

## THE THURSDAY TRUCK — A VOLUNTEER'S PERSPECTIVE

By Eric Boemer

After many years of involvement with the annual golf fundraiser (25th anniversary is next year!) and, more recently, serving on the Board of Directors, I gained an entirely new perspective on the important work of Mission of Deeds by volunteering on the truck. This volunteer opportunity involves picking up furniture at scheduled times and bringing it back to the warehouse for distribution. I joined the team of Jim Taylor and Dave Fonseca, veteran volunteers who were eager to show me the ropes. Our truck is on the road, each week, picking up furniture in Reading and nine area towns.

It is highly rewarding to interact with supporters and share the profound impact their donation will make. The work has a more personal connection than merely hauling goods. On a recent trip, a donor noted that he had explored options to drop off furniture



closer to his hometown but then recalled his connections to the Reading community and appreciation for our work. It is always a pleasure to talk with donors and hear the stories or history of the furniture they are donating and what motivates them to pass it along to those in need.

Volunteering is a bit of a virtuous cycle. I have gotten to know some incredible volunteers like Jim, Dave, and the office and warehouse staff who work hard connecting clients with needed goods. The donors praise the crew consistently for our role in hauling and transporting the furniture. As crew members, one of our key roles is to express our appreciation for generous donations. As volunteers, we always walk away with a smile, knowing that the donors' furniture will be put to good use.



Left to right: New Executive Director David McIsaac, Benefit Concert with The Revenants, Client's Room, David McIsaac and Bruce Murison at MODFEST.

## WHAT IS FURNITURE POVERTY?

By Sharon Petersen

Moving into unfurnished housing is one of the most challenging aspects of moving out of a shelter. Any person or family without the financial means to obtain the basics that turn empty housing into a furnished home is said to be living in furniture poverty. There are harmful physical, emotional, and financial consequences of furniture poverty. People without a bed will have a poor night's sleep, affecting their ability to work and study. Not having a sofa to sit on means people may be unwilling to invite friends or support workers into their homes. Moving from a shelter into empty housing can lead people to give up housing and return to a shelter because at least they can sleep in a bed. We believe that

people should not have to choose between paying their rent or buying a bed.

“Programs like yours change people's lives. Thank you.”

We know that the cost of poverty adds up over time and becomes an endless cycle. Those with limited income spend a more significant portion of their wages on basic necessities and often become stuck in debt while trying to meet basic needs. The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness warns, “many low-income people are forced to choose between rent and other necessities.” Mission of Deeds is dedicated to helping families and individuals faced with difficult

financial decisions by providing, free of charge, the necessities which make a home livable, functional, and stable.

A caseworker wrote to us about a single mother transitioning from homelessness to affordable housing, “as with most of our homeless families, she lost everything.” After receiving our help, the mother sent a thank you note to Mission of Deeds, writing, “I just wanted to let you know that the furniture & other items given to our family has made our house into a home. Before having the items you have given, I worried about not having furniture for my children, now I walk around with a smile. Programs like yours change people's lives. Thank you.”

## TWO TOWN DAYS — TWO CLIENT STORIES

By Paula Goss



Mission of Deeds has participated in local town days for the past ten years. We do this to provide information about donating and reach out to anyone who might need our services. In addition, we have a free raffle for things like Amazon gift cards and children's games. The raffle draws people to our booth who can ask questions as they fill out the tickets.

A mom, whom we will call “Mary,” stopped by with her two young sons, filled out the free raffle tickets, and asked if Mission of Deeds could provide beds for the boys. We told her

how to apply, and she was very grateful. At the end of the day, we pulled the winning ticket and left a message for the lucky person. Imagine our surprise when, the very next day, the winner appears at our door, and we see that she is Mary! A casual stop at our booth gave her the opportunity to receive new beds for her children and win the raffle prizes.

On another town day the following week, a woman we will call “Jane” came to our booth to thank us for the help we had given her. She told us that we had made such an impact on her life and the lives of her two boys. Jane had

come to Mission of Deeds the prior winter after leaving a shelter and starting over in a new town. She had been so excited as she chose her furniture. Her boys jumped up and down for joy when we gave them new winter coats and children's books.

Jane had already come back to Mission of Deeds the week after her appointment to thank us, and here she was at Town Day months later, thanking us again. The stories of Mary and Jane show once again, that when Mission of Deeds furnishes homes, we also change lives.

## THESE ARE SOME OF THE ITEMS WE CAN PURCHASE FOR OUR CLIENTS BASED ON DONATION LEVELS

- \$25 Set of Kitchenware for a Family
- \$50 Linen Set
- \$100 8 Sheet Sets
- \$150 63 Pillows
- \$250 12 Pot and Pan Sets
- \$500 25 Toasters and 25 Coffee Makers
- \$1000 4 Sets of Bunk Beds with Mattresses
- \$1500 167 Blankets
- \$2000 11 Bed Sets (Mattress, Box Spring, Pillow, Sheet Set, and Blanket)
- \$5000 30 Cribs with Mattresses



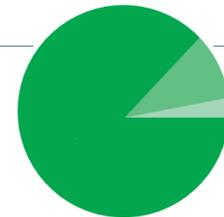
GUIDESTAR® Platinum

At Mission of Deeds we strive to always put our clients first. We are proud that 86.7% of our budget goes directly to client care. In pairing with GuideStar, we are giving our donors a look at where their donation goes and how they have a direct effect on our clients' lives. We hope this information helps you feel great about your decision to donate to Mission of Deeds. GuideStar is the world's largest

source of information on nonprofit organizations. GuideStar's Nonprofit Profiles provide donors with the information they need to make smart decisions, build connections, and learn from each other to achieve their missions. We are proud to have received GuideStar's Platinum Seal of Transparency—their newest and highest level of recognition.

### 2021 EXPENSE BREAKDOWN

- Programs — 86.7%
- Administration — 10%
- Fundraising — 3.3%



MISSION OF DEEDS  
Furnishing Homes. Changing Lives.

WINTER 2022

## A MESSAGE from our PRESIDENT



We started out small in 1993 with just a few beds and furniture items in a vacant corner in the warehouse of the NAPA Auto Parts store in Wilmington that was owned by our founder, Tony Triglione. Tony had the concept of helping those in need, inspired by his own experience of childhood poverty and his faith.

The concept was simple — give beds and household goods to those in need at no charge. “Get them off the floor,” Tony would always say, referring to people coming out of homelessness who had no beds and were often sleeping on the floor before our assistance.

As the donations and requests grew, Tony knew the organization needed to expand. He recruited a Board of Directors, moved the operations to his Reading store, and hired an Executive Director — a quiet, humble man named Bruce Murison. Mission of Deeds (MOD) expanded its reach, developed a volunteer corps and staff, held fundraising events, established a network of supporters, and earned an exceptional reputation. As a result, client assistance went from less than one hundred to over two thousand people annually.

By 2008, it was clear the warehouse could no longer sustain the charity's flourishing operations. After a long search for a new facility, MOD elected to remain at its current address, more than tripling the footprint with a significant buildout supported by a capital campaign. With the expanded facility, an opportunity arose to develop efficiencies and improvements to operations — always motivated by the desire to assist as many people in need as possible. When the virus paralyzed the world,

MOD, through introspection, communication, and reconfiguration, found a way to continue to aid its clients.

The beginning of this year brought a new challenge: our beloved and longtime Executive Director was stepping down to assume a different role in the organization. The Board of Directors began a long and careful discernment and search process. The result was the recruitment of our new and superb leader, David McIsaac.

As the year closes, and Mission of Deeds embarks on its new chapter, we are thankful for our good fortune and wish to express our extreme gratitude to you, who have supported us throughout our history.

Christopher J. Barrett

## A CLIENT'S THANK YOU

From Michelle, with Warmest Regards

I'm wishing to express my heart felt gratitude for all of your help. I'm so very thankful for my new mattress and bedding (I love the comforter and would have chosen the same color ❤️)! And also for the lamps, mirrors, and box of kitchen supplies...



I was immensely touched by the care with how it was all wrapped. And I am hugely grateful for the Stop&Shop gift certificate inside; that is the closest grocery store to my new apartment 😊. I've been too exhausted to use it yet but will now be able to buy everything else needed to put a healthy meal together. Please forgive that I haven't been able to write sooner. I'm still catching up on much needed rest on my new mattress. Thank you again for all of your help!

## SAVE THE DATE!

Celebrate Our 30th Anniversary  
with an Evening of Fun!

Saturday, March 11, 2023  
Boston Marriott Burlington



## A MESSAGE *from our* EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Neighbors helping neighbors. It is more than a tagline. The Mission of Deeds' Board, staff, volunteers, and supporters embody this giving spirit and it informs every aspect of their service.

As Mission of Deeds' new Executive Director, I see this spirit put into action every day. In a short period, it has become abundantly clear to me that Mission of Deeds is an exceptionally special place. We are brimming with remarkable people willing to do anything to lend a helping hand at a neighbor's desperate hour. I am floored by the selfless acts I hear about on a daily basis. The examples are endless. A supporter crafts customized small kitchen tables out of his own woodshop. MOD staff member Donna Snow transformed her garage into a satellite makeshift warehouse operation during the height of the pandemic. Volunteers offered their personal trucks for furniture pickups as our truck underwent significant repairs. MOD Board Member Candy Brower carefully curated items from yard sales, restored to like-new, and donated a careful of household necessities on a consistent cadence. The common thread between these sensational stories

is a steadfast commitment to lifting up neighbors in need. They offer their talent and means without hesitation.

My new role is not only a wonderful opportunity for me, it is a seismic shift for the organization. Bruce Murison provided steady and inspired leadership for 27 years. Under his direction, Mission of Deeds rose from humble beginnings to blossom into a financially and operationally sound furniture bank. With this backdrop of stability, news of an Executive Director change could be startling and met with trepidation. There could be an unfurling of never-ending questions about the future direction. Not here. Everyone has banded together to make this an orderly and seamless transition. At every corner, I have been met with a warm and positive embrace. Questions abound but they are of the "How can we help?" variety. I feel fortunate to be surrounded by wonderful neighbors who are dedicated to the cause and its success.

MOD's foundation was meticulously poured. There is no need for excavation. We will continue to invest our time and

resources in fulfilling Tony's vision. We will remain vigilant to the core mission of providing brand-new beds and gently-used furniture and household goods to people in need free of charge. There will be methodical evolutions (as there was with the coats, children's books, and food gift card programs) only if they fit the bill of enhancing client service. The founding and timeless idea of neighbors helping neighbors will continue to be our guiding star. We will strive to treat each person — clients, caseworkers, donors, and volunteers — with respect, compassion, and a friendly smile and to manage the organization with transparency, minimal red tape, and respect for a dollar.

As we embark on our 30th year, I encourage you to reach out and remain involved. Let's continue to build up the MOD neighborhood, celebrate our successes, and look ahead to a bright future.

*David McIsaac*

David McIsaac

## WAYS TO GIVE TO MISSION OF DEEDS

We are amazed by the many ways you support us. You donate financially, either by check or credit card; you sponsor and attend events; you donate goods; you give generously of your time. Mission of Deeds is grateful for all the ways you help.

From a financial viewpoint, our monthly giving program is the easiest way to provide steady support for the ongoing work of Mission of Deeds. By giving monthly, you can spread your gift throughout the year, and make an even bigger impact in helping our clients. With just \$10 a month, over the course of a year, you are giving a complete bed set to a child in need. For \$84 a month, you can furnish an entire apartment for a family of three.

There are other ways to support our work that you may not have realized. Mission of Deeds gratefully accepts gifts in these forms:

- IRA distributions
- Appreciated stock and other securities
- Donor advised fund grants
- Private foundation grants
- Charitable gift of a life insurance policy

Please consult with your financial planner to determine the best option. For more information you can contact David at [david.mcisaac@missionofdeeds.org](mailto:david.mcisaac@missionofdeeds.org) or Jody at [jody.collinsskinner@missionofdeeds.org](mailto:jody.collinsskinner@missionofdeeds.org)

Whatever way you support us, please know that you make a huge difference in the lives of those in need.

NOW YOU CAN  
DONATE VIA VENMO  
BY SCANNING  
THIS CODE.



@MISSIONOFDEEDS



Clockwise from top left: The Annual Coat Drive, Ropes & Gray-Sponsored Team at the Bill Mulrenan Memorial Golf Tournament, Paula Goss and David McIsaac Tending the Booth at Reading Town Day, Client's Bedroom.

## WHY I GIVE

by Candy Brower



My first encounter with Mission of Deeds was when Wakefield's municipal light department held a linens drive to collect bedding and towels for MOD clients. We were downsizing and were thrilled to find a local organization that could distribute good quality items that we no longer had any use for to their clients. Then, when I read my first MOD newsletter, I was touched to the core reading about children who were sleeping on beds for the first time in their lives; their thank-you notes to MOD brought me to tears. So that's when I knew that this was an organization I wanted to be a part of. Over the years, my involvement has grown little by little until I was honored to be asked to serve on the Board of Directors.

So, why do I give to Mission of Deeds? I see it as a "win-win-win" proposition.

WIN #1

HELPING OTHERS

Giving financially or through donations of goods passed on to clients allows MOD to fulfill its mission of "neighbors helping

neighbors." I have been abundantly blessed to live with advantages and privileges that few in the world enjoy. So how can I not try to share my time and resources with those who need a helping hand to transition into a better life?

WIN #2

HELPING the ENVIRONMENT

I'm passionate about doing everything I can to help save our planet, and recycling is important to me. Giving to MOD helped me fulfill that goal in several ways. First, at my office, I collected redeemable cans and bottles and donated the nickel redemptions to MOD to buy beds. Now I do the same in my over-55 community, which motivates everyone to recycle and keep those cans and bottles out of the waste stream. It's a small step, but it resulted in a donation to MOD sufficient to buy five beds each year.

And now I have a lot of fun going to yard sales, estate sales, and thrift stores to collect unwanted items for little or no money, restoring them to like-new condition with a

## WHO is MISSION OF DEEDS?

Tony Triglione founded Mission of Deeds in 1993 to provide beds, furniture, and household goods, without charge, to people in need.

Tony had grown up extremely poor, then became highly successful in business, but never forgot what it had been like to be poor. His vision was that Mission of Deeds be a place where people would receive needed items while being treated with kindness and respect.

People like you donate furniture and housewares to us, and we buy mattresses, box springs, pillows, and linens from your financial donations. We receive no government funding — it's all neighbors helping neighbors. Thanks to your generosity and the hard work of our volunteers, Mission of Deeds has furnished the apartments of many thousands of the previously homeless, survivors of domestic abuse, displaced veterans, the elderly, and others in great need. With Tony's vision as our guide, we look forward to serving the community for years to come.

bit of elbow grease, and donating them to MOD for their clients. Most of these items are saved from being thrown out unnecessarily, keeping them out of the waste stream since they can be fixed up and given new life in the homes of MOD clients.

WIN #3

PERSONAL JOY

When I made my first donation to MOD of a quilt that I had lovingly made for my daughter, who had outgrown it, I pictured the child who would snuggle under it and be surrounded by the love that had gone into the making of it, and it gave me such joy. When I find a beat-up-looking tea kettle that someone has discarded or is selling for \$1, I scrub away the neglect until it's looking brand new again, and I picture it whistling in some kitchen where it will once more be appreciated and have a second life.

Truly, giving to Mission of Deeds has been, and continues to be, a win-win-win experience for me.

## A MESSAGE of THANKS

By Bruce Murison, Warehouse Manager

If you have read our newsletters before, it may surprise you to see me writing under a new title. After serving as Executive Director for 27 years, we began to transition my responsibilities to David McIsaac on August 29. To say I appreciate all your generosity is a gigantic understatement. I was, and am, in awe of how you have come together to support our founder Tony Triglione's vision and help thousands of people in need. Our volunteers, staff, donors, caseworkers, and clients have made my work meaningful, fun, and unforgettable.

There comes a time in everyone's life, and every organization, when transition is the right course. I expressed this at a Mission of Deeds Board meeting earlier this year. As a result, the Board, expanding upon the work of our Organizational Planning Task Force, formed a Search Committee that culminated in David McIsaac's hiring. We could not be more excited about our future under his leadership. Everyone who meets him knows he is the right person for the job. I am also happy to say I will still be around. The Board graciously agreed to my proposal that I remain with Mission of Deeds in a new position as Warehouse Manager. In this role, I will support David in logistics and client service as we aim to kick us up another notch in inventory control and operational efficiency so Mission of Deeds can help even more people. I am honored to be part of David's team.

There are no finer people in the world than the Mission of Deeds family. Every one of you has my eternal gratitude. See you in the warehouse.

## OUR GRATITUDE

We want to thank the many businesses that support Mission of Deeds in so many ways. They do things like hold fundraisers, sponsor events, champion buy-a-bed and make more affordable (or even donate) needed services. Here are a few members of our Business Hall of Fame. We plan to highlight more of you each newsletter.



## IN THEIR OWN WORDS



*From a 10-year-old girl who lives with her unemployed parents:*

"Thank you for helping my family and other families. Before I used to sleep with my sister because I didn't have my own bed but thanks to you, now I have my own bed and I can sleep by myself. Thank you."

*From a mother whose family had been homeless and was finally able to move into an apartment:*

"It means the world to us due to your generosity our home is complete, and we are able to get back on our feet!"

*From a young man relocating to Lynn after the hurricane in Puerto Rico:*

"I am happy and thankful for the wonderful help Mission of Deeds have provided me, equipment of my apartment."

*From a domestic violence survivor, a single mother of four:*

"I would like to say thank you so much for all the wonderful stuff you gave me for my house. You all were so nice and helpful. Everything I needed you gave. I am so grateful I don't think you'll ever know how much these meant to me, my kids love all the stuff, and they thank you all too. It's people like you that know how to make a family in need smile. Your helping has helped me out so much. Again, thank you all so very much."

*From a grandmother sleeping on a cot and raising her three-year-old granddaughter:*

"I cannot thank you enough for making me feel welcome and taking such good care of me and my granddaughter in our time of need. The items that were donated to me are so appreciated. I will always be thankful for your kindness and consideration of your organization."

*From a previously homeless veteran:*

"You're hope and kindness in one place. Thanks to you for my new beginnings."

