



210 N. Main St., P.O. Box 232  
Ada OH 45810  
P: 419-558-1015 | F: 419-558-1105 |  
[restorecenter@gmail.com](mailto:restorecenter@gmail.com)  
[restorecrockpot@gmail.com](mailto:restorecrockpot@gmail.com)

More news, online giving and volunteer opportunities on the ReStore blog:  
<http://restorecenter.wordpress.com/>

## February-March 2014 Newsletter

### Letter from the Director: A Year of Growth and Discovery

2013 was a year of change. Our leadership changed, with many of ReStore's founders reducing their involvement. They birthed ReStore, and now are letting their "baby" grow in God's will. (We recognize one of those founders, Karen Ward, in this month's newsletter profile.)

Programs changed. Without a Senior Life Enhancement Coordinator, the senior activities morphed into a well-received lunch program for the whole community. This was different, but good: we served a lot of meals. (See our "2013 Accomplishments" for a summary.)

I'm very proud of our meals and other programs to assist those in our community. None of which could have been done without the generosity of our volunteers and our community and organizational partners. The dedication of the community, represented in monthly and annual pledges and donations from various individuals and churches, has been deeply appreciated. Our organizational partners include the West Ohio Food Bank, the Hardin County Foundation, West Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church and the United Way, AmeriCorp VISTA and Summer Food Service Program, all of which provided grants in 2013. We plan to continue these collaborations in 2014.

We're starting to see more churches participating in ReStore, hosting Crock Pot Meals, offering devotion for the meals, announcing upcoming events, volunteering in the store and on the Board of Directors. Ultimately, I want ReStore to be the voice of all the churches. Churches can use ReStore Community Center space to meet, and ReStore can share information about churches with people new to town.

ReStore does have one pressing need, for a **new Lunch Coordinator**. The coordinator plans menus, gets ingredients, and arranges for food preparation. We have volunteers available to serve and clean up, and there is plenty of funding for food. If you are interested, please contact me at ReStore.

Working together, we can continue to be a place of comfort, of fellowship, of good food and laughter, that can "ReStore Lives and ReStore Community.

--LeAnn Pryor



### 2013 Accomplishments

In 2013, ReStore:

- Served 8,182 **meals**, at ReStore and at the Ada Park through our Summer Lunch Program for kids
- Earned \$12,919 through **sales & donations** at Marco's Closet, our resale store, from 4,716 different sales
- Engaged 115 **volunteers** (45 long-term, 14 from JFS, and 50 short-term such as students).



### Free Tax Clinics!

ReStore is offering tax clinics once again with **free** tax filing. To be eligible, you must earn less than \$60,000 (filing single) or \$95,000 (filing jointly) and not be self-employed.

Call 419-558-1015 to schedule an appointment at a tax clinic at ReStore: March 1 (9 am - 3 pm), March 27 (12 - 7:30 pm) or April 10 (12 - 7:30 pm).

## The Journey of ReStore: Reflections from Karen Ward

*Karen Ward was a "founding mother" of ReStore. She is now stepping back from the organization, and shared this perspective:*

Approximately 7 ½ years ago I attended a church meeting at The Ada First United Methodist Church. It was to be about church renewal. Instead, Mark Light shared a vision he had and Pat Searfoss offered her leadership towards that vision. The vision? Developing a community center in the empty storefront across the street from the church at 232 N. Main Street. I, being the 'other' person at this meeting eagerly jumped on board with my gift of 'enthusiasm'.

From there this vision took on life. Mark's confidence and faith and Pat's mature and spiritual leadership set us off like a rocket ship propelled by the rich fumes of spiritual energy! This 'fuel' was like gold and in November of 2006 the ReStore Community Center held their first Thanksgiving meal. Today in February of 2014 its engine is still pumping like a well-oiled engine on spiritual fumes and more!

I rode on that engine with delight, imagination, creativity but also with fatigue and tears. I supported this 'ship' with encouragement, listening, loving and laughing with community. My tangible skills aligned with cleaning bathrooms, bringing crock-pots of soup, cleaning those pots in a small bathroom sink, vacuuming, rearranging furniture, and some desk and computer skills. Did I ever tell you how Pat and I took care of an infestation of fleas in a matter of 2 hours?

As I look back I suppose the best I gave to this mission was my willingness to admit I was wrong many times over. I had to learn how to bend, flex, listen and get my stubborn mind to tune in on God's direction. I had such good ideas but they weren't God's ideas. The 'still small voice' was to be heeded or the Center would never make it. I learned patience and developed a profound place within my spiritual heart I had never experienced before. I was plunged into a sharp swift kick in my self-will and a huge learning curve in my spirit.

This resignation after these 7 ½ years is both difficult and exciting. ReStore will always hold a secure place in my heart. She belongs to God but to be allowed to birth this Center humbles me forever. I thank all who have lent a hand, a heart and a mind in serving ReStore; to those who have given food and dinner donations, financial pledges, prayers and their love to ReStore. Without a little bit of *everyone* ReStore could never exist!

What a great ride. I shall never forget this great 'ship' and its core of energy (love). As I leave, my prayer is for ReStore's 'engine' to be fueled by the grace of humble love and a dedication to the honoring of God's true direction.

Forever grateful for this experience,  
Karen Ward



## An Appreciation of Karen

Those who work with Karen speak of her faith, her warmth, and her commitment to helping.

She's a prayer warrior," says Myra Berger. "She's good at praying herself and good at praying for others." Karen's advice is always to "stick with the Lord," Charlene Borski says. "When the church burnt down," Charlene recalls, "we were all devastated. Karen always told me, 'Just stay with the Lord and good things will happen.'"

Everyone values her warmth. "I've never seen her in a bad mood," says Barb Hayter. Charlene speaks of "her wonderful cheery smile." "She's always helping people," says Myra. "She could be walking down the street, engage people in conversation, find they needed something, and give it herself or find someone else to give it to them."

As one of the "founding mothers" of ReStore, Karen has helped make it a community of caring and faith. "Karen is a most excellent hostess! She has a way about her that makes others just feel welcomed and loved," LeAnn Pryor recalls. "Karen has been a great source of support and spiritual strength for me during this past year of transition. She will be missed, but the door will ALWAYS be opened!"



### Special Thanks

To **EVERYONE** who contributed as part of our annual and ongoing fundraising. ReStore received \$30,800 from our community throughout the year of 2013!

To **Crock Pot Tuesday volunteers** for December and January: SigEps, GenRx, Girl Scouts, Melanie Woods, Rotary Club and Anita Dearth. Also a special thanks to our "Dessert Queen", Chris Brazen, who faithfully provides various desserts for CPT nearly every week! If you see her, tell her she's a SWEET-heart!



### From ReStore...With Love & Laughter!

Congratulations to **Cassie Kurfis**, winner of our Valentine's Drawing for 2 tickets to attend Christian Comedian **Anita Renfro** hosted by Love INC in Kenton on Saturday, February 15th.

### Christmas at ReStore!

ReStore Community Center helped to make Christmas special for children in the area. The annual Christmas Children's Shopping Spree provides an opportunity for children to "shop" a variety of specially held-back donations throughout the year with tickets given per family member. Volunteers help kids find just the right gifts and wrap them up ready for giving. What joy it is to see excitement on the faces of these children and learn how far better it is to give than receive. Completing the experience, children receive a visit and gifts from Santa and Mrs. Claus and of course some delicious homemade Christmas cookies! Thank you to everyone who volunteered to make this event happen!



**Left: Rayola and Clairissa serve cookies and smiles**



**Right: Santa & Mrs. Claus, and "Elf" Cassie, welcome the Watson girls**

### Fond Farewells and Warm Greetings!

At the beginning of every year, the Board of Directors goes through a period of change as Board Members reach the end of their three year commitment and new Board Members join our team.

Best wishes and grateful hearts to Phil Compton and Christy Beaschler for their time, prayers and dedication to ReStore over the years.

Welcome to Matt Crawford, Doris Engler, Laura Ferguson and Jill Pierce! May God bless you in your commitment to ReStore Community Center!



### ReStore Staff:

LeAnn Pryor, Executive Director  
Linda Dearth, Store Manager

### 2014 Board of Directors:

Myra Berger, Chair  
Dana Walters, Vice Chair  
Jolene Bailey, Treasurer  
JoNell Hanratty, Secretary  
Matt Crawford  
Doris Engler  
Laura Ferguson  
Jill Pierce



**Spring is coming!**

A celebration from volunteers at last year's ReStore Village Garden



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**Save trees!** If you would rather receive this newsletter by email, please send your email to [restorecenter@gmail.com](mailto:restorecenter@gmail.com).

**Hours:** Mon 12-4 PM | Tues 12-6 PM (Community Dinner 4-6 PM) | Wed 12-6 PM | Thurs 12-6 PM | Fri 12-4