



A Volunteer Christian Ministry

Our Mission

To Bring the Love and Hope of Jesus Christ to those we serve.

We deliver furniture, household items and food free of charge to those who seek assistance. There are no prerequisites for service.

MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

"We're just the delivery people, this is the person who sent you the furniture."

BUILDING COMMUNITY...

My Brother's Keeper is a "Christian community in action." We are thousands of volunteers and supporters, each offering our unique gifts and talents to serve our more humble brothers and sisters in Christ's name. This issue of our newsletter highlights how we work together as a community...men, women...young, old...students, homemakers, retirees, business owners...the employed, unemployed, and disabled. We are a diverse family united in Christ serving families who reach out to us in their time of need.

† A New Life Together †

By Ryan Thorley



Lisa was waiting outside her apartment in **Weymouth** when we pulled up in the truck. Tears immediately began to fill her eyes. *"Thank you so much for helping me. You don't know how much this means to me."*

Lisa wept at the sight of **Jesus** and said, *"He's always been there for me. Even in my hardest times, I know He's been there."*

We gave her a hug and assured her we'd keep her in our prayers. We delivered many things to **Lisa** that day including a new start for her family, but by far the most important was the **Love and Hope of Jesus Christ**.

Lisa had thanked us before we moved a single piece of furniture; she was simply grateful that a group of strangers cared enough to help.

We began filling **Lisa's** empty apartment with furniture. She was shocked when we brought in a beautiful sofa. *"That's for me!?"* she asked. *"Oh my God, I don't believe it!"*

Lisa cried, telling us how hard it had been living in a shelter for the past eight months. While she was homeless, her ten-year-old son lived with his grandmother. She only saw him once a week at best.

This delivery was clearly about so much more than furniture—we were helping a mother and her son start a new life together.

We carried in bedroom furniture next. **Lisa** looked at her son's room with a twin bed, dresser, and nightstand filling the space that was empty just a few minutes before. *"You people are angels! He'll be so happy!"* When we brought in a cherry kitchen table with four matching chairs, she said, *"I never imagined anything so wonderful. It'll be so nice to eat together again."*

After we brought in the final items and set things up to her liking, we presented **Lisa** with our final gift. I told her, *"The furniture's not from us. This is the man who sent it to you"* and handed her the crucifix.



2010 Mission Appeal... Building Community

Please respond to our 2010 Mission Appeal, "Building Community," which will be mailed to you in the coming weeks. In so doing, you will join with our community of supporters *"To bring the Love and Hope of Jesus Christ to those we serve"*... one family, one delivery at a time.

Your direct involvement and active participation in our ministry is important. Thank you for your support.

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The My Brother's Keeper "Sweatshop"

A special group of about 20 women make up what we affectionately call "The Sweatshop," assembling boxsprings at *My Brother's Keeper* to help get families off the floor and into beds in the most cost-effective way possible.

The materials are provided for us at cost by area businesses and the ladies take it from there: two cut flame-retardant fabric according to a template they created; up to eight ladies sew covers using Kevlar thread on machines they obtained in donation; and two do the final assembly with a compressor, staple gun, and, of course, safety glasses.

Beds are the most requested furniture item at *My Brother's Keeper* and our 'Sweatshop' volunteers make about 1,000 boxsprings each year. They've even included a few men lately to keep up with increased deliveries! Their hard work and dedication saves *My Brother's Keeper* more than \$30,000 annually.



Maeve Paul of Easton and Margaret McEwan of Whitman assemble boxsprings in the "The Sweatshop."

At bedtime, our 'Sweatshop' volunteers don't think of the boxsprings they made or the money they saved, though...they think of children sleeping in beds with a crucifix hanging on the wall above them, a reminder that **God** loves them and has not forgotten them.

Our special thanks to **Paul** and **Jane Rosenblatt** and **David Teixeira** of **The Mattress Maker in Brockton** who have generously shared their skills and knowledge with us—along with countless beds!—over the past twenty years.

"Ministries within The Ministry"

2,000 volunteers serve at *My Brother's Keeper* annually, each offering their special gifts and talents to serve others in Christ's name.

Over the years, this has led to many ministries within the ministry: small groups of dedicated volunteers who joyfully work together in community on special tasks.

This is the first part of an ongoing series sharing the beauty and impact of our volunteers' work.

Desperate Measures

By Josh Smith



Without help from *My Brother's Keeper*, those we serve often endure desperate measures. **Linda**, a single-mother and a full-time record keeper at a local medical office, is a perfect illustration of this sad reality.

While **Linda's** job enabled her to rent an apartment on **Brockton's** quiet east side, affording furniture was another question. Putting her five-year-old son first, **Linda** scraped together a month's savings to purchase a new bed for him.

A new bed for herself, though, was out of the question for **Linda**. She didn't know about *My Brother's Keeper* so she did the only thing she could: she dragged in a soiled mattress and box spring from a neighbor's garbage.



Beds are the most important furniture item we deliver at *My Brother's Keeper* since a good night's sleep is critical for good health and for success in work, school, and life in general. We often witness people sleeping on the floor, salvaging furniture from dumpsters as **Linda** did, or renting furniture from predatory lenders. Our work eliminates the need for people to choose any of these dehumanizing options.

Fortunately, **Linda** soon heard about *My Brother's Keeper* from a friend. When the delivery was scheduled, **Luke Kalinoski** from **Stonehill College** and I brought her a beautiful pillow-top mattress that had never been slept on.

Linda was excited to sprawl out on her new bed, but it was the crucifix which truly moved her. "He's the one that gets me through the day," she sighed. "Jesus is always watching out for us." As much as the bed, this seemed to be the message **Linda** needed most in her busy working life.

Our Cost:

New Twin Bed

Mattress	\$ 68
Boxspring	\$ 14
Frame	\$ 18
Blanket	\$ 0
Linens	\$ 0
Total:	\$100

Average Retail Cost:
\$250

Donna Lane appointed New Treasurer

At the Board of Directors meeting in February, **Donna Lane** of **Easton** was appointed the ministry's new treasurer upon the recommendation of long-time treasurer, **John Danehy**.



*"I've enjoyed witnessing the immense growth of My Brother's Keeper since I took over from **Dick Hepworth**, the founding treasurer, in 2003," said **Danehy**. "As we continue to grow, though, I think we're best served by someone like **Donna** who specializes in non-profit accounting."*

Donna is a Senior Audit Manager at **Kevin P. Martin & Associates** and has more than 20 years of accounting experience. Her practice primarily encompasses affordable housing and other not-for-profit clients.

Donna is also a member of the Development Board and the "**100 Lovely Ladies**" committee (*see below*). She, her husband **Jim**, and their sons **James** and **Jacob** have actively volunteered at *My Brother's Keeper* since construction of our new facility in 2002. **John Danehy** will remain on the Board of Directors. Thank you, **John** and **Donna**, for your outstanding service!

SAVE THE DATE!!!

New event in the works... **"My Brother's Keeper Family Walk"** **Saturday, June 19th**

Families volunteering at Christmas often ask, "How else can we be involved with *My Brother's Keeper*?"

Our answer—on **Saturday, June 19th**, we will hold our first annual "**My Brother's Keeper Family Walk**." It will be a celebration of the *My Brother's Keeper* community: a family in **Christ** serving families in need. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

The day will include a prayer service, a beautiful 3-mile walk around Holy Cross Fathers' property and Easton's "Sheep Pasture" followed by a picnic lunch with plenty of fun activities for children.

Please mark **Saturday, June 19th**, the day before Father's Day, on your calendar. It'll be a great way to honor our **Father** in heaven!

More information will follow on our website and in our June newsletter.



100 Lovely Ladies Event... *a celebration of community & mission*



On Thursday March 11, one hundred and sixty-five women attended the **4th Annual "100 Lovely Ladies"** Fundraiser at **Thorny Lea Golf Club** in Brockton.

The ladies-only event was coordinated entirely by a group of dedicated volunteers from **Easton** (*see Committee picture, right*). It was an incredibly fun night—more than 50 prizes were awarded and local comedienne **Mary Ellen Rinaldi** provided laugh-out-loud entertainment.

The committee worked hard to convey the mission of *My Brother's Keeper* as well. The first course was a simple bean salad to be mindful of the humble families served by *My Brother's Keeper*. Reflections were read between courses. Instead of a silent auction, tables were filled with samples of items we deliver to families in need: linens, a food box, dish sets and even a bed.

The event raised more than **\$13,500** but the impact of the evening is so much greater. First-time attendees are drawn to *My Brother's Keeper* like a magnet and women who are familiar with our work become much more invested in our mission.

Lori Bechtel, an attendee, said, *"I was so moved by how much My Brother's Keeper has touched so many lives and the message of HOPE you convey. The woman on the committee amaze me too—all so active, some working full-time jobs, yet still find the time to put this together! They have inspired me and my family to get more involved with My Brother's Keeper."*



The 2010 "100 Lovely Ladies" Committee, left to right: Sue Vatalaro, Patti Boucher, Deb Murray, Donna Lane, Kathy Jones, Lori Grant, and Ann Andrew, all from Easton.



Co-founder Jim Orcutt—the only man in attendance! — shares a mission moment.

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

MAY	2nd Annual Mission Appeal Mailing
JUNE	Saturday, June 19 My Brother's Keeper Family Walk – Easton
JULY	Monday, July 19 My Brother's Keeper Golf Tournament – Foxborough Country Club
SEPTEMBER	Friday–Sunday, September 17-19 Million Dollar Hole-in-One Shootout – Golf Country, S. Easton



MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

P.O. Box 338, Easton, MA 02356-0338

Furniture Assistance . . . 508-238-4416

Donations / Business 508-238-7512 – Fax 508-238-3613

(501 (c) (3) tax-exempt)

www.mybrotherskeeper.org

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QUOTES FROM STONEHILL VOLUNTEERS

"We are all spokes on God's wheel. No one of us is greater or less than another. Some of us may be poor, some may do hundreds of community service hours, and some may even donate large sums of money, yet God loves each one of us the same. In God's eyes, no one individual is more important than another and that is one of the most important lessons I take from my service at My Brother's Keeper. God calls each of us to humbly offer our own gifts and talents to build up His kingdom."

– Alex Ogozaly, sophomore
Accounting Major
Hollis, NH

"My Brother's Keeper has provided me a home away from home, where I know I will always be welcomed with smiles and comfort. Whether it's a random small talk about weekends or deep conversations about the future or the importance of service, I always feel like there is someone who listens and truly cares. The countless hours of effort put forth by everyone at 'the Keeper' is so inspirational to me, and reminds me what dedication and passion can lead to. I truly believe that being a member of the My Brother's Keeper community has changed my life forever and I cannot thank you enough."

– Marie Boyd, sophomore
Sociology Major
Southwick, MA