

# The FreeStore



## Annual Report

### 2010

# Mission Statement

We support children and families who have escaped abusive situations. We provide donated furniture and household goods to clients of domestic violence services and other agencies as these families begin new independent, productive lives in safe environments.

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## FreeStore Background

The FreeStore was started as an outreach ministry of St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in July of 2001. Due to the growth of this ministry and its operational readiness, the FreeStore was incorporated in March of 2005, and was designated as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization in September of 2005.

The FreeStore provides household items (furniture, bedding, tableware, etc.) to families who have escaped abusive situations. These families are usually comprised of a single mother with small children who sought safety at Children and Families of Iowa's Domestic Violence Services and from other central Iowa shelters. Many times the family owns little but the clothes they are wearing when they fled their abusive situation. Once the family is stabilized and has secured housing and employment, the FreeStore steps in to provide necessary household items at no charge as they leave the shelter and transition into the community.

Without the services the FreeStore provides, many women and their children either would have to remain at Children and Families of Iowa's Domestic Violence Services for a longer time; or they would move into apartments without the most basic household necessities such as beds, linen, or kitchen items. Helping these women and their children establish comfortable homes is often an important factor in securing their independence and is a deterrent from going back to an abusive situation. The FreeStore works to provide these women with good quality items because an essential ingredient in their service is to help restore dignity and a sense of self worth that has been taken from them by the abusive partner.

In June 2006 FreeStore moved our warehouse operation into space donated by the Principal Financial Group. On an annual basis since 2006 the FreeStore has:

- Tripled the number of outside agencies we assist
- Tripled the total dollar value of goods shipped
- Increased the average value per client from \$624 to \$1,683
- Grown the number of items distributed by 125%;
- Grown our annual tonnage shipped by 80%.

As our donations of goods increased we were able to offer our services to other social service agencies. For a small fee to the sponsoring agency, a client of the agency can come to the FreeStore.

**For every dollar of our cost in  
2010 we were able to give  
away \$9 worth of goods.**

## 2010 FreeStore Board



L to R: *Judy Bloom, Jeanie Smith, Bev Blaha, Mike Smith,  
Larry Anderson, Earl Lemke, Terry Swanson*

### Board Chair

Theresa M. Swanson  
1561 NW 103rd St  
Clive, IA 50325  
(Hswanson@dwx.com)

### Vice-Chair

Jean D. Smith  
4816 Pleasant St  
Des Moines, IA 50312  
(jeanie4816@  
yahoo.com)

### Secretary

Beverly B. Blaha  
8110 Valdez Circle  
Urbandale, IA 50322  
(bevblaha@gmail.com)

### Treasurer

Lawrence R. Anderson  
3109 Meadow Lane  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
(Larryanderson@  
gmail.com)

### Board Member

Earl W. Lemke  
1427 57th Street  
Des Moines, IA 50312  
(gorfsrus@gmail.com)

### Board Member

Judith K. Bloom  
4820 Elm St.  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
(freebom52@msn.com)

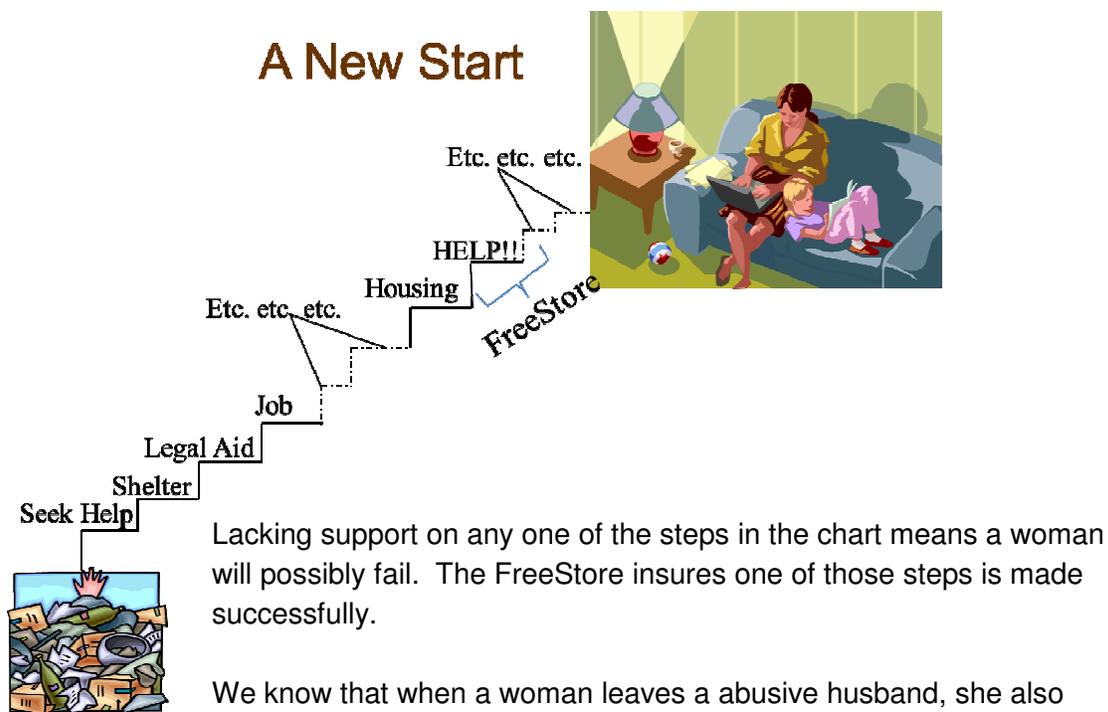
### Board Member

Michael H Smith  
2015 Nash Dr.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
(mike8smith@dwx.com)

## Message from the Board Chair

2010 was a busy year for the FreeStore, though not quite so busy as 2009. We started to feel the effects of the economic slowdown. Women were not so easily able to get either jobs or low-cost housing. We served 18% fewer families than in 2009. As the number of jobs and low-cost housing decrease, our most vulnerable families suffer the most.

As the chart below shows, the FreeStore is only a small part of the support necessary to insure that women leaving abusive situations can be successful. A woman once told me, that while in her abusive situation, she felt as if she was at the bottom of a garbage heap. It takes a lot of work to move from feeling like that to being a safe, productive member of society.



We know that when a woman leaves a abusive husband, she also leaves most of her possessions. When she is ready to re-establish a home, we help with the household items she needs so she can move on to the next steps in recovering her life.

With your help we will continue to support not only local domestic abuse shelters but also will offer our services - for a nominal fee - to other agencies in the Des Moines area. that work to help needy families reestablish themselves as contributing members of society.

Thank you for all your support.

*Jerry Swanson*



## 2010 FreeStore Activities

### Clients Served

Over the past five years, the FreeStore has furnished household items to the following number of households.

Year	Households Furnished	Adults Served	Children Served
2010	210	235	304
2009	258	278	388
2008	210	235	287
2007	224	NA	NA
2006	177	NA	NA

While it is apparent that the FreeStore served fewer families in 2010 than it did in 2009, there are some solid reasons why this is so:

- The economy has made finding housing units for those moving out of shelters much more difficult. Consequently, victims are staying longer in the shelters before suitable housing can be found.
- CFI initiated a better coordinated approach to counseling clients before they move out of the shelter. Increased efforts were made to ensure that clients have the resources to continue to pay rent on their new housing units and that they are taught financial management skills in order to do so. This also leads to longer family stays in the shelter than was previously the case.

The total value of goods and total tonnage both decreased in 2010 over 2009. However the average value shipped per client increased again in 2010 and was approximately \$1,683, up by 7% over 2009.

Mike Smith and Harry Swanson attend the Iowa Non-Profit Summit in Ames.

FreeStore is now listed on the Iowa Register of Accountability for non-profit corporations.



## Volunteer Activities

The FreeStore has no paid staff and operates solely through the efforts of very dedicated volunteers who

- Pick up household goods donated by community members throughout the Des Moines area, which are then warehoused at the FreeStore.
- Work at the warehouse managing the inventory and keeping the warehouse neat and items in order so they can be seen and selected easily.
- Manage the trucks' maintenance
- Arrange pick-up schedules
- Reply to phone messages from donors and schedule pick-ups.
- Reply to phone messages about questions other than donations.
- Manage deliveries for families from clients referred by Children and Families of Iowa Domestic Services shelter
- Manage deliveries to families from the ACCESS shelter in Ames.
- Schedule and meet clients from other social service agencies.
- Greet families when they come to the warehouse and help them select the items for their new homes.
- Manage the administrative areas involved in running the warehouse (including finances, funding, and recordkeeping)

During 2010, we continued to grow the number of FreeStore volunteers, from 70 to 80 individuals who gave generously of their time while picking up their own expenses (e.g.: gasoline, etc.) to work at the FreeStore.



Volunteers relax at the annual tenant barbecue hosted in River Hills by Terrus Real Estate.

## Getting and Giving

We received a grant from the BWA Foundation to purchase a second Penske Truck.

Our Saturday delivery volunteers can now easily deliver to 4 client families on Saturday mornings.



And prevented cracked heads for some of our volunteers.

In October we donated our first truck (with 238,000 miles) to Joppa Outreach, Inc. of Des Moines. Joe Kucera watches Larry Anderson, FreeStore treasurer, sign the title over to Joe Stevens, the Joppa Chairman.



# May 2010 Mayflower Event

We filled two Mayflower trucks with furniture donations in May



Some volunteers checked out early!



In a few years we'll have plenty of help for the Fill the Mayflower event!



Mall displays and radio media helped turn out donors for the 2010 Mayflower event

## Forming Partnerships



FreeStore participates annually in Domestic Abuse, Crime Victims, and Meals from Heartland events

And receives donations from many organizations, such as Walnut Hills Elementary 3rd graders



# FreeStore Financial Statements

## Financial Activities

For the years ended Dec. 31: 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>
<b>Unrestricted net assets:</b>				
Revenue and other support:				
Contributions:				
Noncash support *	\$389,850	\$421,516	\$373,266	\$361,565
Cash support	\$70,770	\$41,605	\$35,839	\$40,071
Restricted	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,500
Other income	\$833	\$3,495	\$627	\$202
Services & shirt sales	\$2,666	\$1,085	\$2,867	\$1,472
Release Temporarily Re- stricted Contributions	\$0	\$0	\$11,121	\$0
Total revenue/other support	<u>\$464,118</u>	<u>\$467,701</u>	<u>\$423,720</u>	<u>\$405,810</u>
Expenses:				
Program services	\$371,432	\$416,079	\$342,860	\$324,707
Management and general	\$29,331	\$26,555	\$17,139	\$15,632
Fund-raising	\$3,847	\$6,428	\$4,686	\$0
Total expenses	<u>\$404,610</u>	<u>\$449,062</u>	<u>\$364,685</u>	<u>\$342,986</u>
Inc in unrestricted net assets	\$59,508	\$18,640	\$59,034	\$59,076
<b>Changes in temporarily restricted net assets:</b>				
Temporarily restricted contri- butions	\$0	\$224	\$4,102	\$11,121
Release Temporarily Re- stricted Contributions	\$0	\$0	(\$11,121)	\$0
Inc in unrestricted net assets	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$224</u>	<u>(\$7,019)</u>	<u>\$11,121</u>
Increase in net assets	\$59,508	\$18,068	\$52,015	\$59,076
Net assets at beginning of year	\$183,128	\$164,265	\$112,250	\$53,174
Net assets at end of year	<u>\$242,636</u>	<u>\$186,128</u>	<u>\$164,265</u>	<u>\$112,250</u>

\* Includes \$14,868 as the value for donated use of warehouse fa-

# FreeStore Financial Statements

## Balance Sheet

Years ending Dec. 31: 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007

<b>Assets</b>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>
Current assets:				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$83,397	\$40,054	\$41,255	\$33,596
Investments	\$32,124	\$41,525	\$25,524	\$11,121
Inventory	\$111,141	\$90,325	\$85,606	\$53,618
Total current assets	\$226,662	\$171,904	\$152,385	\$98,335
Transportation equip net of dep	\$15,974	\$11,225	\$11,880	\$13,915
Total assets	<u>\$242,636</u>	<u>\$183,129</u>	<u>\$164,265</u>	<u>\$112,250</u>
<b>Liabilities and net assets</b>				
Current liabilities:				
Acc. Pay and accrued exp	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total current liabilities	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net assets:				
Unrestricted	\$238,310	\$178,803	\$160,163	\$101,129
Temporarily restricted	\$4,326	\$4,326	\$4,102	\$11,121
Permanently restricted	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total net assets	\$242,636	\$183,129	\$164,265	\$112,250
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$242,636</u>	<u>\$183,129</u>	<u>\$164,265</u>	<u>\$112,250</u>

## Agencies we supported in 2010

Agency	Requests filled	Agency	Requests filled
<b>CFI Domestic Violence Services</b>	<b>143</b>	St. Luke's Episcopal Church	1
Iowa Homeless Youth	14	Primary Health Care	1
<b>ACCESS</b>	<b>11</b>	Polk County Crisis	1
Salvation Army/Food Pantry	6	Our Lady of the Americas Catholic Church	1
CFI-In Home	3	Mercy Hospice	1
<b>L.U.N.A. Crisis Line</b>	<b>2</b>	Hoyt Middle School	1
Homeless Vets Rehab	4	Families First, Inc.	1
St. Timothy's Episcopal Church	2	ELPIS	1
Real Life Church	2	Easter Seals	1
Plymouth Congregational Church	2	DMACC	1
<b>MONSOON</b>	<b>2</b>	Creative Visions	1
AIDS Project of Central Iowa	2	Bureau of Refugee Services	1
West Des Moines Christian Church	1	Bread of Life Church	1
<b>Crisis Intervention and Advocacy Center -- Adel</b>	<b>1</b>	Beacon of Life Shelter	1
St. Teresa's Catholic Church	1		
<b>Total Requests</b>		<b>210</b>	

NOTE: Bolded agencies are domestic violence shelters

### Looking ahead to 2011

In November we learned, that in 2011, we would have to leave the Principal warehouse on E. 4th Street in Des Moines . It was not a complete surprise because we had already been on east 4th street nearly 6 months beyond the original lease. It was a sobering message and forced us to take steps to assure our long term survival. We sought and were awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines to do sustainability planning. We contracted with The Jacobs Group LLC to provide consulting services to address two key areas: 1) increased partnership with corporate sponsors; and 2) movement of the Board of Directors structure to support a management style board. Both of these initiatives will require much work as we enter the 2011 year.



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