

Orphan Grain Train †

Relief for Human Need Worldwide

OGT Spotlight

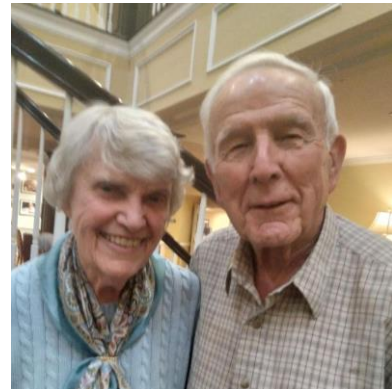
Mid-Atlantic Branch

YEAR ESTABLISHED:
2002

**BRANCH MANAGER AND
BACKGROUND:**

Cliff Kraft pictured with wife Marilyn

The Mid Atlantic Branch of Orphan Grain Train started in October 2002 when officers were selected to start the Branch and began the activities to allow it to function. However, we were not granted our official Charter until the September 2003 Convention when Pastor Wilke presented me, manager of the Mid Atlantic Branch, with the Charter, a Burgundy Towel, symbolizing washing the feet of our volunteers, and two Tape Guns for packing boxes. I have been an LCMS member all my life, have served in various positions in my home congregations and also in District and Synodical positions. I have a degree in Horticulture from The Ohio State University, been in sales and management, and operated a Management Consulting business for 27 years before retiring. My wife Marilyn and I have been married for 65 years and have three adopted children, one of whom is in heaven.



WHAT INTRIGUED YOU ABOUT OGT?

Orphan Grain Train came to my attention when a friend, Pastor Tim Nickles, decided to become a missionary and was stationed in Kyrgyzstan. On one of his furloughs back to the US I asked Pastor Nickles and his wife Rita to share with our congregation their experiences in Kyrgyzstan. During the presentation Orphan Grain Train was praised for the items which were sent to them for distribution to the local people and the opportunity to witness to these people.

Also emphasized was the opportunity to start House Churches and have the people share their gifts with others.

Looking forward to retirement I put OGT out of my mind. However the Lord kept bringing it back. After some time and much prayer Dick Jostes of OGT was contacted and sent me information about starting a Branch. A group was gathered together to discuss the possibilities, and after a second meeting 30 days later in October 2002 the decision was made to start the Mid Atlantic Branch. Officers were elected and we were ready to start doing what we felt necessary as the Lord guided us forward.



HOW HAS YOUR BRANCH EVOLVED?

We started with nothing, only the guidance of our good Lord. The Holy Spirit took us by the hand and continues to lead us. We started looking for a warehouse, sent a few truckloads of clothes to the

New York Branch, and were blessed with a \$2,000 check from St Paul's church in Flemington, NJ. After three different warehouses, some with little heat, some with a restroom in another building, and one built in the late 1800's, in December of 2018 we were blessed with a wonderful well

lighted, heated warehouse with first class restrooms, an office, four loading docks and a drive-in ramp, all at a nominal rate, plus a very cooperative landlord. All of this by the grace of God.

LOCATION AND HOURS OF OPERATION:

We are located at 8 Federal Road, West Grove, PA 19390. Our hours are Wednesdays from 10am to 2:30pm and the 2nd and 4th Saturdays from 9am to 1:30pm. We always break for lunch and a devotion. Arrangements are made for special times for groups from schools, churches etc. Volunteers come from as far away as 2 hours.

WHAT MISSION TOUCHED YOUR HEART THE MOST?

There are many mission projects which have touched our hearts over the past 21 years. Shipments of household items, clothing and food to southeastern Ohio, meeting the recipients of shipments to Haiti at an OGT convention, and most recently many photos of starving children in Malawi receiving Kids Against Hunger food.

WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU FACED?

We have had many challenges, the biggest being a warehouse. After much prayer and by the grace of God we are now in that well-functioning facility. Other challenges have been the availability of volunteers, boxes for shipping and of course funding. Fundraising started by asking people to fill 35mm film canisters with quarters, next were auctions, which took tremendous amounts of time but were successful. We now each fall have a Grant Matching program which starts in late October and ends the first part of December. We have two persons who each donate funds to be matched. This has been very successful to date.

IN CLOSING.....

It is only through the grace of God that we are where we are today. He has shown us that everything we do is a process and to continually strive to improve these processes. There have been many challenges, and



more to come. We always try to confront them with prayer, asking the good Lord to guide us thru the next challenge/opportunity. It is not us who have brought us to where we are today. It is God working thru us which has brought the Mid Atlantic Branch to where it is today.

To God alone be the glory!

Branch Manager

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Orphan Grain Train

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Contact Us

