as best possible.



DON'T FORGET Missouri State

We need lots of volunteers between October and December. This is the busiest time of the year at the Samaritan Center. If you want to find good cheer and help others at the same time, come and join us for a very fulfilling day. Inserted in this newsletter is a sign up sheet. It lists all of the areas of need as well as the times and days of the week that we could use extra help. Please, stop and take a minute to complete this form. We need a minimum of a 100 of our friends to be a part of our Samaritan Center team. Here's an explanation of a few of the areas listed:

Sign up Clients in October for Christmas

This is our Christmas Family and Seniors adoption program. Families or Senior Citizens 65 years of age or older, that visit the Samaritan Center and qualify for assistance are offered the opportunity to be adopted by another family or agency from our community for Christmas. This process takes about five extra volunteers for each shift. The volunteers are in a room with a member of the Samaritan Center staff where they interview the families asking about all the needs and wants of those in the household.

Afternoon Warehouse Help

Our back and side door bells never seem to stop ringing in November and December. Gifts for families and other such donations roll in at a pretty good pace and we need help answering the doors and moving the items around to make room for more and more and more.

Receptionists, Data Entry, Assistance with Mailings, etc

All such help are doubly needed during this period. The Samaritan Center relies solely on volunteers for clerical support. If you ever call us, know that 9 times out of 10 the person who answered the phone, is a volunteer. During the Christmas season though phone traffic and visitor volume is at its peak requiring 3- 4 times more help. We also do more mailings and have additional data to process.

Spanish Translators

Something we never seem to have enough of during the last quarter of the year. We need a translator available every day we're open to the public. If your interested, come in and talk to us about how you can help.

Santa's Workshop

This is for families that choose not to be adopted but have children 12 years of age or younger, and qualify for services. They are then eligible to visit the "Workshop" and pick out 2 toys for each child. These are brand new toys that have been donated. We need a handful of people to work in Santa's Workshop each day for the first two weeks in December. Its lots of fun and you'll love every minute of it!

Adopting a Family

Last year we had over 600 families and seniors sign up to be adopted. The minimum we ask of any agency, organization or family that chooses to adopt is to buy at least 2 gifts averaging \$20.00 each for every child 18 or younger and at least 1 gift for the parents and any adult disabled child living in the home. We also ask that the Christmas meal be provided in the form of a gift certificate or food items. The average cost to adopt a family of four would be about \$150.00. For most of the families who sign up, these are the only Christmas gifts they and their children receive. It will be an experience you'll never forget.

As you can see, there is a lot to do to get ready for Christmas at the Samaritan Center. Come on down and join in the fun – it'll make your Christmas season that much more wonderful for you and for others less fortunate.

Come Celebrate Christmas with Us!



Employees our MSECC# is 4026

Calling All Ghouls and Ghosts!

The days are getting shorter, the mornings crisper, and fall is upon us. Halloween is just around the corner. The Samaritan Center is accepting donations of Halloween costumes and paraphernalia. Many children cannot afford any sort of costume. Younger aged kids often have costume day at school, so they have to face the reality of poverty with their peers, an uncomfortable situation for anyone, especially a 7 year old. Whether it be Spider-Man, Dora the Explorer, a ghost, or a ballerina anything helps. Also flashlights with batteries, treat bags, decorations, and of course candy are great items to donate. Please help our area children to have a happy and safe Halloween.



Dates to Remember

October

11 - Columbus Day- Closed.

19 - Board of Realtors chili supper

4-8PM Eagles MO Blvd \$6.50/ticket

28 - Halloween Costume donation deadline

28 - Last day for clients to sign up for Christmas

Marylyn's Message

Autumn Leaves and Christmas Trees

Autumn chill is in the morning air, the hummers have flown south, leaves are beginning to fall and it is time to prepare for Christmas here at the Center. We have sent out letters to our adopters, and our adoptee's to remind them that Christmas sign up's will begin on Monday October 4th.

Even though it is a tremendous amount of work for the staff and our volunteers it is also our most joyful time. We know that our families depend on us to help them celebrate the birthday of Jesus by providing for their children.

You know we are sent to be servants to all of our brothers and sisters. When we reach out to the most vulnerable ones which are the children and the elderly we all feel so warm and fuzzy inside our skin.

One never knows how a little kindness will affect a whole family. Sometimes we wonder when we give a gift if it makes any difference to the child. Let me assure all of you that we have seen the faces of the children and the tears of joy of the moms and grandparents. You have lifted huge burdens from their hearts. Your gifts that you so carefully shopped for will not be forgotten. Prayers of thanksgiving are offered by these folk for your needs.

Along with these activities we have not forgotten that our little ones need Halloween costumes for school parties and to trick & treat on that magic night when kind people give you tons of treats. Nor, have we forgotten that Turkey Day is coming and all of our kids need a big fat bird on their table that provides seconds and thirds of meat that is really out of the ordinary. When you normally have a hot dog or spaghetti from one pound of meat a turkey is a real blessing in your home.

It seems we are always begging but we do it for all the right reasons. We are all servants on a mission to ease the burdens of all of brothers and sisters who look to us with hope in their eyes when asking us to help. Recently we sent out a letter asking for utility assistance. So many families are sitting in the dark with no heat, hot water, gas to cook their food, refrigerator to keep their food. We constantly have to say "NO" when they bring in shut-off notices because we are out of funds. If you can help us in any way with saving the kids from being cold and scared in the dark we would really appreciate your help. God bless all of you for your commitment to those in need. Keep us in your prayers as we keep you in ours.

Services from page 1

The dental clinic is open on an appointment basis, volunteer dentist visit through the week to see scheduled patients, patients who often have been waiting over a month to see a dentist. A paid staff dental assistant helps run the clinic and keep the visiting dentists in a comfort zone. With state of the art equipment purchased through grants the Ossman Dental clinic is ready to help ease pain of suffering people, but the clinic continues to need more dentist to keep pace with the need.

A prescription assistance program helps those in need of medication, whether it is an antibiotic to fight an infection or insulin to live with diabetes, several prescriptions are filled on a monthly basis. Many who participate in this program are elderly in need of regular medication for various health issues.

Other Specialty programs offered include Book Buddies, a reading program offered monthly during the school year. The program is aimed at encouraging children to read and offers free books to the attending children courtesy of Scholastic Inc. A monthly cooking class teaches how to prepare a dish using the USDA commodities available that month. Attendees learn proper handling of food and nutrition information while they learn to cook the dish.

Several seasonal programs are part of our services. Most people are familiar with Christmas baskets, but there is also Mother's Day baskets, Halloween costumes, Easter baskets, valentines, and school supplies. Holiday food is also offered for Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

There are even more areas of assistance, ranging from utilities to car seats to fans to hygiene kits.

The Samaritan Center is truly becoming a one stop shop to service the needs of the community. Thank you for all you do for us as we continue to grow and serve those in need.

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Hours of Operation

Open to Public:	9:30am-11:30am Monday-Thursday 4:00pm-6:00pm Thursday
Medical Clinic:	4:00pm-6:00pm Thursday
Dental Clinic:	by appointment Only, call (573)761-3473 for information
Staff Office Hours:	8:00am-5:00pm Monday-Friday

