

## Community known to rally to help those people in need

A year ago, the population increased several hundred people when a blizzard hit this area. While it has been a whole year, there are people who remember the time well, especially those who were stranded. What is really nice is the majority of those people remember St. Francis fondly as the letter from Lois Britten (printed on this page) expresses.

What may be most remembered is the giving, sharing spirit displayed by the people living in St. Francis. They tried to make the best of a bad time.

So often, the people of the community rally to help others in need.

Take the Food Pantry. Janet Jensen, the new coordinator, was amazed at the shelves that were

filled before the Thanksgiving food baskets were distributed. Ever so often, the Thrivent organization organizes a bake sale or a dinner or something to raise money to help a person who has been ill, had a fire, or any other type of disaster. Not only to they take the time to organize the event but they hold it, bring much of the food and, if anything is left, they buy it — then, they double the money taken in. Fantastic!!

The list goes on and on. When a farmer becomes ill or is injured, other farmers take time from their work to bring in their crops or plow their field...whatever it takes to help him get back on his feet.

When someone has a death in the

family, the food, flowers and cards show up.

Now, it is Christmas time. The Angel Tree names are up and kids who might not get a gift will be surprised when Santa appears with a wrapped box.

The Salvation Army kettles are out on special occasions. Salvation Army, like the Food Pantry, helps people all year long. Those donations dropped in the kettle may not be much to the person giving but, they all add up.

Yes. 'Tis the season! Take a little time to appreciate the people who live in your hometown! A kind word, a little assistance or even a call or card can mean a lot.

—Karen Krien

## Hospitality still remembered

A year ago I passed through St. Francis and stayed two nights — in the high school cafeteria. You may have heard the stories of unwitting travelers stranded because of a wind blizzard.

I arrived around 10 p.m. the Sunday after Thanksgiving, after inching along Highway 27 behind a tractor trailer. I just wanted to find safety — to park in a lot in the next town and sleep in my car and wait the storm out. However, when I reached the lights of St. Francis, several men stood sentry at an intersection, bundled against the blinding storm, directing drivers to the high school.

About 200 people were housed there already. Volunteers greeted me at the door and ushered me to the cafeteria where coffee and snacks were waiting. The cafeteria lights were dimmed by now, a DVD of a movie was being projected on the south wall. Several people were sitting at the square tables. Most were sitting on pallets propped against the walls around the perimeter. Some were sleeping.

The wrestling room was carpeted with mats, providing comfort for this impromptu sleepover.

My 38-hour stay included two nights sleeping on the floor with my coat as my pillow and a fleece throw I carry in my car as my blanket. In that 38 hours, I passed the time with my fellow travelers, watching movies, playing cards and games, sharing adventures. Some even confided their life stories. It's amazing

### Letter to the Editor

what people will tell you when they think they won't see you again.

News of acts of kindness gradually spread from traveler to traveler. Before I had arrived, high school students had canvassed the town, door-to-door, gathering pillows and blankets. Townspeople brought in food — we had plenty to eat — cereal and pastries, coffee, milk, juice for breakfast. Chili and sandwiches and delicious desserts for dinner. Popcorn and snacks in the evening.

Someone provided movies and games. The owner of the local theatre invited all to a free showing of "Chicken Little." Many families accepted the invitation. Local families opened their homes to elderly people and a family with a very restless baby. A local physician came to see if anyone needed medical attention or prescriptions filled. And a minister stopped by to offer spiritual help.

Mr. Carmichael, the high school principal, gave a face and a name to St. Francis. He was the most visible host. Gracious and kind, his calm leadership assured us we would all be taken care of. He opened the gym for activities, allowed us to use the computer lab to connect with the outside world, and made the shower rooms available so we could clean up.

He and Sheriff Gardner regularly updated us on road conditions and

what to expect. On Tuesday, when the roads were finally clear enough for us to leave, the sheriff organized the effort to rescue all the vehicles that had been abandoned during the blizzard. Deputies and volunteers worked to dig and pull vehicles out of the drifts and ditches.

Many wonderful people responded to this situation to make us feel safe and comfortable. And that's the story!

Individuals often minimize their contributions — whatever the cause. This was an example of many individuals contributing and collectively making a big difference.

I'd like to think that any town in America would have responded in the same way. I hope so.

I recently watched a movie at home, "Pay It Forward." The premise was that if each of us does an act of kindness for three people and then those three do something for three more, the acts of kindness will grow exponentially and it will change the world we live in. St. Francis people did many acts of kindness for 200 people stranded last November. I hope each of us paid it forward in 2006.

So, thank you, St. Francis, for your hospitality and kindness and for giving new meaning to the Thanksgiving season.

Lois Britton  
Mt. Pulaski, Ill.

## Thrift store welcomes volunteers

Letter to the Editor:

Everyone involved with the United Methodist Thrift store has been amazed and pleased at the support we have received from our community and around the area! Without all of the volunteers, customers and donations of merchandise, we could not exist.

We have been asked if volunteers have to belong to our church. We are delighted to have anyone who wants to come join us at the store, and several of our volunteers are not members of the United Methodist Church. We feel this is a community effort and we provide assistance to many local causes as well as Methodist Missions.

If you would like to volunteer, please call on Thursday, Friday or Saturday (785-332-2953) or come by the store. Although it takes many hours by many people to make it work, we have a good time doing it.

Men and youth are welcome, too!

We get some clothing that is good, but for various reasons not something we can use in the store. We pack it in small, sturdy bags to be taken to Goodwill or any other charity.

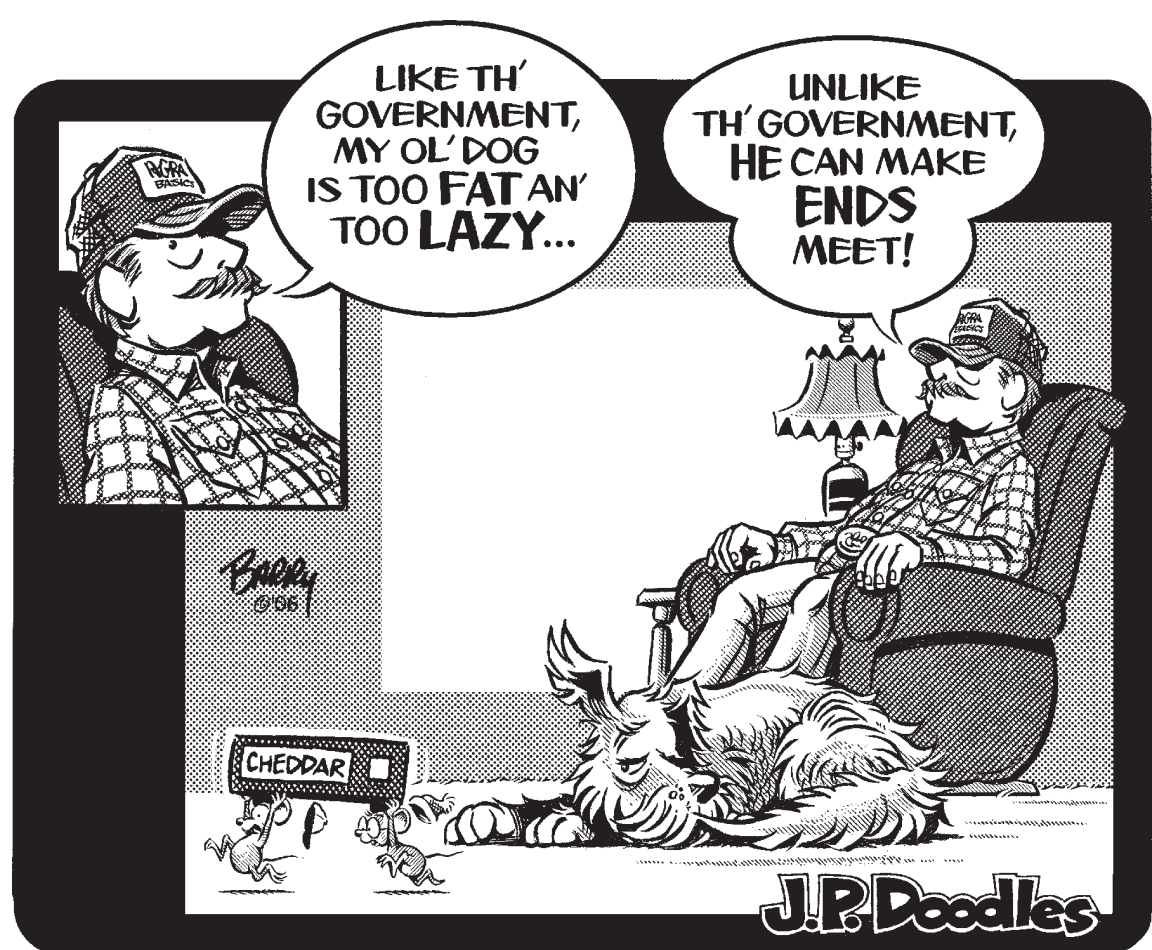
We appreciate those who take these bags to other locations for us. If you are going to Hays, Denver or anywhere else where someone might be able to use this clothing,

contact us and we would be happy to send a few (or a lot) of bags with you.

We always welcome donations of good, clean seasonal clothing, small appliances, housewares, linens, toys etc. We cannot accept furniture because of space limitations.

Thanks again to all of you!

The Thrift Store "Crew"  
St. Francis



## Hangin' With Marge

By Margaret Bucholtz

The Real Holiday

As the holidays approach I began to get a little apprehensive about how I will be able to make the holidays special for the children and grandchildren.

I know that I am not the only person that has trouble with depression, and holidays seem to add to this.

Part of it is that on Television we watch the ads with the children coming home for the holidays. I love the ad where the older son is coming home and he makes the coffee in the morning and his little sister runs down the stairs to greet him as the mother wakes up to the smell of coffee and instantly knows her son is home. Who wouldn't like that

scene, but who has ever experienced it?

At my house when the kids came home from college it was in the wee hours of the morning but there sure wasn't any coffee made and the only person running to check of them was their mother, but I can't say there were any hugs just the dread of how am I going to get them up in time for dinner.

At Christmas the tree was always decorated but it looked like a twig with some balls on it. Not at all like the trees you see on Television.

The meals are cooked, but always the kids comment about how I can't cook like my mother.

This Thanksgiving was different.

Kurt, who has been the person I have leaned on for the last 20 some years started having some problems with his heart. All of a sudden I realized that the holidays aren't really that important. What is important is what we do and how we live every-day of the year.

The past three weeks I started waking up each morning and took that second cup of coffee and a longer look at the sunrise and said a thankful prayer before the day began.

On Thanksgiving when the kids and grandchildren came for the day it was truly a day of Thanksgiving for both Kurt and me.

## Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick

The holidays are such a magical times. We gather with family and friends around brightly lit trees while Old Man Winter blows his best outside.

But what about all the preparation for the special moments of happiness? It can come at a cost.

I'll never forget Lezlie and my first Christmas together. It was marked by our first fight.

It was time to decorate the tree and, being "the man," I took charge. Lezlie had a very nice artificial tree that went up easy enough. So far, so good.

Then I opened the box that contained the Christmas lights from the year before.

Growing up, my folks had trained me to carefully gather the lights into small bundles that could be rolled up in newspaper. The rolls would be stacked in a box, ready to be unwrapped and reused the next year.

Our box looked a lot like a nest of snakes. As I began to untangle the strands Lezlie watched as my complexion turned red and sweat beaded on my brow. She sort of shrugged it off and went to the kitchen.

At this point, being "the man," and a dumb Irishman at that, I began to use words that are never appropriate to use, especially so close to Christmas.

With a good amount of fighting with the strands, by myself, I finally managed to have a tree that was ready for ornaments and tinsel. I

went to the kitchen and asked Lezlie "How does the tree look?"

Without looking up from the plate she was washing in the sink, she applauded my efforts with a sarcastic "Look's great!"

I can't say that that was our first and last fight, but they really don't happen too often. However, I do recognize that the holiday's come with a certain amount of stress. Maybe I should double up on my Lexapro?

New and renewed Herald subscriptions: Colleen Renk, Bismarck, N.D.; Richard Cram, Topoka; Carl Frodine, Wheat Ridge, Colo.; Ruth C. Appel, Rush Center; Strohm Farms, St. Francis; Torrie Conway, St. Francis; Josephine

### Church of Christ

332-2380, Pars. 332-3424  
502 W. Spencer  
Norman Morrow - Minister  
Bible Class 11 a.m.  
Morning Worship 10 a.m.  
Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.

### United Methodist

Church Office 332-2292,  
Church 332-2254,  
512 S. Scott  
Pastor Morita Truman  
Early Bird Service 8:30 a.m.  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:30 a.m.

### Salem Lutheran Church

332-3002  
Pastor Chris Farmer  
Sunday School 10 a.m.  
Morning Worship 11 a.m.

### St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church

625 S. River • 332-2680  
Fr. Roger Meitl  
Sunday Mass 10:30 a.m.  
Weekday Mass 8 a.m.  
Confessions Sat. 4-4:30

### First Christian Church

332-2956 • 118 E. Webster  
Sunday School 9:20 a.m.  
Church Service 10:30 a.m.  
Wed. night Bible Study 7 p.m.

### Grace Assembly of God

332-2925, Pars. 332-2899  
208 E. 2nd  
Rev. Rob Meyer  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:30  
Sunday Eve. Service 6 p.m.

### Seventh-Day Adventist Church

332-2888 • 3rd & Adams  
Pastor Mike Larson  
Sabbath School 9:30  
Morning Worship 10:45

### First Baptist Church

2nd & Scott • 332-3921  
J.W. Glidewell, Pastor  
Sunday School 9:30  
Worship 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday Evening Service 6:30 p.m.,  
Wed. AWANA Club 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

### Peace Lutheran Church

202 N. College  
Pastor Ken Hart  
332-2928 Pars. 332-2312  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:30 a.m.

### St. Francis Community Church

332-3150  
204 N. Quincy Street  
Pastor: David Butler  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.  
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

### Clough Valley Church of Hope

12 m. west, 6 m. north of SF  
Pastor Jason Howard  
332-3152  
Saturdays 8 p.m. CT or 7 p.m. MT

### St. Francis Equity

### First National Bank

Member FDIC

### Knodel Funeral Home

202 S. Benton • St. Francis  
785-332-3131



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