



A NEWSLETTER FROM THE BLAND MINISTRY CENTER

The Servant

SUMMER 2016

Dear Friends,

Many of you are probably aware of the recent flooding that devastated our friends and neighbors in West Virginia at the end of June. On the day of the flooding, our staff heard reports of extremely high waters, but had no idea how much damage the flood would cause. The following morning, news of the homes destroyed and lives lost still had not reached our office. It was that afternoon when a young mother and her two daughters came to our office that we saw firsthand just how devastating this event really was.

This young lady, a biologist who has performed contract work in Bland County, had stayed at our local motel while working in the area. When waters began to rise and electricity was lost, this mom packed up her girls, leaving all belongings behind, and started driving away from the danger to somewhere that was familiar to her. That place was the Big Walker Motel, where she

found shelter with her daughters until her parents could arrive from New York. While in the motel, we had the pleasure of meeting this family as we offered them food, clothing, hygiene items, and gas money for the mother to go back to their home in order to salvage anything that remained.

We are so grateful that this family made it out safely and that God placed the Bland Ministry Center in their path to offer some hope in a very dark time. We realize others did not fare as well. It is because of businesses, churches, and people like you that we had food and clothing to share with that displaced family.

Already knowing how generous our community of southwest Virginia and Southern West Virginia can be, we were not surprised when several locals asked us to serve as a drop-off location for donated items. Churches from the East River and Mountain State Baptist Associations came together to secure box trucks

and volunteers for hauling donations into West Virginia, and volunteers from Bland County loaded two trucks full of clothing, home goods, food, and cleaning supplies. We feel truly blessed in our position to enable our very generous supporters to serve others, whether it is through flood relief, home repair, food drives, or any of our other programs. Thank you!



Partnership Allows for Expanded Dental Services

In 2015, the executive staff of the Bland County Medical Clinic approached Bland Ministry Center regarding an opportunity to expand dental care for our area through a federal grant. Susan Greever, BCMC Executive Director, presented a proposal to the Board of Directors to partner with our dental ministry and provide full time dental treatment for patients throughout southwest Virginia and Southern West Virginia. The dental clinic at the time was staffed by volunteer dentists in addition to two paid dentists and their staff who saw patients from Wythe and Bland Counties only through a grant from the Wythe Bland Foundation. The volunteer and grant-funded clinics were able to have a tremendous impact on the health of our patients. The wait time, however, was very long, and patients were only able to receive emergency care instead of developing a preventative maintenance schedule for oral hygiene. Our Board of Directors voted and agreed to enter in to this partnership with the Bland County Medical Clinic, and the clinic confirmed with the approval of their grant.

In January of this year, the dental clinic began full time operation, Monday through Thursday. The dental staff schedules Wythe Bland Foundation patients on Monday and Tuesday. The Bland County Medical Clinic patient base receives treatment on Wednesday and

Thursday. Bland Ministry patients are seen with \$10.00 copay, while Bland County Medical patients are charged based on a sliding scale fee. Patients with dental insurance are seen during the Medical Clinic days and their insurance is billed. These copays allow BMC to afford expenses not covered by grants, and are in no way meant to hinder patients from receiving services.

The staff and basic procedures have remained the same, but after seven months on this schedule, the Board can certainly tell a difference. Patient wait times are drastically shorter, emergencies are able to be addressed almost immediately, and many patients are able to be served on a preventative basis rather than only when emergencies arise. Another advantage is the vast

resources the Medical Clinic brings to the partnership. Their network and knowledge of funding sources has recently allowed them to purchase digital x-ray machinery to be installed in the dental clinic later this year.

Despite how well things have gone, we could never downplay the importance and continued need of our volunteer dentists! They have been the heartbeat of the clinic since it opened in 1983, and continue to allow us to serve patients who would not otherwise be able to afford dental care for basic or more complex procedures. We still need our current volunteer dentists and have room in our schedule for even more. Please contact the Center if you or someone you know might like to serve.



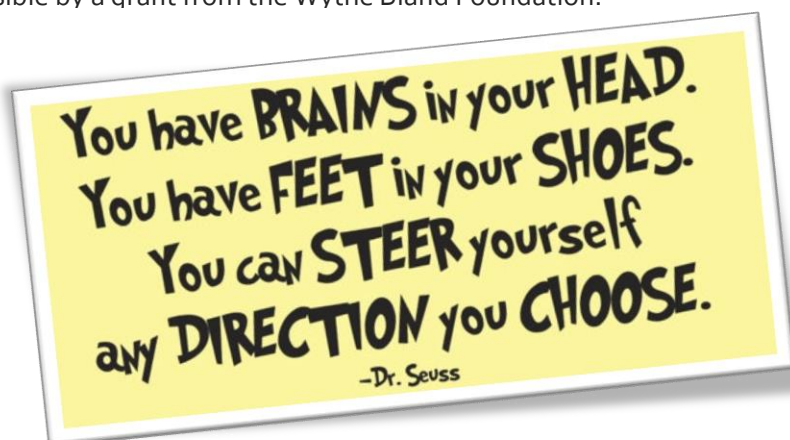
Bear Jam 2016

Bear Jam 2016 was held on June 11 at the Bland County High School football field. Despite extremely warm weather, a large crowd enjoyed local artists Transformed, Casey Lewis, and Craig Whittaker, national recording artists Unspoken and Audio Adrenaline, a Kid Zone, concessions, and great fellowship. Thank you to all the volunteers, sponsors, and everyone in attendance. We can't wait to "Jam" with you next year!



Back to the Books to include shoe distribution

For years, Bland Ministry Center volunteers and mission teams have helped to distribute school supplies to Bland County Children. This year, BMC will once again work with Bland County Department of Social Services to register local school-age children for new backpacks, all grade-level items, socks, underwear, and a new Bible from Blanket America Ministries. In addition to the standard distribution on August 4, BMC will also offer new shoe vouchers for income-eligible children. Bland Elementary principal, Mrs. Hensley, expressed that many children were outgrowing or wearing out their shoes before their parents were able to purchase a new pair. So children can go to school in comfortable, protective footwear, and so that they may feel confident in their shoes, BMC will offer a one-day distribution on August 6 for children to pick out the perfect pair, and will also allow school officials to request new pairs throughout the school year as needs arise. This program is made possible by a grant from the Wythe Bland Foundation.





Bland Ministry Center

FOOD PANTRY • CLOTHES CLOSET • DENTAL CLINIC • HOME REPAIR

The Campbell Soup Label for Education program recently announced that they will end their collection of qualified UPCs on July 31, 2016. The program enabled us to purchase many office supplies. If you are one of the faithful volunteers that clipped and counted labels for years, we appreciate you!



If you would like to hold a special collection for the Ministry Center, please consider the following areas where we currently have the greatest needs:

Underwear (new, in package)

Children's hangers

Cleaning Supplies

Lowe's gift cards

Office Supplies (copy paper, blue/black ink pens, paperclips)

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