

A Typical Day with the Furniture Crew

Five of us gather on Mondays, three on Wednesdays. We're the "furniture crew" and our primary mission is to assist needy families with furniture that is donated by parishioners and area residents. Costco, Murphy's Furniture, Forest Grove's Re-Store and other area businesses also provide substantial support toward our mission. As a group, we are on the "front line" of Hillsboro's fight against poverty.

Its 7:00 AM on Monday morning and Jim McGuire, Greg Clemmons and Bill Jacobs head out to Costco. Bill or Victor Gomness have already loaded the truck with empty boxes and bread trays for one of the three weekly visits made by SVdP to the Hillsboro Costco. They've also made the coffee that keeps the SVdP staff going. At Costco, we pick up dozens of loafs of bread, croissants and sweet rolls. Other food items, along with miscellaneous returned items such as mattresses, furniture and bicycles are routinely part of the treasure trove.



By 7:30, we're back on the road to return to SVdP's Hertel Center where we meet with our Monday cohorts, Shankar and Nolan who are with us for the rest of the morning. After getting "un-loading assistance" from Vic, Bob Orme, Eldon Vandehey and who ever else is present, the five of us head out to the "Big Red Barn" to start our work there. En-route, we're making calls to potential donors and recipients, hoping to make a connection. Typically, we bat about .250, but persistence is important and it pays off.

Bingo, we have a connection! We need to deliver a couch, a dining room table, six chairs, a floor lamp and a queen bed. Then, we get a call back from a parishioner who is donating a queen bed and a dresser. This is one of those "jackpot days" ... we get to pick up and deliver the queen bed, without double handling it at the barn. In the meantime, we've rounded up furniture for deliveries to North Plains and another pickup from Banks. Finally, we have to make a trip to the Bethany area to pick up another dresser and a bed.

Not always are the donated items in great condition. That's when we call up our expertly trained furniture repair crew. And ... that would be Bill, Jim, Greg, Shankar and Nolan. Broken chair legs? Not a problem. Missing a left handed, single-sided framus washer? Not a problem. We are here to fix it and we aim to please! No job is too big for our specialists. Usually, though, we receive excellently cared for and

quality furniture items. Items given to our clients are ready to serve many more years of use.

Of course, there is no formal “position description”. We are frequently asked to help out wherever possible. This past Monday, we picked about 100 pounds of Gravenstein apples for distribution in the Center to our clients. Bike assembly and repairs, furniture repair and cleaning the barn are some of those “filler jobs” when times aren’t quite so hectic. Finding a home for some of those donated items that our clients can’t use is another side of the job. For example, we were able to negotiate the sale of a donated antique drafting table. This was a money generator with the proceeds going directly to our pantry shelves.

So, if you’re newly retired or have a morning or two each week that you’re looking for “something to do” in a meaningful way, one that helps your fellow, less privileged neighbors, then please consider our SVdP. The furniture crew, our food center, or some other aspect of our multi-faceted organization could sure use your help. Stop by anytime, Mondays through Saturdays from about 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM and learn how you can donate your time and talents. Thanks.