



Oct. 2010

# The FreeStore Story

## Because It's the Right Thing to Do

By Terry Swanson

Between the rain and the sun, it's certainly been a hot, muggy summer. If you don't believe it, just ask some of our FreeStore volunteers.

It's been a busy summer and every Tues and Fri morning saw volunteers straightening up the NOT air-conditioned warehouse. By the time the two-hour shifts were about over, the volunteers were pretty hot and sweaty.

The same is very true of the moving folks who came in on Saturdays and after loading furniture into the truck, had to unload it - often to third floor walk-up apartments. Then there are the weekday

movers who often came in around 5PM (the hottest time of day in the warehouse and outside) to move clients.

And we can't forget the pickup fellows who go out three mornings a week and haul heavy furniture out of houses, into the truck, and off load it into the warehouse. It's pretty heavy work and even seems heavier as the temperature reaches into the 90s.

The other night after a particularly sweltering 5 o'clock move for a mother with five children (ages 10, 5, 3, 2, 5 months) who had a third floor apartment, I asked one of the volunteers, "Why?"

His answer was simple and direct, "Because it's the right thing to do."

What powerful words to drive us! I think those words "Because it's the right thing to do" drive all that is human in us. They surround and encompass religion, ethics, morals, customs, mores, behaviors, and commandments. They have to be the most important words we can teach our children and, more importantly, learn ourselves.

I am so proud of our volunteers who give of themselves freely, because IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO!



**FreeStore Open House**  
**Oct 21 from 4PM to 7 PM**

702 E 4th ST  
Des Moines, IA  
515-382-3733

See the inventory

Meet the volunteers

Come see what the FreeStore does for families who need furniture!

## October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

In 1995, the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence convened several national domestic violence organizations to launch a new effort to support domestic violence programs. The Domestic Violence Awareness Month, observed annually in October, grew out of that meeting.

Organizations in Des Moines joined in this project and have several activities planned to inform the public of local efforts to fight domestic violence.

The Children and Families of Iowa Domestic Abuse Shelter (CFIDVS) will have several offerings including classes on *Understanding Domestic Violence*, *Rape Aggression Defense*, *Safety Planning*, and *Healthy Relationships*.  
<http://www.cfiowa.org/LinkClick.aspx?filetick>

[et=ojUS8xkpDcU%3d&tabid=136](http://www.cfiowa.org/LinkClick.aspx?filetick=ojUS8xkpDcU%3d&tabid=136) has the complete calendar of activities for Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

One particularly interesting session will be the Domestic Abuse Coordinating Council's sponsorship of an "Introduction to Services" open house featuring organizations offering support to domestic violence victims. It will be held at DHS River Place 2309 Euclid Ave. on Oct 14 from 4-7 PM. Come learn more about the problems of and solutions to domestic violence.

As noted on the first page, the FreeStore will have an open house on Oct 21st and we hope you will be able to stop by. The FreeStore is only able to function because of your support and we would like to meet you, show you around, and say, "Thanks!"

 [Make a Donation](#) 

## FreeStore Update

It's been a pretty busy year so far for the FreeStore even though our numbers are lower than last year's. We're told by CFIDVS that this year, because of funding declines, fewer women leaving the center are able to move into their own apartments. They also told us that almost all of those who do get apartments use the FreeStore to furnish their new homes. We helped 258 families last year but it looks like we'll only have a little over 200 requests this year.

Still we have accomplished a lot and helped 134 families through the end of August and given away 106 tons of items valued at \$225,108. (Check out our video at <http://www.youtube.com/user/TheFreestore> to see our delivery volunteers in action last February.)

In July, we became the proud owners of another big

yellow used Penske truck— thanks to the generosity of the Business Women's Association. It doesn't have logos on it yet because we have a volunteer who is going to paint it sometime in October.

Our support programs are going well. Over the summer Buena Vista university gave us 150 twin mattresses. We are currently soliciting funds so we can buy bunk bed frames for them. We have found that each year we have requests for about 40 more bunk beds than we can supply.

A bunk bed frame costs about \$150 so we won't be able to buy them unless we have designated donations for them. If you designate money for a bunk bed and would like, a sticker will be attached to the bed that says, "This bed was gifted through the generosity of *Mary Smith*." Like the

Dresser Project, it's nice to make the donation in someone's name for a present.

We've refined the Cleaning Bucket project a little and have combined the cleaning and laundry supplies by using a large laundry basket filled with both kinds of supplies. So far this year, we've only had one client who said she didn't need one. Usually the baskets are among the first things a woman sees and promptly asks if she can have one. They are so grateful for all the items in the basket

The FreeStore is always looking for volunteers so if you have some free time, call [282-3733 ext. 3](tel:282-3733) and let us talk to you about opportunities to help.

You can also call that same number to set up a FreeStore presentation for your church groups, and service and social organizations.