



Hurricane Relief Welcomed!

Texas, Haiti, Florida, and Puerto Rico receive disaster aid from OGT.

Fall 2017 was a unprecedented season of damaging hurricanes in the Caribbean and the United States, creating the need for a great deal of disaster aid. Less than a year after Matthew crippled Haiti, three more hurricanes—Harvey, Irma, and Maria—brought widespread despair in one month to Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico.

With so many in need, what did Orphan Grain Train do? Our branch raised funds and collected donated cleaning supplies to help fill a 40' container to Puerto Rico. It shipped through a joint effort of the Mid-Atlantic, New England, and Maryland branches and got through port customs in San Juan to anxiously waiting victims of hurricane Maria in late December. Recipients (front page photos) eagerly accepted gifts of clothing, food, shovels and rakes. Centro Cristiano Gracia Y Verdad Inc. (The Christian Center of Grace and Truth) reported to us, "What a great Christmas gift for those in Puerto Rico



Puerto Rico volunteers get to work with shovels and rakes from OGT MAB

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Shipments Outlook

Shipments are determined by specific requests from our destination partners. Here are the latest updates.



Tajikistan container at the OGT MAB warehouse loading dock

Our Tajikistan container, shipped last July, was received in the capitol city of Dushanbe in late October. Christian administrator Vladimir, of contact organization "Mayak" (the Lighthouse), works to help people in one of the poorest countries of the former Soviet Union. Due to shortages of work and food, 85% of Tajik people are in need, living below the poverty line. Vladimir wrote to Karen Mangels in the Norfolk office, "Sometimes when I see thankful people, I see Him hands. Thank you so much for your helping."

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Generous Giving Exceed Expectations

Matching Grants Fund Drive reaches new heights.

Last November we were again blessed to have \$10,000 in matching gifts, \$5,000 each from two generous individuals. We were awed when our supporters rose to the challenge, unselfishly giving beyond expectations in a year when appeals for disaster support came from many charities. In total, \$16,596 was donated, almost 14% more than the previous year! Many thanks to all of you; we could not survive without your dedication. Because of your gifts we can continue our mission with confidence in the new year, sending life-giving aid to help those in

desperate need. We hope to use the funds you donated to send shipments to the Philippines, Haiti, and disaster relief to Puerto Rico. ■



"And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:8"

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that you have helped by the container you sent. This connection with you is being guided by God to bless our people. Thank you for everything."

Corporately, OGT has so far sent two semi-loads of groceries to a Lutheran church pantry in Spring, TX; seven loads of sheetrock, two loads of wall insulation, a truck load of shingles, and three loads of supplies also went to a Houston Lutheran church to help flood victims. Additionally, a 40' tool storage-container and two sleeping units were sent for Houston's volunteer village. A semi-load of tools and construction materials was sent each to Corpus Christi, TX, and Fort Meyers, FL. Meanwhile, residents of Puerto Rico continue to suffer as 45% of the electrical grid is still out making ordinary daily tasks arduous. OGT has shipped five containers of much needed food, water, supplies and clothing there, and will send more. As in the case of Hurricane Katrina, OGT is committed to helping those in need for the long run.



Haiti girls receive pillowcase dresses from St Timothy Lutheran Church in Crystal River, FL

Haiti is still recovering from Hurricane Matthew. Materials from our June container continue to be distributed as needs arise. Sandra Koch, of Help for Haiti, wrote, "People went to the food station ... then someone helped

them over to the clothes station... with some crutches and canes. Then they went to the prayer station and received a Bible and the ladies prayed over each person. Keep up the good work for the Lord!" ■



A therapist helps a Haitian man select crutches

Bosco Fundraiser a Success

Volunteers raise more awareness—and more funds!

For the second year Mid-Atlantic Branch volunteers joined in department store Boscov's "Friends Helping Friends" Day, held last fall on October 17, 2017. The northeast retailer invites not-for-profit organizations to sell \$5 shopping discount passes for its annual store-wide one-day sale. OGT volunteers presold passes to



Ruth Hewlett presells at the Concord Mall in Wilmington, DE

friends and neighbors, then set up in-store table displays on sale day and sold more passes. MAB collected \$790, beating last year's \$545 total! Thank you to all who helped. Would you like to volunteer this year?

Contact Sandy O'Hedy at 302-270-0362 to participate. We hope to 'raise the bar' again in 2018 while sharing OGT's mission with people in our community. ■

How You Can Help Our Mission

We depend entirely on you for material donations and funds.

- **Donate goods** to ship to those in need. See the enclosed "Considerations for Donors" insert for a detailed list of what we can, and cannot, accept.
- **Make a financial gift** (see enclosed envelope) to help cover container shipping costs and support our operations. Consider dedicating your donation "in honor" of a loved one's birthday or anniversary. Make online contributions by visiting www.ogt.org, navigating to the MAB page and then clicking on the "Donate" button. Thrivent Financial members can designate their Choice Dollars to OGT MAB anytime. Remember, the 2017 cutoff is this March. Call 800-847-4836 or visit www.thrivent.com.
- **Lead a Thrivent Action Team**-Twice a year members may apply for up to \$250 to fund special projects benefitting OGT aid recipients, such as Hygiene Kits, Pillowcase Dresses, and School Kits. Visit www.ogt.org for ideas.
- **NEW! Donate your Staples Reward Points** to help us buy supplies for our warehouse. When you check out using the enclosed OGT MAB Staples Reward card the points will be put into our account. Every purchase matters! ■

Shipments Outlook (continued)

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Tajik women display a bounty of clothes and crutches

Last November 29th the Mid-Atlantic and New England branches loaded a truck with clean-up supplies for Puerto Rico. Thanks to \$4,000 from our donors, we were able to send more brooms, mops, rakes, shovels, and household cleaners for hurricane relief. New England Branch assistant manager Richard Klepps drove the truck to Annapolis where our materials were combined with Maryland branch goods to fill a container. We thank the Norfolk office for coordinating our efforts and giving us the good news that the shipment was received on December 21st. ■



Marilyn Kraft with buckets and cleaning supplies for Puerto Rico

In Memoriam

OGT MAB mourns the loss of volunteer, Pat Olsen, 83.

On December 14, 2017, Patsy Ann Olsen went to be with her Savior. For the past several years Pat was our sewing and mending volunteer at the Wilmington warehouse. In her quiet, graceful manner she approached each task without complaint. Clothes that would have been rejected for lack of a button or a ripped seam were saved because of Pat's skills.



Born in Frederick, MD, she lived here in the greater Chesapeake area for 67 years with her husband Cliff. They were very active with Peace Lutheran Church in Smyrna, DE, where they were founding members. She worked for the Smyrna School District and the Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill. After retirement she volunteered her time to Laborers for Christ and Orphan Grain Train. Pat's kind and generous spirit will be missed at our Mid-Atlantic Branch. ■

Have You Lost a Jewelry Item?

Donated handbag reveals a surprise.



In late December warehouse volunteers discovered a valuable piece of jewelry while sorting through a bag of clothes and accessories. If you think the item might be yours please email carlaniesen@verizon.net and describe the piece. We are hopeful to find the owner! ■

Warehouse Update

MAB continues mission in temporary space.



Roger Hazzard, grandson Andy, and Ruth Hewlett sort clothes.

Our interim warehouse is a joy to work in—a vast improvement over our previous leaky roof quarters! We continue to pray for the Wilmington City Planning Board to permit construction so we can occupy our new permanent space in late spring. Watch for updates in the News Flash. If you are not a subscriber email carlaniesen@verizon.net. We are operating as normal and need more volunteers Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9am - noon. Could you help one day a month? This is how and where our missionary work begins. ■



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Prefer to receive this newsletter electronically? Please email Carla at carlaniesen@verizon.net.

Our Mission Statement

In loving response to Christ, the Servant, the Orphan Grain Train movement encourages and enables God's people to share personal and material resources in bringing Christ's name and character to needy people, both far and near.

Mid-Atlantic Branch Purpose

To build a Christ centered team who can use their God-given talents to be a blessing to others through their service in the Mid Atlantic Branch of Orphan Grain Train fulfilling the Mission Statement of the OGT movement.

Genesis 12:3 - "I will bless those who bless you ... and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

"I will not leave you as orphans, I will come to you." John 14:18

what's AHEAD

- **School Desks Needed** — Do you know of a school closing in your area? We are looking for desks to ship overseas to countries where children desperately need an education. Please call Cliff Kraft at 610-420-0380 with any information you may have.
- **OGT MAB to Attend LWML Convention** — On June 1–3 volunteer Sandy O'Hedy will represent our branch at the LWML biennial Eastern District Convention in Niagara Falls, NY. Look for Sandy at our OGT display table.
- **KAH Bonanza** — On June 2, the Harrisburg ELCA community will pack 300,000 KAH meals at Messiah College. 240,000 will immediately go on a container to the Philippines. The remaining 60,000 will be transported to our warehouse and stored until a future destination is determined.

did YOU KNOW?

- **OGT on NBC!** — On November 13, 2017, the Today Show credited Orphan Grain Train in their "Lend a Hand" segment about Hurricane Harvey victims in Spring, TX. Al Roker introduced OGT and showed 35,000 lbs. of groceries from Norfolk donated to Trinity Klein Lutheran Church. Go to [OGT on NBC—Orphan Grain Train](#), to read the full story.
- **OGT is Growing** — We welcomed the newest member of the OGT family last fall—the Nevada Sierra Branch in Reno. With this addition we now have 26 locations in 18 states shipping aid to 66 countries and 42 US states. Visit www.ogt.org to see where we are in the world.



To God alone be the Glory!