

# Only the Pump



**THE SAMARITAN CENTER**  
ANNUAL REPORT **2016**

# Only The Pump

As a desert spring brings welcome aid to a weary traveler, for over 30 years the Samaritan Center has stood as an oasis for tired and struggling community members experiencing the desert of despair and challenging life experiences.

In this analogy though, the Samaritan Center is not the source of the water. **We are only the pump.** The streams of water represent the refreshing gifts of our Lord (time, talents, means) lent to you and shared with us. **In short, your gifts are the water.** We only take those gifts and, in a responsible way, pump them back to those who need them most.

As happens in nature, every drop of life-changing kindness that is pumped through this Center creates a ripple effect, not only benefiting the lives of those we touch, but of those who they touch as well.

Listen to words of the generous invitation of Revelation 22:17: “Let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.” Thank you for helping thirsty hearts find *Help for Today* and *Hope for Tomorrow* in 2016. As you read the stories and statistics that follow, it is my prayer you see the power of your investment.

*With Sincere Thanks,*

*Tomy Dahlberg*

Tony Dahlberg  
*Samaritan Center Executive Director*



Our team of Puzzlers validated puzzles for an amazing 4,946 hours.

A team of faithful volunteers spent 1,621 hours in 2016 knitting, quilting, and processing fabric and yarn.

Volunteer Joanna DeJong dedicated a whopping 973 hours in volunteer labor in 2016!



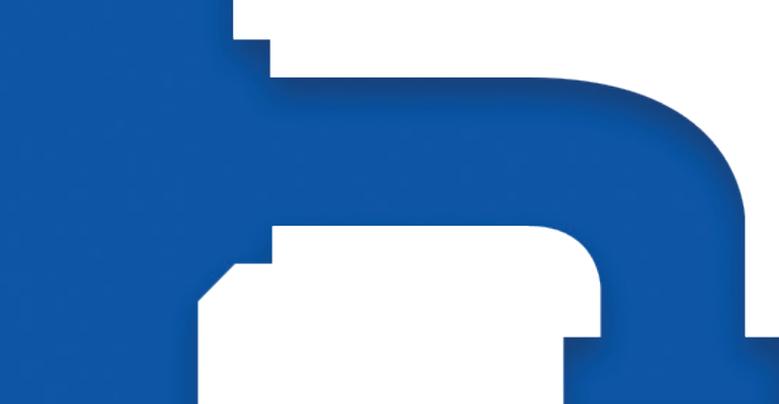
Our thrift operations team was supported by 1,943 hours of volunteer effort pulling hangers and processing clothes.

Our donor records team volunteered 1,954 hours in our front office.

## Thank You To Our Volunteers!

Without the combined efforts of our 40 staff members and 150 plus active volunteers, we would cease to exist. These generous individuals brought skill, energy, and devotion to our Center in 2016.

The total contribution that our volunteers gave our Center was over \$530,000 in value.



# WORKING FOR JESUS

When her son was born 14 years ago, Samaritan Center volunteer Katherine stepped out of a professional office setting and into the more-than-full-time job of being a stay-at-home mom.

“I didn’t want anyone else raising my son,” Katherine remembers.

Although she never regretted her decision to stay at home, as her son entered his teenage years, Katherine began looking for a way to transition into the workforce, while giving back to the community at the same time.

Her quest reached a turning point one day as she visited with a friend from church, Lisa Parker, the network administrator at the Samaritan Center.

“I was talking with Lisa and she mentioned they had an opening in their front office helping with donor records,” Katherine recalls. “I thought that this might be something I could help with.”

At first, Katherine was intimidated by the prospects of entering the office world again.

“I was admittedly a little rusty,” Katherine confides. “But over time things changed and my self-confidence came back.

When she first started, Katherine only set aside one day to volunteer, but as need at the Center increased, she happily agreed to work more.

“The better I got at my job, the more I wanted to be here,” Katherine says. “I enjoy the feeling of being needed and knowing I am doing my best.”

Over time, Katherine has gained appreciation for the multi-faceted ministry of the Samaritan Center.

“I didn’t know the social services side and the way they help the people they do,” she says. “That was something I never saw as a shopper.”

She also has made friends with her fellow volunteers and staff members.

“Everyone is so helpful, accepting, and friendly,” Katherine remarks.

More than anything, Katherine finds joy in the fact that she’s serving God and His children.

“I work for Jesus ultimately,” Katherine states. “And that brings me great satisfaction.”

During our 30 years in ministry, volunteers have played an essential role at the Samaritan Center. 2016 was no exception as 382 individual volunteers and 161 group



volunteers blessed our Center. That’s a value, according to the Independent Sector, of over \$530,000.

But more than the monetary assets we’ve gained, a higher value must be placed on the hearts of those who gave. Through the kindness of community members like Katherine, the spirit of sacrifice exemplified in the life of Jesus has been demonstrated in flesh and bone. Thank you to each volunteer, who in 2016, gave of themselves to work for Jesus.

**I work for Jesus ultimately, and that brings me great satisfaction.**

# MORE THAN ENOUGH

For several years, the men of the Ooltewah United Methodist Church have made it a priority to give back to the residents of one of Tennessee's poorest counties.

Hancock County, a mountainous county bordering Virginia to the north, has a median income of \$27,323, the lowest of any county in Tennessee, and 31st lowest in the nation. Many residents of the county do not have running water in their homes, and the water for many that do is dangerously contaminated.

The men of OUMC have partnered with the Jubilee Project, a mission located in Sneedville, Hancock County's seat, that aims to provide the county's citizens with nutritional food, running water, and spiritual support. Over the years, the men of OUMC have sent volunteer teams to help Jubilee install water lines, remodel failing homes, deliver food, and provide spiritual support.

In October, Mike Hand, OUMC's men's ministry leader, learned that Jubilee's supply of food was running

very low. There wasn't much time. The people of Hancock County needed food right away. Soon he was on the phone with Samaritan Center executive director Tony Dahlberg seeing if the Center could help.

After consulting with his food pantry staff, Tony was happy to answer in the affirmative. When, OUMC member B.R. Blair came with his pickup to load up the food for Sneedville, he had to turn right around and go back home — there was more food than he could handle. He returned within the hour with his utility trailer. Soon 2,741 food items with a value of \$4,071 were on their way to Hancock County.

According to Hand, the directors of the Jubilee Project were overjoyed when the food arrived. Because of the support of committed Samaritan Center donors, they had the food they needed through the end of the year.

To our pantry staff, the only question that remained was how we would make up the deficit that was created in our food reserves. When the



summer came and our stock was lower, would we have enough food to meet the needs of our local clients?

The answer to this question soon became obvious as the results of several community food drives started flowing into our Center. Bag by bag, box by box, can by can, the food came in, and we stood amazed. During the months of October and November, we brought

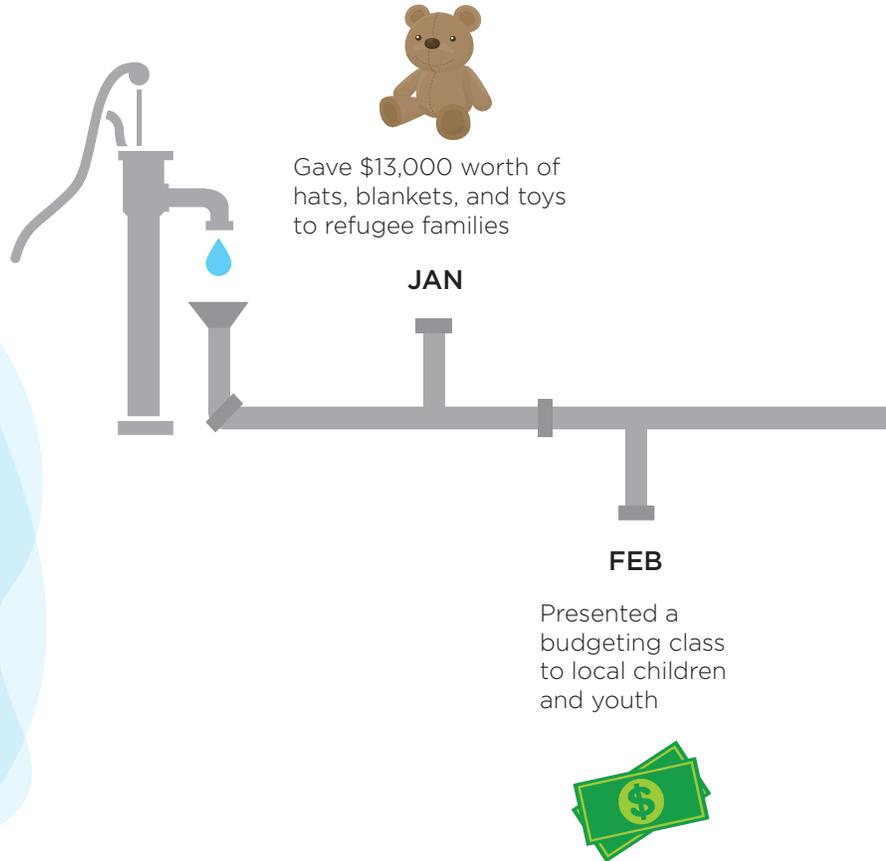
in 30,259 pounds of non-perishable food items, 5,000 pounds more than we'd ever brought in before.

Once again God had demonstrated His faithfulness through the generosity of His people. As we've seen time and time again during our 30 years in ministry, when we extend to help to those in need, He returns to us more than enough to share.

# THE YEAR AT A GLANCE

Though we're not able to adequately show you the myriad of ways your kindness flows out of our Center, we hope this timeline will give you some idea of the services we provided to this community, and beyond, in 2016.

Thank you to each person who gave of their time or resources to help our Center in 2016. For a list of businesses, churches, organizations, and schools that partnered with us, go to: [thesamaritancenter.net/donate/partners](http://thesamaritancenter.net/donate/partners).





Assisted two local families with house repair projects

**JUN**



Gifted 315 students with backpacks full of school supplies

**AUG**



Brought Christmas toys and clothes to 116 families

**DEC**

**MAR**

Held basic computer skills class for community



**JUL**

Helped organize fundraiser to rebuild Apison tornado monument



**NOV**

Delivered Thanksgiving dinner to 109 area families



# Hope For Tracy

**He had yelled at her for the last time, he had cursed at her for the last time, he had hit her for the last time.**

Quickly Tracy\* gathered up her possessions and her two children and began the 2 ½ hour trip to her mother's home. As she drove, tears filled her eyes. She had counted the cost and knew what she was losing – familiar surroundings, a nice home, the security of a six figure income. But what she was gaining was even more significant: no longer would she face his anger, his threats, his abuse.

Tracy and her children now slept on a blow-up mattress in her mother's living room. She was glad she had a roof over her head, but her situation wasn't ideal.

Soon she began the search for work and was able to find a job working third shift at a local non-profit organization. She appreciated the work and the income it brought, but working all night and getting home after the kids were already off to school was challenging. It was affecting her health, as well as her connection with her children.

Tracy's life at her mother's house was deteriorating. She needed help, and fast. That's when she turned to the Samaritan Center.

Here she met case manager, Erika, who after evaluating her situation, presented Tracy with gift certificates to our store, connected Tracy with other Hamilton County agencies, and scheduled her to meet the next day with Samaritan Center life coach, Nancy Ridge.

During her visit with Nancy, Tracy revealed that, although her housing situation was very difficult, she was making progress in her life. She was attending church regularly and had arranged supervised visitation with her children's father and grandmother.

**Tracy's life at her mother's house was deteriorating. She needed help, and fast.**

*\*Names of all clients featured in this annual report have been changed to maintain their anonymity.*

Nancy recommended that Tracy use her time away from her kids to develop a plan for self-improvement. Tracy made a plan to incorporate Bible study, prayer, church attendance, and warm baths as a way of recuperating from the stressors she had experienced over the last several months.

Using a goal worksheet, Nancy helped Tracy identify other priorities going forward. In the short term, she would seek to find more appropriate housing for her family. Long term, she would look to regain her CNA certification and explore nursing school. Tracy agreed to stop by in a week to discuss her progress with Nancy.

At her appointment the next week, Tracy had good news to share. She had found work as a cafeteria worker, a job that worked much better for her children's schedule. Now her short-



term goals were to seek housing, and to find health care for herself and for her children.

Two weeks later, Tracy visited with Nancy again. This time she reported that she'd been to the doctor herself and enrolled her children in health insurance.

And although her job was going well, she needed more. She emphasized her goal to get her CNA license renewed. Financially, she had made progress as well and was seeking legal help to establish child support from her children's father.

Since then, Tracy has begun compensated CNA training, has moved into her own place, and her life is looking up. She credits the support of the Samaritan Center for keeping her focused and helping her get through her time of life crisis. And we credit you for the support it takes to sustain long-term accountability and support. Because of those who supported the Samaritan Center in 2016, people like Tracy are finding the Help they need in crisis and the Hope they need to move forward.



## “Beep, Beep, Beep.”

“Beep, Beep, Beep”

“Ugh, it’s that time again,” Angela shivered as she braced herself to face the wintry January temperatures outside. Grabbing her sweater, she headed out to her car.

As she opened the door, she looked at the dome light. It was on, for now. She put the key in the ignition, the car coughed to life. She revved the engine, wrapping her arms around her chest, hands on her shoulders. She longed for the time these mid-night ventures would be over, but, for now, she had no other choice. She couldn’t risk being at the mercy of her neighbors for a morning jumpstart. What if they weren’t home? She’d be stuck. She couldn’t miss work.

Her job at FedEx was only part-time, but during the holiday months she had been able to take extra shifts to bring her hours up to eight a day. Those additional hours had paid for multiple trips to the mechanic. But a new alternator, battery, and starter and several hundred dollars spent later, her car still couldn’t keep a charge. To top it off, her radiator was leaking fluid, which was costing her \$20-\$30 every week.

# Kindness Extended

When the holiday peak season ended, Angela's pay had decreased substantially. There was hope it might pick up again later in the year, but in the interim, with nearly \$450 in car expenses and over two months of rent due, Angela needed more than future prospects. She needed help now.

She'd been here before. Two years earlier she'd been laid off and tried to make it work. She'd filed for unemployment, but had been denied. She'd dipped into her savings, but finally 3 months after losing her job, funds had run out. It was then that she first turned to the Samaritan Center. At that time, we were able to help her with rent assistance and personal care items. Now, facing challenging circumstances again, she turned to a place she knew people would listen, care, and connect her with help.

In our offices, she met with Stephanie, the same case manager that had helped her navigate her choppy financial situation in 2014.

After learning more of Angela's situation, Stephanie recommended the Samaritan Center help with rent assistance. Stephanie also referred Angela to the Tennessee Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program

(LIHEAP), a federal program that assists low-income citizens with temporary electrical bill assistance. Because of the amount of need that Angela had, Stephanie also referred her to another agency to help her pay the portion the Samaritan Center could not.

When Stephanie called Angela to inform her of the Center's ability to help her with rent, she also offered a cart of food and personal care and household items.

According our office receptionist, when Angela saw the cart full of food and personal items, she choked up in tears of appreciation. The next day she was still overwhelmed with the support the Samaritan Center had given her when she called Stephanie to let her know that "every time I think about what you've done for me, I get teary-eyed. I will never forget your kindness."

We, at the Samaritan Center, could take credit for stories like this, but that would be amiss. We realize that we're simply an outlet, a pump as it were, to distribute the kindness of our community members to those, like Angela, who need it most. Thank you for allowing us this distinct pleasure.

# Pumping Out Hope to Disaster-Torn Neighbors

The Samaritan Center remembers well the outpouring of support that was pumped into our community following the tornadoes of 2011 and 2012.

“I’ll never forget all the supplies and people that poured into this community after our 2011 and 2012 tornado events,” says Center executive director Tony Dahlberg. “That’s the spirit the Samaritan Center wants to exemplify – paying it forward to other communities struck by natural disasters.”

When three separate storms brought massive flooding to West Virginia, Louisiana, and South Carolina, we were honored to pay it forward.



## West Virginia

In response to massive June 23 floods in West Virginia, the Samaritan Center donated over \$7,000 worth of summer clothes, shoes, stuffed animals, and baby items, to aid in a free mobile medical and dental clinic in Beckley, West Virginia. We also donated the use of one of our box trucks for a week to aid in the efforts there.

## Louisiana

In an attempt to aid the 500,000 plus victims of the August 2016 flooding in southern Louisiana, the Samaritan Center sought the community’s help in donating new cleaning supplies, baby items, and disposable dishes. These items were transported to Southern Louisiana by Center director of operations Keith Heming, who also presented a check for \$15,000 of donated disaster aid funds.

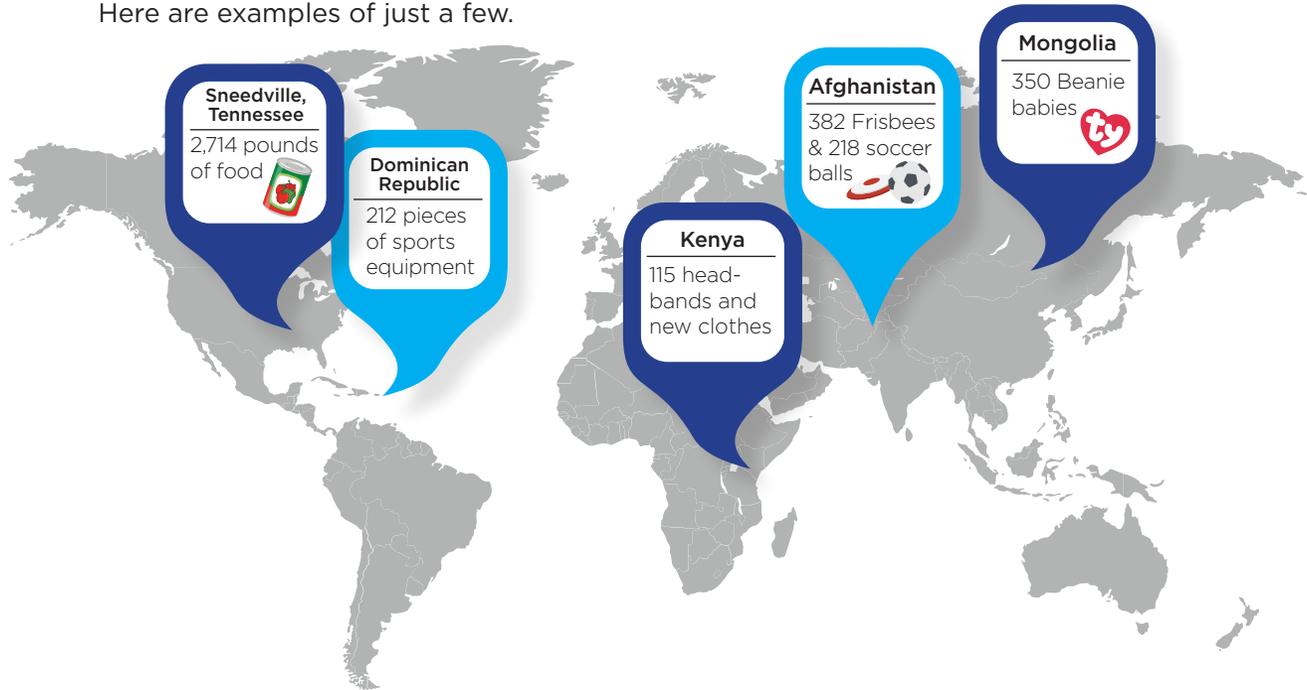
## South Carolina

When Hurricane Matthew devastated the rural city of Nichols, South Carolina in early October, three first responders of the area turned their backs on their own homes to focus their efforts on rescuing their neighbors. In the process their own homes were nearly destroyed. When the Samaritan Center learned of their story, we committed to do something about it, pledging \$10,000 of our disaster funds to help them. Additional gifts brought the total to \$12,000.

Thank you to each one who contributed to make these life-changing efforts possible.

# Pumping Your Generosity Farther

When disasters occur or when local people extend themselves in mission trips, the generosity of our community extends beyond our service area. Over the last two years, resources from the Samaritan Center have reached 15 states and 29 countries. Here are examples of just a few.



For more statistics, check out [thesamaritancenter.net/assist/missions](https://thesamaritancenter.net/assist/missions).

# Who We Are

## BOARD:

**Chair:** Ben Wygal

**Vice Chair:** Franklin Farrow

**Treasurer:** Julie Hyde

**Secretary:** Tony Dahlberg

Kurt Allen

Bert Coolidge

Dora Desamour

Danny Garcia

Tanya Jansen

Wolf Jedamski

Peter Kulakov

Kitty McGhinnis

Todd Suchy

Sonia Wrate

Carla Youngberg

## OFFICE TEAM:

**Executive Director:** Tony Dahlberg

**Office Manager:** Erin Barthle

**Accountant:** Sally Fisher

**Social Services Director:** Sharon Smith-Hensley

**Receptionist:** Dale Cady

**Senior Case Manager:** Stephanie Pyke

**Case Manager:** Erika Hughes

**Social Services Support:** Susan Pettibone

**Communication Director:** Eddie Schwisow

**Communication Specialist:** Amber Sarno

**Director of Operations:** Keith Heming

**Operations Manager:** Debra Johnson

**Volunteer Coordinator:** Bethany Hills

**Volunteer/Operations Support:** Debbie Wright

**Network Administrator:** Lisa Parker

