



Pathways to Sustainable Living

Winter 2013

Back to School Fiesta had another great year!

Since 2006, the Barnabas Connection has hosted the annual Back to School Fiesta with multiple area partners (civic, corporate and faith) to help meet the school supply needs of Wimberley students starting their school year. The annual event has grown to include providing free school supplies, backpacks and Payless Shoes gift cards; free haircuts; and access to other services. Students on the Wimberley ISD free and reduced lunch program are invited to submit a preregistration application.

As preregistration closed on Monday, August 5, we had just over 400 students pre-registered. Postcards confirming registration were mailed the same week. When all was said and done we ended up helping just under 500 students with school supplies, backpacks and Payless Shoes gift cards.



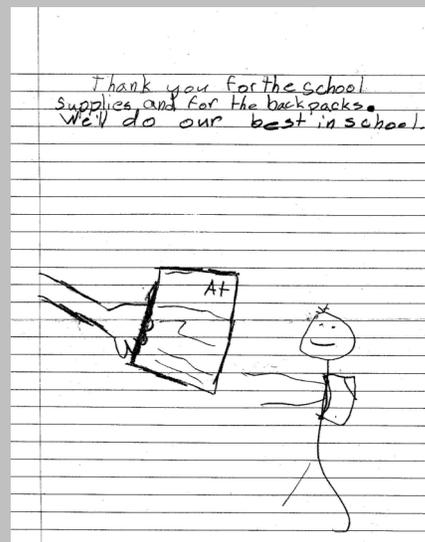
Generous Funding partners included: Rotary Club of Wimberley, Wimberley Lions Club, Wimberley Civic Club, Barnabas Connection, Cypress Creek Church, Wimberley Christian Church, St Stephen's Episcopal Church, Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Unity Church of Wimberley, Wimberley Presbyterian Church, First Baptist Church, St Vincent De Paul, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Ace Hardware,

Wimberley UMC, Presbyterian Women, Seton Medical Center Hays, Demasters – Daniel Insurance, Ozona National Bank, the Ruth Circle of United Methodist Women, Communicare Clinic, Walgreen's, Literacy Volunteers of Wimberley, and many generous individual donors!

We are also grateful to St Stephen's Episcopal, Unity Church, Lutheran Church of the Resurrection and Wimberley Presbyterian Church for actively supporting the Fiesta with specific engagement opportunities with their congregations.

Families receiving assistance were also invited to volunteer on the Thursday and Friday before the Fiesta. Youth from Leo Club, National Honor Society and Church youth groups also volunteered their time in assisting with sacking supplies, setup and decorating.

The Back to School Fiesta was recognized in the National United Methodist New Service as an example for back to school missions around the country. See the article—<http://www.umc.org/site/apps/nlnet/content3.aspx?c=1wL4KnNlLtH&b=5700485&ct=13224243¬oc=1>



A thank you note from a child, that was walked back in and handed to volunteers at the Fiesta.



Each sack represents one pre-registered Wimberley student and the supplies they need for their classes.

Food for Thought—Christmas Assistance

Barnabas is asking questions and seeking ways for Christmas assistance that builds dignity. The ideas are not finalized and will not be implemented until 2014 at the earliest. We recognize this is a challenging subject and we appreciate your thoughtful response as we find our way through it.

Reprinted from an Interview with Bob Lupton, Author of Toxic Charity. Written by Sarah Pulliam Bailey:

How do you see charity hurting families?

I'm seeing one-way giving, doing for people what they have the capacity to do for themselves in a way that disempowers them. In the United States, the most common Christian charities are food pantries and clothes closets. For example, at Christmastime, I used to be involved with "Adopt a Family" at Christmas. I would line up suburban families with families whose kids wouldn't get anything for Christmas. Then, on Christmas Eve day, they would deliver toys and presents to that family. I saw something I had never seen before. The kids, of course, were excited. The moms were generally gracious, but a little subdued. But if there was a dad in the household, he just disappeared. These parents, in front of their kids, were being emasculated. They were being exposed for their inability to provide. The moms would endure that indignity for the sake of kids.

But for the dads, it was just too much. It was just killing their pride.

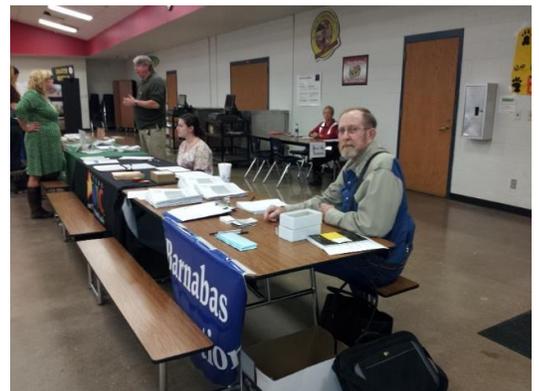
The following Christmas, we did a "dignity for dads" promotion, or "pride for parents." So as folks called in for their families, I said, 'Go shopping, get presents for the kids, but bring them in unwrapped.' We set up a little toy shop and marked them somewhere between a garage sale and wholesale price. We invited parents to come into the shop. If they didn't have any money, we could hire parents with the money that came in. So on Christmas morning, the low-income parents could see their children open the gifts that they had earned through the efforts of their own work. We have to find a better way of entering into charitable relationships with more reciprocity.

This sounds more pragmatic or psychological. Are there theological implications for how we do charity? Dignity is given to us by our creator. We hold a whole theology of community and mutual supportedness, bearing one another's burdens and concerns. One-way giving creates toxic relationships where one has the resources, the other has the need. Do recipients at clothes closets and food pantries become a part of your church? Often, they're not participants in our community. How do we create respectful, honest, caring, and mutually supportive relationships?

Barnabas would like to host a meeting in January to discuss all ideas and seek opportunities for collaboration and partnership. If you are interested in participating, please contact Vicki McCuistion at vmccuistion@hotmail.com or 512-847-3109

Hays County Flood Response

The Barnabas Connection was invited to provide assistance at a Hays County community meeting in Kyle to Wimberley and Hays County residents who suffered from the tremendous rain on October 30. We invited the Wimberley Intercommunity Network (long-term disaster relief) to attend with us as we sought ways to respond to the needs of our neighbors. We are continuing to coordinate with WIN and the Regional Disaster Response Coordinator of the United Methodist Church in responding to Wimberley residents who suffered from flood damage. (Pictured: Harold Tannahill, Barnabas board member)



A message from the Wimberley Wesley Nurse:

It is not often you find your niche in a job. However, I am fortunate and blessed in that I found mine working for Methodist Healthcare Ministries as a Wesley Nurse. My name is Charlotte Johnson and I am the Wesley Nurse for this area. I have been a Wesley Nurse for six years. I am originally from Kentucky and have resided in Texas for the past 14 years. I have a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. My twenty-five years' nursing experience includes public/community health, pediatrics, geriatrics, psychology, and staff development.



A key component of my nursing ministry is health education, health promotion, and the facilitation of resources. I assist individuals and communities in achieving improved health and wellness through self-empowerment, preventive health education and access to healthcare resource information. Most importantly, I provide these services utilizing a holistic approach incorporating mind, body, and spirit. In addition, all of the Wesley Nurse services are free and open to the public. My Wesley Nurse Ministry includes assisting two churches and their communities: Wimberley United Methodist Church and Dripping Springs United Methodist Church.

Blessings, Charlotte Johnson RN, BSN, Wesley Nurse

Need a speaker for your civic or faith community? Charlotte is happy to come and share about the Wesley Nurse program, nutrition, medication safety, or a specific health topic that you arrange together. Charlotte can be reached at cjohnson@mhm.org or 512-847-3109.

The Barnabas Connections works closely with the Wesley Nurse providing input and seeking support for the clients and communities we serve together.

Good Listeners Needed!

In 2013, the Barnabas Connection restructured our phone-based referral program with Level 1 and Level 2 volunteers. Level 1 volunteers greet callers and ask lots of questions, seeking information! Level 2 volunteers provide the resource referral and interface with our online database that provides all referral information. Volunteer shifts are half or full day 1 to 2 times a week. Ongoing training is provided. To learn more about this engaging and compassion filled volunteer opportunity, please be in touch with Vicki McCuiston.

Considering Your End-of-Year Giving Options?

We hope you will keep the Barnabas Connection in mind.

The Barnabas Connection has been on a path for several years now of expanding its connection to the community with the intent of becoming an incorporated non-profit in order to expand our volunteer and funding base. At this stage of our growth and with the blessing of the Wimberley UMC Finance Committee, the Barnabas Connection Board received the WUMC Church Council's support of filing for non-profit incorporation status.

We are very excited about this time of transition. We have exciting ideas and dreams for the future as we seek ways to be in relationship with our neighbors in need in the Wimberley and Hays County area.

We are grateful for the road we have traveled over these last 10 years: starting with an idea of helping to connect people in need with resources to help them to growing to an organization that is at the center of many of the health and human service concerns in Wimberley and actively seeking ways to provide sustainable opportunities for the families we serve.

Your donation to the Barnabas Connection makes Wimberley a better place to live as we work to encourage and learn from our neighbors together.

The Barnabas Board officers and Executive Director have been working hard on the formal non-profit application process and hope to have the final application submitted within the next few months. Until it is official, tax-deductible donations can still be made through the Wimberley United Methodist Church and designated for the Barnabas Connection. All donations should be mailed to the Barnabas Connection, PO Box 737, Wimberley, Texas 78676. Thank you!

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(512) 847-3109 (office admin.)
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Barnabasconnects.org



2013 Board of Directors

Bev Hartsock, Chair	Jan Millard
Susan Agee	Sally Pool
Jan Allison	Linda Reed
Jean Eastlake	Harold Tannahill
Ana Garcia	

Vicki McCuiston, Executive Director

The Barnabas Connection (BC) serves individuals and families living in Hays County who are struggling with issues of poverty, including those families who may encounter a temporary financial crisis. The BC has expanded its services from just connecting those in need with health and human resources to responding to needs in the community, being an advocate on behalf of clients with low incomes, as well as providing education so the community can better respond to the needs of the poor.

If you would be interested in learning more about Barnabas and applying to serve on the Board of Directors, please be in touch with Vicki McCuiston at vmccuiston@hotmail.com or 512-847-3109.

Happy Birthday Barnabas Connection!

2014 will be Barnabas' 10th year serving the Wimberley community.

In place of an end of year dinner, the Barnabas Board of Directors decided to wait and hold a birthday party in February. We hope you will join us in celebrating this special occurrence and "Loving our Neighbors" in February!

Formal invitations will be coming your way in January, so be looking for them!

YOUR
NEIGHBOR

