



W.A.R.M.

Providing a Hand Up, not a Hand Out.

Westerville Area Resource Ministry



By the Numbers

In the midst of the largest recession in over 30 years, **Money Magazine** has named Westerville 15th on its list of the best 100 small cities in which to live. This national ranking aside, Westerville residents are not immune to the effects of sudden economic loss and hunger. Perhaps our community's ability to sustain our afflicted neighbors through the WARM

food pantry and job recovery assistance programs is one of the finest reasons to live in this top-ranked community.

In the first seven months of 2009, 2202 families (6,693 individuals) were sustained nutritionally through groceries and funds donated to the WARM food pantry. This represents an increase of 41% in the number of Westerville families served since this time in 2008 and a staggering 55% increase in individuals served.

How has our community pulled off this challenge? By continually responding to the needs of our less fortunate. Local food drives and tremendously-effective cash donations have managed to keep the pantry just ahead of this unprecedented need. Incredibly, more than 4,000 volunteer hours have been logged this year at WARM. This is an increase of almost 30% over last year.

Not surprisingly, the only statistic to drop this year is in job placements. Twenty WARM clients have found work so far this year – down from 26 in 2008.

Unemployment levels have climbed to their highest levels in more than 25 years. Companies statewide have trimmed employee benefits and salaries and reduced work hours. Because of - and despite this - our community continues to pull our neighbors back from the brink of hunger and lead them successfully to economic independence.

We at WARM congratulate all of you who live, work, worship and recreate in Westerville for achieving a coveted Money Magazine distinction. From where we sit, it's easy to see how our community has risen to the top. You continually embrace the needs of those suffering in our community. Your caring is demonstrated through increasing donations of time, money and products. And never have these contributions been more needed and more appreciated.

Is your family, company, church or group looking for a fun way to give back to your community? *Contact Cheryl@warmwesterville.org* for details on these events to benefit WARM. **Run 4 the Health of It @ Westerville Sports Complex (9/07/09); Crop Walk Westerville @ Westerville Community United Church of Christ (10/11/09); Columbus Marathon/WARM Team @ Downtown Columbus (10/18/09)**

Pancakes on the Patio

Organizer **Rene Delane** treated her friends and neighbors to a sweet fundraising deal. Over \$600 were raised during this one day event.



Just shy of his Ph. D, John Phillips had always taught college level math classes. He's worked at Miami University and at Capital University, too. Until October 2008. That's when John joined the painfully long list of highly-educated, well-experienced unemployed. The lay-off immediately placed John's family in peril because his was the only paycheck for the household. John's wife Julia worked in the couple's home raising their two sons.

"At first, I pieced together revenue through freelance writing and partaking in a variety of assistance programs aimed at reducing household expenditures," says John. "But as time wore on, it became clear that I needed to take a more aggressive approach to finding a long-term solution to support my family."

John approached WARM to learn more about the S.T.O.P. program*. Lynda Chambers, WARM Coordinator of Employment Services first helped John scan the Ohio Benefits Bank for assistance applications and resources. Then, Lynda assisted John and his wife Julia to map out short and long-term career strategies.

Next the couple worked with Lynda on resume writing techniques. Since their sons were both now in elementary school, Julia jumped back into the job market, too. Her MA in chemistry and experience with a local manufacturer increased the chances that the family could once again secure continuous employment. "Lynda is an HR professional and she was best able to help us fine tune our job search to meet the needs of hiring managers," says John.

Before long, John did secure a job as curriculum director at Columbus State Community College where he is currently employed. "Although it's not a permanent position," John explains, "It's a step in the right direction."

*The WARM Steps To Overcome Poverty (STOP) Program guides clients back to self-sufficiency. The multi-faceted program helps the unemployed research community resources, set family budgeting goals, assess job training skills and brush up on job search strategies.

Every time you give to WARM, you help neighbors like John in their quest to return to productive employment. With every donation of food, cash, volunteer hours, in-kind goods and services – you are making a direct investment in the people who live here in Westerville. *To become a WARM cash or in-kind donor, contact Diana@warmwesterville.org*

Giving on the Double

A glimpse of the WARM volunteer roster caused us to ponder. Just how many couples devote time in tandem to the organization? Our growing list of volunteer couples includes:

Rodney & Linda Daniel, Doug & Elaine Palmer, Dave & Beckey Stamm, Bob & Veronica Searles, Bob & Nancy Strasburg, Bill & Sheila Tompos, Dwight & Jane Davis, Dale & Jan Hartman, Pat & Michelle Tighe, Jeff & Colleen Gaston, Bob LaChance & Patty Edwards and Ken & Julia Keener.

Elaine Palmer and her husband **Doug** have been married for 48 years. After retiring, the couple traveled with RV Caravaners and worked with Habitat for Humanity, "We do believe in helping others and finding ways to contribute to the community in retirement," says Elaine. "Now our days are filled with either volunteer work or leisure activities. We are involved in our church and work in the thrift store. We like to ride bikes or hike and also walk 3 miles every day. WARM is just part of our overall purpose in life which is to help others and enjoy ourselves at the same time. We have met many nice people at WARM and enjoy their company."

You don't need to be a twosome to enjoy volunteering. *For more information contact Karan@warmwesterville.org.*



The Meijer store in Westerville has once again led the community in a fight against hunger.

Their **Simply Give** campaign has once again brought over \$2810 worth of Meijer gift cards to needy WARM families. Shoppers donated cards in \$10 increments and Meijer gave additional gift cards for the cause. Meijer Store Director **Ken Barclay** is shown here with Scott Marier.

The Heart of our Mission Heritage Christian Church



Begun as Paul's Pantry in 1972, WARM nurtures partnerships with dozens of member churches throughout the area. This month, we give special thanks to the members of our partner Heritage Christian Church.

Heritage Christian Church at 7413 Maxtown Road was founded in January of 1989 when **Pastor Jim Zippay** and a small core group began to prayerfully explore the idea of beginning a new church in the Westerville, Ohio area. Their focus was to address the need for a church focused on reaching out to those who had never been introduced to, or had turned away from Christianity. Worship services were first held that year in Westerville's Heritage Middle School with 150 people in attendance.

Now celebrating 20 years of worship, Heritage Christian Church has continued to experience phenomenal growth – each year increasing church membership by as much as 30% and more. Additional facilities and added Sunday services now support over 3,000 members. The congregation is especially blessed by a true diversity of members and staff.

"Our church supports five major focuses annually that enrich spiritual development and the community around us," explains **Connection and Communications Pastor John Buckles**. "We strive to be a 'Force for Good' in our community. While we support WARM year round, we placed an all-church focus on food pantry donations during the month of June."

Food drive coordinator **Jeff Gaston** set the church wide goal to collect an unprecedented 12 tons of food in one month. He enlisted volunteers and used the WARM truck on Sundays to transport Heritage donations to the pantry. Non-perishable items combined with cash donations resulted in a whopping 39,657 lbs of food for the pantry – 20 tons! This outpouring will feed 620 families of four for one whole week.

Could you use the WARM truck for your next Food Drive?
Contact Denise@warmwesterville.org.



The WARM Spot

GLS Consulting: A WARM Link to Technology

A retired electrical engineer with nearly 40 years at American Electric Power (AEP), **Gary Sams** now operates **GLS Consulting Services** to assist local individuals and small businesses with their computing needs. Along with this consulting activity, Gary offers technology services on a voluntary basis to several non-profit organizations, including WARM. "These consulting jobs have provided me with a sense of purpose during retirement," Gary explains.

"When I was first asked if I could help WARM develop their computer technology, they had a small staff and only one computer with an AOL dial-up account for accessing the Internet and sending/receiving email," remembers Gary. "After a donation of some used computers, they had one on each desk, but still had to share the very slow dial-up account and only one person at a time could connect to the Internet. There was no website."

From those humble beginnings, Gary has been able to guide the WARM staff through the development of a full computer network, including 12 computers with flat-screen monitors and a printer on each desk, a file server, broadband Internet access, individual email addresses, a website, and improved network security. This has been an evolutionary process, made possible by Gary's donated time and by a grant from the **Westerville Sunrise Rotary Club, Rotary District 6690 and the Westerville Fund** which allowed WARM to purchase all new equipment.

Throughout the course of this technology development, Gary has provided on-call support to answer questions, resolve problems and update the website. "Because of the new equipment recently installed, most of the WARM technology needs have been met for the foreseeable future," says Gary. "My attention now has shifted to the task of redesigning a modernized website to attract new donors and clients."

Gary's contributions to non-profit organizations like WARM have been rewarded. **First Link** recently bestowed their *Agent of Change Award* in the Technology Category to Gary.

If you have computing needs, please keep Gary in mind. Or, perhaps like Gary, you have a special skill set to offer WARM on a voluntary basis. "The staff at WARM really is warm and friendly," encourages Gary, "They make any time spent at that office a real pleasure."

Contact Karan@warmwesterville.org to volunteer today.

