



## Supporters By Jeanie Smith, FreeStore Board Chair

2005-2015. Has the FreeStore really been in business ten years? How great is that, and how many supporters do we have to thank?

Early on I said to a friend, “We have lots of little supporters but it would be so nice to have a big corporate sponsor.” He said, “Maybe, but think of it this way: if you lose one supporter, you’ll still have lots of others to call on.” How true this has proven to be. Whatever it is, from knitted pot-holders to trucks, you, our supporters, have responded to our calls for help. You have said, “We believe in your mission, and we want to help.”

2005: the FreeStore is now an

independent 501c3 with rent to pay and no income. Enter the West Des Moines Churches Outreach Group and the Des Moines Domestic Abuse Coordinating Council. Each gave us a few hundred dollars—our first windfall.

After that, it kind of grew like Topsy. When we needed, we asked. One or more of you would rise to the occasion: the Principal Financial Group: 4 years of rent-free warehouse space and an annual grant; BWA, DSM Jr. Women’s club, the Brays, the Deans: three FreeStore trucks; Select Van and Storage, and various area churches: furniture and household item drives; Chrysalis, St.

Timothy’s Episcopal church, Episcopal Diocese of Iowa, and Prairie Meadows: operating expenses and item purchases; Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines: special projects and support. DWX: website support; Two Men and a Truck: client moves and warehouse moves; all the other grantors, too numerous to mention: monies and grants that allowed us to grow and serve.

Finally, you, who over the years, have supported us with dollars and prayers, thank you! I know I join you in hoping that in the future there will be no need for the FreeStore. Until then, together we will provide for those in need.



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**SAMMONS**  
FINANCIAL GROUP

### Your Donation

+ BFC (Birdies for Charity) match=\$110%

Here’s how we’ll increase your donation.

We will enter your donation into the BFC fund.

If we reach \$1,000, BAM!

each donation will increase by 10%

Your donation—\$50

+10% BFC Match —\$5

Now you’ve donated—\$55

# FreeStore Update: Ten Years and Counting

By Terry Swanson

It's hard to believe but in Sept 2015 the FreeStore will officially be 10 years old. Actually, we started collecting furniture for DV (domestic violence) victims in 2001, but it wasn't until 2005 that we became an official, certified 501c3 charity. Things have certainly changed in the past 10 (14 years). In 2001 we served seven women. We had no truck so they had to be able to move the items they needed by themselves. Usually that meant whatever they were able to load into their cars.

With your support, things at the FreeStore have really improved. Now, not only are we able to help DV victims, we can help other families in need—again usually women with children. That last part (children) is a driving force for us. We know that if we can

change an uncomfortable, often unhealthy, living situation, into one that is healthy and comfortable for children, we will affect a change—for the better—in their future. Beyond that, if we offer one small step to a family moving from homelessness to a better future, we know we have improved the future, not only for them, but also for us.

In the last 10 years, we have served 1900 families, including 3020 children. We gave away 1575 tons of furniture, including 1540 couches, 2880 beds, 1080 kitchen tables, and the list goes on and on. It's awesome isn't it?

Equally awesome is the dedication of the FreeStore volunteers. They come from all walks of life and work for the same end: to make life a little better for their neigh-

bors. A dentist folds towels next to a housewife; a lawyer goes around picking up furniture; an engineer and a minister move mattresses from one warehouse to another; young working couples give up Sat. mornings to move furniture for DV victims. When asked why they work so hard, the answer is always the same, "Because it's the right thing to do."

And finally—and maybe most importantly—there are all of you, our supporters. You remember us when you replace furniture; you respond when we ask for help raising the money. You tell us how much you admire what we're doing. You reinforce our determination to success.

So on this 10-year anniversary, "thank you, Thank you!" You make our work possible with your support.

## Fill the Mayflower For the FreeStore May 16 8 to 6 at the Valley West Mall

**This year we need small household items  
Please, no large furniture**



**We need  
vacuum cleaners, lamps, microwaves, blenders,  
crockpots, toasters, coffee makers, linens, pots and  
pans, end tables, coffee tables, kitchen utensils**

