



The FreeStore Story



May 2014

A Gift That Keeps on Giving

By Jeanie Smith

During 2013, the FreeStore was able to fill 263 requests for help – that’s our highest number ever. The vast majority of these requests were from domestic violence shelters and agencies in Polk, Story, Dallas and Warren counties. That’s a lot of people right here in central Iowa who are affected by domestic violence!

We are in the unenviable position of running a business that we wish wasn’t needed.

But that’s not the world we live in today. Everyday, there are more families affected by partner abuse. And everyday, women and their children are trying to escape. The emergence from recession has created a number of new jobs, but the vast majority of those are at the minimum wage level, many part-time. Our clients are people who are getting these jobs. They have struggled to escape abusive situations in their home lives.

They now struggle to make ends meet. Furnishing and equipping a new home is low on the priority list for scarce cash – and yet, it’s essential!

The gift that we give is not only the material goods we supply. We also build dignity and self-respect – and for many women we serve, this is something new. The FreeStore tries very hard to supply furniture that is in good condition. We have a number

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BIRDIES FOR CHARITY

By David Blaha

What is that and why do we care at the FreeStore?

Birdies for Charity is the fundraising arm of the Principal Charity Classic golf tournament.

How can this help the FreeStore?

If you make a pledge and select the FreeStore as your charity choice we receive your money and a 25% Bonus from one of the tournament sponsors. Last year we raised \$7,360 for the FreeStore. So if you intend to make a donation to the FreeStore now is

the **perfect time** and Birdies for Charity is the **perfect way**.

How do I do that you ask?

Here are three options. Choose one.

1) Send the FreeStore your check made out to The Principal Charity Classic and on the memo line of your check write FreeStore and we will do the rest.

2) Go to www.principalcharityclassic.com click on the Birdies for Charity icon and follow the prompts.

3) Ask for a Principal Charity Classic brochure from David B. Blaha 515-276-1352 or dbblaha@gmail.com.

What are you waiting for? This is a great opportunity to support the FreeStore and our mission: **“Helping Families Start Over”**.



FreeStore Update

By Terry Swanson

What a winter we've had here in central Iowa. But how lucky we are. Green grass and blooming flowers and flowering trees quickly help us put the past behind us as we see better times ahead.

"Better times ahead for my kids and me. That's what I have to think about now. I think that rose-colored couch might just be a step in the right direction. Sandy loves that color."

She chattered on like this for the over-thirty minutes she and her oldest daughter walked through the warehouse picking out furniture, and lamps, and bedspreads for their "first" apartment.

She and the two girls had been in the shelter three weeks. She knew she was one of the "lucky" ones. After a few nights in jail, her soon-to-be ex husband had left for parts unknown.

Usually that means real financial hardship for women

who have suffered domestic violence at the hands of an abusive husband. But she was smart and had a pretty good job. Her boss was a woman who had been in an abusive relationship several years ago and was very supportive. We both knew she was one of the lucky ones who could see better times ahead.

It's not always that way for the families we serve but we do try to help them toward a better life. Through the end of March this year we've helped 50 families. It takes about 3/4 of a ton of furniture to set up the average family with household goods. It would be an impossible task for some families—except for you good people who each year donate not only your items, but your dollars and your prayers.

We are grateful to be able to "help families start over." But we are also grateful to you, our supporters, who, with those donations, dollars, and prayers, make it all possible. Together we help these families to reach their better times.

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of new small appliances that have been donated to us or that we have purchased. Many times, these new items are the first new things our clients have received in a very long time.

You, our supporters, make this happen. It is only through your generosity that we are able to provide these items. Individual contributions from you make up more than half of our budget every year. Your word-of-mouth advertising expands our reach so that we can collect more and better furniture donations all the time. Your volunteer hours are the only staff power we have. We are very, very grateful for everything you give!

So pass this newsletter on to a friend or two. Tell them about us and the work we do. Together, we can change lives for the better.

Fill the Mayflower

with lamps, kitchen tables/chairs, kitchenware, microwaves; coffee pots, toasters, pots and pans, etc.

May 16: 10AM-6PM May 17: 8AM-5PM

Valley West Mall

More information at www.thefreestore.org

