

**Metro Lutheran Ministry: With vision, purpose and compassion since 1971.**  
MLM affirms the right of all people to food, clothing and shelter, while promoting self-sufficiency and hope through direct client services and advocacy.

## Going A Mile (or More) for Food

Theresa Riley may know some of Kansas City's sidewalks about as well as anyone.

Disabled because of severely herniated and ruptured spinal disks, the former nurse uses an electric mobility scooter to travel nearly two miles from her home to Metro Lutheran Ministry at least three times each month, rain or shine, hot or cold. Her quest is simple: gathering food to supplement her meager Social Security and disability benefits.

"It keeps me from going to the grocery store as often," she explained. "My money doesn't go as far now. What used to cost a little now costs a lot."

Theresa worked from the age of 16 and was only without a job when her back problems began six years ago, probably the result of years of lifting.

"I've always worked until the last five to six years," she said. "This has been a real hard time because I miss it."

After studying criminology, Theresa trained in medical technology, first becoming a nurse's aide, then a medical technologist and finally a Licensed Practical Nurse. She liked to help people, and especially appreciated working with the elderly. "I



*Theresa Riley rides her scooter nearly two miles to access MLM food programs.*

enjoyed that," she recalled. "They're really friendly and you feel like your doing something."

Theresa uses several of MLM's food programs, including the monthly food distribution, the food pantry and special Saturday food programs. In addition to augmenting her meals, she also picks up food for her 77-year-old neighbor.

"It's a big help," Theresa concludes. "It really makes a difference."

## MLM "Daily Miracles" Help Thousands

With stories like the one about Theresa Riley, it's important to remember that she is only one of 58,000 people that MLM helped in the past year.

That staggering figure includes people and families served at Christmas, food and supplies for seniors, mortgage or rent help and medical assistance. In terms of sheer numbers, the largest area involves the MLM food pantry, which helped 13,239 people.

This time of year, the 1,586 young students helped with school supplies and books are notable. Other stories involve cases where MLM works with other organizations such as Aging Services, or provides bus fare for someone to reach their new job.

All of this takes place with contributions and MLM's small staff. If you want to consider this a daily miracle, you'll get no argument here.

### ***Sign Up for Our E-Newsletter!***

MLM will make our newsletters available online and even e-mail you your own

personal copy! Sign up today at our Web site, [www.mlmc.org](http://www.mlmc.org). Using e-newsletters will also save postage costs.

MLM works hard to minimize expenses.  
Ninety percent of designated gifts go directly to programs.

# Volunteer Finds Thrift Store Far Reaching

Shirley Foss knows a thing or two about volunteering.

A long-time assistant at MLM's Christmas Store and Food Pantry, Shirley has recently expanded her range to include the Blessings Abound Thrift Store in Overland Park. The store, which provides funding for MLM and the Lutheran Mission of the Good Shepherd, recently needed help when the director was absent for surgery. A veteran of stocking MLM's food pantry, she easily switched to stocking the store and running the cash register.

"The thrift store has been a lot of fun," she noted. "There are a lot of people from different churches donating items and we have a lot of great people coming in to shop."

Shirley has always found that volun-

teering for MLM-related programs is worthwhile. "MLM is very beneficial to the area," she explained. "And we need to give back to the community. Plus, you meet the nicest people here." MLM's older adult clients especially affect her.

The biggest challenge at the thrift store involves items that don't fit the shop's goal of providing high-quality items for sale. However, many items can still be used, such as furniture that helps an MLM client set up an apartment after being homeless. Other options include recycling clothing for use in the inner city or third world countries.

"Our goal here is to make the money to donate to MLM. That's why we focus on nicer stuff, the sellable stuff. But if we get something that can be used we call MLM."

The Thrift Store is located at 9620 Nall in Overland Park. For more information, call 913-648-0700 or visit [www.blessingsaboundkc.com](http://www.blessingsaboundkc.com).



*Shirley Foss volunteers at the Blessings Abound Thrift Store...and helps MLM deliver critical services.*

## Important Dates for MLM Include Fall Events

The 2008 **Power of Each One Event** will be Nov. 1 on the Starlight Theatre Stage, 4600 Starlight Road, Kansas City.

The event to benefit Metro Lutheran Ministry begins with a social hour at 5:30 p.m. The event this year will feature the Kansas City Boys and Girls Choirs.

Tickets are \$80 per person, \$65 for

seniors over 65. For more information, visit MLM's Web site at [www.mlmc.org](http://www.mlmc.org) or call 816-931-0027 Ext. 240.

The Joint Hollis Renewal Center/MLM **Golf Benefit** for Lutheran golfers will be Friday, Oct. 10.

The event will raise funds for two Lutheran-based not-for-profits in the

Kansas City area. The cost is only \$95 per player, but \$75 per player if you are able to get your registration in early.

For more information, contact Dave Mareske, Hollis Renewal Center at [hollis-center@kc.rr.com](mailto:hollis-center@kc.rr.com); or Suzanne Bartling, MLM, at 816-931-0027 or [suzannebartling@mlmc.org](mailto:suzannebartling@mlmc.org).

## Housing Program To Fill Major Gap

On Sept. 2, MLM opened five new apartments for chronically mentally ill and chronically homeless people in Kansas City, KS. Called Grace Homes, the project was named by Pr. Sally Fahrenthold, former MLM program director and one of MLM's honored friends.

With an ultimate capacity for nine residents, Grace Homes is funded by grants from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and H&R Block Foundation. A new staff person will be on site five days each week. Wyandot Mental Health will also support each resident with outreach case management and psychiatric services.

MLM is excited about the important

opportunity of addressing one of the nation's most challenging issues: homelessness among those with mental illness. The project will be among the first here to address directly the widespread but often overlooked problem of mental illness among the area's homeless people.

Mental health issues are estimated to be a major problem for as many as half of the nation's homeless people, including many military veterans.

People with severe mental illness tend to remain homeless for longer periods, have less contact with family and friends, encounter more barriers to employment, have poorer physical health, and have more contact with the legal system than other homeless people.



*The May 30 Dykman Lecture was held in honor of long-time MLM leader Loyd W. Dykman. Speaker Jill Schumann, president and CEO of Lutheran Services in America, met with Loyd before the event, which was held at Atonement Lutheran Church, Overland Park.*

## "Small But Mighty," MLM Serves The Community

During the last twelve months, MLM served more than 58,000 people who looked to us to help them end the pain of poverty, and increase hope for their future. We listened to their stories and did whatever we could to assist them. I



*Jim Glynn: MLM's programs make a difference for 58,000 lives.*

couldn't be more proud of our mission and the compassion with which we help people.

We have a small but mighty staff at MLM. Working with hundreds of dedicated volunteers, we mobilize our limited resources to affect the greatest outcomes. I love seeing our white truck loaded with household goods being driven away by an MLM staff member and a previously homeless client. The next step is permanent housing and a new start. Invariably the client has a job as well, the result of assistance from our Chael-Dykman Education Center.

Every month we have a Saturday food distribution for 400 families. Many Lutheran congregations have stepped forward to help us "feed the hungry." Those of you who have volunteered to help us put food in the hands of those needing it know the joy that results.

Each day the challenges appear great, but invariably the energy and resources

we need are provided to us. We thank each of you who help us in many ways—with dollars, by volunteering, by attending our fundraiser events, and with your prayers. Call me for an MLM tour (816.285.3117) or invite Suzanne Bartling or me to visit your congregation. We wish to share the joy we experience by serving others—come join us if you haven't already.

God's blessings to you,  
Jim Glynn, Executive Director

### Thank You Donors!

MLM is deeply grateful for those who support our efforts. Your contributions continue and expand MLM services to help people get back on their feet and remain independent. Visit our Web site, [www.mlmkc.org](http://www.mlmkc.org) and click on the "give today" button. Your generosity is deeply appreciated.

## Generosity Illustrates The Power Of Long-Term Giving

A recent gift to MLM illustrates the importance—and power—of long-term giving.

The late Mary Patricia "Mary Pat" Punkari of Lenexa recently left all of her personal possessions to MLM. Several furniture and other items are being used to help homeless families and individuals to establish a real home. Other items were donated to the Blessings Abound Thrift Store.

Mary Pat's niece Lynne Punkari was executor of the estate and said her aunt spoke often of MLM. "She had been a

shut-in the last two to three years and, when I visited, she talked about how people from MLM would call and talk," she said. "It was important to me that she wanted to give all of her personal items to MLM."

A member of Faith Lutheran Church in Prairie Village, Mary Pat was a second generation Finnish-American who was active in her church until her health began to fail. "She was just a very generous, kind person," Lynne recalled. "She thought the most important thing was to do good things for other people."

### Leave a Legacy

Please consider helping MLM for years to come with a gift through your will or trust. Even modest long-term donations help provide critical stability for planning and ensure funds are there to steadily maintain services such as the food pantry. For more information, call Jim Glynn at (816) 285-3117 or visit [www.mlmkc.org](http://www.mlmkc.org) on the Internet.

## Help Fill Critical Wish List for MLM Services

If you can help with any of the following, call (816) 931-0027:

- Volunteer to teach Life Skills classes
- Volunteer for senior food distribution the 2nd & 3rd Tuesdays from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

- Furniture and household goods for our homeless program
- Plastic & paper bags for our food pantries
- Food items (peanut butter, jelly, can vegetables/fruit, macaroni and cheese,

- soups, can meats, pastas).
- Zip lock bags to repack bulk foods.
- Bibles
- Winter clothing: Winter coats (adult and children), blankets, gloves, hats and sweatshirts.

**Metro Lutheran Ministry**  
**3031 Holmes**  
**Kansas City, Missouri 64109**

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*"with God all things are possible." —Matthew 19:26*

## Springsteen Chooses MLM For Local Visit

MLM was honored by being selected as the beneficiary of the Bruce Springsteen concert Aug. 24 at Kansas City's Sprint Center.

Four of the best seats at the event were auctioned through [www.charityfolks.com](http://www.charityfolks.com), with the proceeds going to MLM. Then,

at the end of the concert, Bruce spoke about donation containers that were placed at the exits with all of these proceeds also going to MLM.

The selection is a Bruce Springsteen tradition that "adopts" one hunger-fighting organization in each concert city.



*Members of the ELCA Youth in July visited Metro Lutheran Ministry to provide the youth with a chance to serve in Jesus' name. They did wonderful things to help the poor and needy in the Kansas City area and hope to return.*

*Blessings Abound*  
Thrift Store

9620 Nall in Overland Park  
913-648-0700  
[www.blessingsaboundkc.com](http://www.blessingsaboundkc.com)

Proceeds Support:  
Metro Lutheran Ministry  
Lutheran Mission of the  
Good Shepherd

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**Metro Lutheran Ministry:**

**816-931-0027, [www.mlmkc.org](http://www.mlmkc.org)**

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