

From the desk of Antoinette DeBose, Founder
The Provident Corporation

February 27, 2009

How Providing a “Wee Lift” Can Pay Dividends for a Lifetime

Dear Friend:

Recently I heard a story about a farm family who had fallen on hard times. They were visited by a stranger who gave them a gold bar in exchange for their kindness. When he left, he told them he'd be back the next year to see how they'd managed.

The family buried the gold for safekeeping, vowing not to touch it unless absolutely necessary. Because of the encouragement provided by the caring stranger and the knowledge they had something to fall back on if necessary, they redoubled their efforts and brought prosperity back to their farm. When the stranger returned, the farmer told him, “Once we got the help we needed, we soon got the place going again. You gave us just the ‘wee lift’ that we needed.”

My friend, sometimes knowing that others care is just the “wee lift” a child, a veteran, a family needs to get back on their feet.

Jesus tells us, “... whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.” (Matthew 25:40 NIV).

At Providence Ministries, our mission is to minister to our needy brethren through community outreach, while sharing the good news of God's wonderful kindness, love and provision.

Our primary focus is at-risk youth and seniors, veterans, community development, pre-employment services for underprivileged people living in inner cities, and people recovering from substance abuse.

Perhaps the following stories will demonstrate better than I can how caring people can make a difference in others' lives.

One Veteran's Story

Can you recall what you had for dinner last Wednesday night? I can barely remember what I had for supper two nights ago, let alone what I was doing four years ago.

But ask Staff Sergeant John Michaels where he was and what he was doing on October 17, 2004 at 11:34 a.m., and he'll start rattling off the details.

John was on a civil affairs mission in Falluja, Iraq, when sniper fire hit the scope on top of his rifle and exploded in his face. Suffering shrapnel wounds and hearing loss in his left ear, Michaels survived the attack because of the riflescope his father had purchased for him and sent overseas. He now marks every October 17th as his "Alive Day". The day he narrowly escaped death, and an anniversary he'll never forget.

John faced a long recuperation upon his return to the States and today still battles post-traumatic stress disorder, making it difficult for him to hold a steady job.

But thanks to Providence Ministries, John and other returning vets like him are getting the help they need. They are finding their way back to normal society, gaining meaningful employment and coping with relationships that will never again be the same for them.

Susan Jackson Had a Full Plate ...

... Five kids at home and a husband fighting a war overseas. When she started suspecting that Steve, her 15-year-old son, was using drugs, she knew she had to act immediately to keep his life and her family from falling apart.

Shortly after Susan's husband, Tom, left for Iraq, she began to notice changes in her second oldest son, Steve. He'd always had a moody side, but this was much worse. His group of friends changed. And while he still hung out with some of his old friends, it was just to keep a good cover. As time went on, however, even those friends disappeared. She also noticed that Steve had red eyes, erratic behavior, constant "munchies" and late nights out. She knew something wasn't right.

A friend of hers told her that Steve was selling marijuana and abusing cocaine. She confronted him and he confessed. A long road of recovery and relapse lay ahead, but Steve is currently clean and putting his life back together. Still, the fear and suspicion that live in Susan's house is crippling. Her husband has asked for a divorce and the four other children have been deeply affected by Steve's addiction.

At-risk students needing tutoring ... returning vets struggling to readjust ... impoverished families living in the inner city ... child victims of abuse and neglect ... students caught in the trap of drug use. These are some of the ways we at Providence Ministries touch lives, impact change and reach our community to help those in need get their lives back on track.

As agents of change in the local community, members of Providence Ministries bring hope to those in despair. We seek to educate, inform and empower people with knowledge, information and support.

And we give people living in poverty a chance to dream big dreams again. We offer a helping hand and a way out of the despair they are feeling. Plus, we seek to establish unique communities of care for all people, while at the same time acting as advocates for them among governments, society and the Church.

But, we can't do it alone. We need your help. Together we can offer support to the needy through meaningful interaction.

We Have a Place for You

Many of us invest in stocks, bonds, mutual funds, retirement portfolios, etc., only to see them lose half their value due to poor choices or economic downturns. Jesus reminds us about an investment that reaps tremendous dividends spiritually: the investment in your fellow man.

I'm writing you today, my friend, to ask if you will consider becoming a partner with Providence Ministries in our community outreach efforts. Your gift will generate that "wee lift" so many needy people in our community are looking for. When you give to the "least of these brothers", you give to our Lord.

We all suffer setbacks at one time or another. The loss of a job, an investment gone badly, divorce, fire, even death of a family member. Bad things happen to good people. Life changes due to substance abuse or domestic violence. Many people have legitimate needs.

We have a place for you. Won't you ask the Lord how He would have you help? Give under His leadership. Open your heart to people in need. Share your time and talents by getting involved in outreach. And then, experience the richness of spiritual dividends for the rest of your life.

Providence Ministries provides clothing, food and information regarding State, Federal and county resources. Our job bank lists opportunities that are currently available. And if pre-employment counseling or training is needed, we also provide that.

If you can't volunteer your time and talents, please consider making a donation to offset the costs of outreach activities and events. Provide a "wee lift". \$35, \$25, \$15 – any amount will help to aid and heal the John Michaels, the Steve Jacksons and other at-risk children and families in our communities.

Get involved and help us impact change! Experience personally the wonderful rewards of investing in things that reap spiritual dividends ... dividends that don't go up and down with the whim of the stock market ... dividends that are eternal.

Touch the World with the Power of God's Love!

Some in our community have an abundance of resources and are able to help those with needs. Do you have the resources to meet a need?

You can impact the communities we serve by partnering with us in the following ways:

- ♥ Monetary donations for supplies and event planning
- ♥ Food/Clothing for needy families
- ♥ Computers for after school and employment services programs
- ♥ Housing for homeless or low-income families

Help us touch the world with the power of God's love! Simply fill in the enclosed reply form, attach your check or money order payable to Providence Ministries, and mail it back to us in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. Your gift is fully tax-deductible.

Or let us know about food, clothing, computers or shelter you can offer. Call the toll-free number or indicate your gift on the enclosed reply card. One of our members will be in touch with you as soon as your card is received.

With our thanks and God's blessings on your life,

Antoinette DeBose,
Founder
Providence Ministries

P.S. John Michaels, Susan Jackson and Steve Jackson can all attest to the transforming power of God's love in their lives as demonstrated through the resources of Providence Ministries and its partners. Experience spiritual dividends for yourself by partnering with us in our outreach ministries. And be an agent of change in your community! Mail back the attached reply card with your donation today.

P.P.S. And if you can't give at this time, please pray with us. Your prayers are deeply appreciated. We know that God honors the prayers of His people.

Reply Card

Providence Ministries, P. O. Box 3335, Center Line, MI 48015-0335
Phone: 800-XXX-XXXX

Yes! I want to be a partner with Providence Ministries and make an impact on my community today. Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift (payable to Providence Ministries) of:
\$35 _____ \$25 _____ \$15 _____ \$ _____ (other)

Yes! I want to be a volunteer and offer my time and talent to assist people in need. Please contact me at (telephone # or email address)
_____ (please print clearly)

Yes! I have the following items I can donate to help families in need:

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone No.: _____ Email: _____