

The NCM Herald

A publication of the Norcross Cooperative Ministry

Spring Edition · January through April 2006

What is the Norcross Co-Op?

The Norcross Cooperative Ministry is a faith-based, non-profit, non-political organization dedicated to serving men, women and children in the Norcross community, a metropolitan suburb north of Atlanta, GA. Founded in 1988, the mission of the Norcross Co-Op is to provide emergency assistance to families in crisis. The Co-Op is an ecumenical ministry supported by twenty churches in Norcross. NCM also receives support from local businesses, civic and social organizations, foundations and individuals.

Who is my neighbor?

A great question to ask these days. In Luke 10: 29-37, Jesus answers the question “Who is my neighbor?” This is known as the parable of the Good Samaritan and at the end of the story the answer to the question is given, “The one who had Mercy on him.” It is easy these days to become cynical to the sufferings of others. In 2005, we were bombarded with world events and crisis after crisis. Hurricanes and natural disasters have filled the news of the day. Constant images of the human struggle just to make ends meet are around us everywhere. Compassion fatigue abounds, yet aren’t we called to have mercy on others? 2005 was a great year at NCM because of the hard work and dedication of the volunteers and staff, but also because the need was so great. Here are some highlights of 2005:

Katrina Aid.....	300 Families Served
Job Ministry...Nearly.....	1,900 Job Lead Calls Made
Christmas Toys & Meals	1,400+ Families Received
Small Group Bible Studies.....	Continuing
ESOL Classes.....	Continuing
2005 Year-End Summary	30,068 Bags of Food Distributed
\$330,053 Financial Aid Toward Rent and Utilities
11,273 Families Served

2006 will call on us to be neighbors again to those in need in the Norcross area. Our goals this year are high because again the need will be great. We need individual, corporate, and civic as well as the churches to help us in this effort. We are truly blessed at this ministry by all who contribute their time, effort and money. Thanks to your generosity and efforts we are starting 2006 out by paying off the building loan. What a blessing! God continues to heap his goodness and mercy on this ministry so we must do likewise to those in need in the Norcross area. Yours in His service, *John Byerley*, President, NCM Board of Directors

Stock Donations

NCM can accept donations of common stock. Our Financial Advisor, Mr. Dan Kinney of The Kinney Group, can be reached at (770) 449-9079. For some people, the direct donation of stock can have certain tax advantages. The Kinney Group has been gracious to offer us their assistance, at no charge to us, in maintaining an account that will ensure the proper processing of gifted stock.

NCM gratefully acknowledges the donation of printing supplies and services by Trinity Press.



Food Pantry Needs

NCM distributes over 3,000 bags of non-perishable food each month to more than 900 families.

Canned Meats (Tuna, Chicken, Ham, Spaghetti & Meatballs)
Canned Fruit & Vegetables
Cereal and Juice (Apple, Grape, Orange)
Macaroni & Cheese
Peanut Butter & Jelly
Spaghetti Sauce & Spaghetti Noodles
Diapers—Size 5, 6, and Pull-Ups
Personal Care Items for men and women including soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toilet tissue, feminine products and laundry detergent.

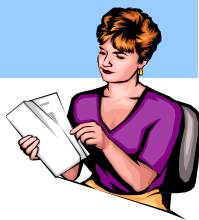
Your donations are important. Please avoid glass containers. Please give generously.

Job Services Update

2005 finished with much success! Our annual job fair, CareerFest 2005, was bigger and better; the job ministry team made nearly 1,900 calls with job leads to job seekers; and over 80 clients reported they are now working! We thank all of you for supporting our job ministry program over the last year! Looking forward to 2006, we will continue to look for and provide job leads; plan events that include job search assistance and enhance our programs to better serve the needs of our job seekers. You can help too! If you are working, enjoy your work, and would recommend it to others, think of us the next time a job opens up! Call Leslie Buchanan at 770-263-0013 or fax 770-263-0998 or e-mail jobministry@norcrossco-op.org.

Donations Envelopes

We invite you to use the convenient self-addressed envelope included with this newsletter.



You may designate your gift to be used for “General Operations”, “Food Pantry”, or “Client Rent or Utility Assistance”. Make your check payable to “NCM”. Each and every donation helps someone!

Displaced Families Fire & Storm Recovery

NCM continues to see on average 15 families each week who were displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. The families are not only looking for communities to settle into and work but they also need many tangible household items to start over.

Please donate any new or very gently used household items to help us help families displaced by storms and families who may be displaced due to apartment or house fires in 2006. The most needed items are:

Pots & Pans and Cooking Utensils
Mixers and Mixing Bowls
Everyday Dishes and Flatware
Casual / Everyday Drinking Glasses
Sheets (Queen and King Size)
Towels, Pillows and Blankets (All sizes)
Cribs, High Chairs, Car Seats, Strollers
Pack & Plays

Your donations are especially important to fire and storm victims following unexpected and often unprecedented tragedies.

Please give generously.

To God Be the Glory “We are debt free.”

The Norcross Cooperative Ministry started off 2006 debt free. The building is now officially paid off. Praise the Lord! We attempted building something so BIG when we started the \$1.2 million NCM building that only God can get the glory.

And we are grateful for you—all our supporters and donors—who have faithfully supported God’s vision for our wonderful facility. Your generosity has already impacted thousands of lives. We couldn’t have done it without you! Thank you again from our heart to yours. Together, we continue to make a difference in our community.

Katrina Relief Efforts 2005

On August 29, 2005, at 6:10AM Hurricane Katrina made landfall near Buras-Triumph Louisiana. We watched in horror at the devastation the storm caused, many of us wondered, "What can we do to help?" On Friday, Sept 2, 2005, we had to answer that question when a family of twenty evacuees arrived late in the day. We soon realized that many evacuees were heading to Georgia, many would come to Atlanta and settle in Gwinnett County.

NCM's Board of Directors and volunteers quickly decided to expand our boundaries and serve families coming to Gwinnett County. We partnered with Traveler's Aid, Cross Purpose Ministry, the Gwinnett County School system, and several local hotels to form a "Central Intake Center" at the Amberley Suites in Norcross where evacuees could check into the hotel, receive food and clothing, enroll their children in school, and receive information about other resources available in the county.

By December 31, 2005, NCM had served over 800 evacuees food, clothing, personal care items, school supplies, financial aid, gas cards, grocery certificates and referrals. The lower level of our building was transformed into a "Distribution Center" for Katrina families. From that operation we continue to provide household items, linens, toys, clothing, cleaning products and school supplies. Many families were connected with a "Friends and Family" sponsor through Victory World Church and Perimeter church.

Thanks to donations from the community and from UNITE!, we are continuing to serve displaced families by providing financial assistance as they transition from temporary to permanent housing. We have been challenged and blessed as we have ministered to families who are now calling Gwinnett County home. Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Katrina relief project. There are still needs for household items, food and financial donations. For details on how you can help, see the article titled, "Displaced Families".

Small Groups Continue at NCM

In August of 2005, NCM launched a new program. Small groups were formed, one in Spanish and one in English. These groups were led by members of Victory World Church and designed to introduce, encourage, support and connect NCM clients with the word in a safe, small group environment. This year we will continue this concept of Small group fellowship. We have already begun a new six week course, and hope to have several throughout the year. Some of the topics include financial planning and other life skills programs based on biblical principles. We invite friends and supporters of NCM to come and be a part of this Ministry. Volunteers are invited to join us at the place where our call as Christians and God's hands "meet" and transforms lives. We need help in the following areas:

- Volunteers to attend and minister to children
- Volunteers "to stand in the gap" as prayer warriors for the vision
- Volunteers to participate in the small group
- Volunteers with a heart for the lost and struggling wanting to assist small group leaders

If you are interested in helping us with the small group ministry, please contact Shirley Cabe at shirley@norcrossco-op.org or Alfredo Garcia at agarcia@victorywc.org.

Volunteers Needed

As we begin a bright new year, please keep the Norcross Co-Op in mind and volunteer as often as you can in one of many service areas. You might use your bilingual and computer skills to work directly with clients in the reception or application areas or during the annual CareerFest. If you would rather be a "behind the scenes" volunteer, we need assistance in the office, in the food pantry, and in the warehouse where answering the phone, stocking shelves, sorting donations or assisting clients as they exit the facility help us keep the organization running smoothly. If you are more of a "project manager" type volunteer, we need your help conducting neighborhood and office food drives or identifying job leads. For more information, please call Shirley Cabe or Leslie Buchanan at 770-263-0013.

The Good Samaritan Health Center of Gwinnett

Good Samaritan was birthed from UNITE, a consortium of 70+ Gwinnett churches, seeking to minister and reach out to their communities.

We have been in our self-contained medical building on Club Drive since July 2005, with physician, nurse practitioner, and administrator in place.

So far there have been 970 patient visits, the dental clinic started in December 2005 and the eye clinic opens in February 2006.

We invite you to join us in ministry in direct or indirect patient care, administrative or support tasks, or through financial gifts. Call 678-280-6630 to talk to us about your ministry involvement, and thank you to our present ministry partners.

Check Free

Checkfree Corporation, a provider of financial electronic commercial services and products, located here in Norcross, is sponsoring a Charity Putt-Putt Tournament on April 28, 2006. The Norcross Cooperative Ministry has been chosen to receive the proceeds from this charity event. We are very thankful for Checkfree and their support of the community and the needs of families living in Norcross.

Christmas Assistance Report

Christmas can be especially stressful for some of our families as they struggle to pay for rent and utilities. Thanks to many volunteers and donors, we provided food and toys to over 1,400 families during Christmas 2005.

Thanks to many toy drives throughout the community, over 3,500 children received gifts and toys.

A special THANK YOU! to Alex Alexander and the companies of Technology Park who collected thousands of toys and to the DECA club at North Gwinnett High School for coordinating a Toys for Tots drive.

While Christmas 2006 is still months away, please begin talking now with your neighbors, companies, Sunday School classes and civic groups about the possibility of doing a toy drive for us this year.

We can accept toys anytime during the year. Perhaps your group would like to do a "Christmas in July" toy drive for the Co-op.

Thanks again to everyone who made Christmas 2005 possible for so many families.



Helping those in crisis through the resources of the community given in the love of Christ.

Norcross Cooperative Ministry

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