



Love INC
Love In the Name of Christ



SPRING 2013

VOLUME XXII ISSUE I

A Special Christmas for Callie

Many of our Love INC clients are single mothers, so we are often reminded of the Scriptures where our Lord emphasized the care of widows, orphans, and aliens. We have certainly found that those who are marginal, ill, disenfranchised seem to be the ones most in need of the love of Christ to be shown in tangible ways.

Callie* called us several months before the holidays in despair. Her church had helped her with her electric bill during the summer but she was behind again. The good people of her church had helped with food and other needs and Love INC volunteers had given her clothing for herself and her little girl.

So, now we had to wonder why was she behind on her electric bill again? Gentle probing and questioning uncovered the reason why. She had asked for a sofa from a Love INC volunteer earlier in the year, but when none was forthcoming, she accepted a 'gift' sofa from a friend. For that reason, she had let us know that she was no longer in need.

But the 'gift' sofa turned out to contain bedbugs, unbeknownst to this single mom, who also was battling a serious illness. She was behind on her electric bill because she now had bedbugs throughout her tiny house and had spent all her electric bill money on bedbug traps from a

local store.

Of course these had not worked at all and she had had to discard her beds, her sofas, chairs, and other 'stuffed' furniture. She had gone from bad to worse, now sleeping on the floor with her daughter. She had contacted a pest control company that sent a man to give an estimate. The pest control man was quite sympathetic and attempted to see if his employers would be willing to train employees using this house as a 'test' case -- doing the extermination for free.

However, that did not work out and the final price they were looking at was much more than Callie's entire monthly income! She was at her wit's end and was in floods of tears, completely overwhelmed by her plight. Our Love INC staff prayed with her and her church prayed as well. Her little church had gone out on a limb to pay the electric bill and had nothing left to help with such a large expense.

As so happened — in God's providence — the timing of her contact could not have been better. The Christmas season was approaching and when a small group from the **Church of the Incarnation** called looking for a family that they might bless at this time of the year, Callie's name came into the minds of the Love Inc staff.

"What does this young woman

need besides food?" the lead family in the group asked. The staff explained that she had bedbugs in her home and had had to discard her mattresses. Would the group be willing to get her a couple of air mattresses to sleep on? Would they be willing to get her some cleaning and personal care products as an extra blessing? The group agreed that this would work for them.

But the family that took on this project decided that they would go above and beyond anything the Love INC staff or Callie could have imagined. So, as you read what Callie experienced this past Christmas, picture in your mind the scene in her home in the days that followed.

First — and perhaps most important -- the pest control company came and exterminated the bedbugs, courtesy of the Incarnation group. The group brought her boxes and boxes of delicious food, and bags of cleaning supplies and personal care products including paper products. On top of that, the Incarnation group brought the little girl clothing and thirteen other gifts!



Callie had never in all her life had a Christmas full of joy like this year. She continues to call Love INC to

say thank you one more time for all the blessings. She says she wishes she knew of a way to repay this generous family. We know that the givers are blessed simply knowing that their demonstration of the love of Christ has changed some-

one's life.

It is amazing to see how an act of generosity can bring so much hope and joy in the life of a young woman who only a month or so before could see no hope at all.

The Love INC staff thanks our Lord for all the Christmas and Thanksgiving volunteers who helped others catch a glimpse of heaven this past holiday season. ■

** Names of those served have been changed throughout the newsletter to protect confidentiality*

Sara Volunteers Every Holiday!

Sara is a quiet, gentle person who has shared very little about herself and prefers it that way. But, she has a big heart and this short "excursion" into her life will help you to see it in action. Each year she sends Love INC a simple email requesting the name of an elderly single person who otherwise would be spending the holiday alone.

She takes the information we provide to set up a visit, cooks a meal and brings it to the residence and eats dinner with the Love INC client. Then rather than hurrying off, she spends the remainder of the day with her or him. And, on a couple of occasions, she has spent the day cooking with the person and then enjoying their meal together.

Reflecting on her experience, Sara prefaces her thoughts with these

lyrics from *Jump Little Children, "Words of Wisdom"*:

"If you will go and not return
Leave me some words of wisdom
If I cannot follow any more
I promise to teach what I have learned"

Then, she goes on to say, "promise to learn;" never have I felt as powerful an intention as this. Raised by my depression-generation grandmother, she embodied it so that I couldn't help but be infected with her devotion. When I was a young social worker, Love INC taught me that there is a deeply rooted community compassion for those in need.

"And through the years, they've helped me pay attention and learn lessons from unlikely teachers -- as in seeing the power of reconnecting

through a meal shared, and a simple sit and chat. It's amazing what taking over a turkey dinner and resting a spell, shooting the breeze and watching the Macy's Day Parade teaches you!

"In my spiritual practice, my latest guide: 'When life needs us, it will come to us, but we will recognize it only if we are paying attention, and if we are courageous enough to respond (Deborah Adele).

"Recognize. Embrace. Respond. Setting these intentions will change you, and better, the world around you.

"Thank you everyone at Love INC for making these connections possible.

"Love and Peace -- Sara" ■

Available to Serve on Short Notice

Jewel Mason is our wonderful friend and contact person at the Charlottesville Housing Authority. She alerts us to some of the many needs that she encounters from the housing residents. Just after Thanksgiving she sent a distress call regarding one of our long-time Love INC folks.

It seems that Denise allowed one of her grown children to stay temporarily. That person and family proceeded to trash the entire apartment to the point where she was in jeopardy of losing her housing. Cleaning and painting was needed at once. Almost immediately, volunteers from **Chestnut Grove Bap-**

tist Church in Earlysville sent a crew and they patched holes in the walls and painted the entire Apartment — along with cleaning both bathrooms!

On the heels of this work, a small group from the **Vineyard Church** in Charlottesville responded to an appeal from Love INC and, amazingly, rallied to the need and arrived a few days later.

Here is the report we received from the Vineyard Small Group:

"I wanted to give you both an update on our cleaning of Denise's place, where seven of us went over

for about 3 hours on Saturday morning. We didn't know what to expect, but were ready and willing to help!

"We organized the two bedrooms on the main level (sorted clothes, shoes, toys, etc. into bags), deep cleaned the bathroom on the main level, organized and cleaned the living room, took the trash to the dumpster out back, cleaned out the utility closet in the lower level, and swept/mopped the entire house (excluding her bedroom and the lower level).



“At the end of the cleaning, I believe it was the boyfriend of a daughter that came to the house and spoke with Denise, but after the conversation, she was pretty upset about some news she received re-

garding her daughter. Apparently Denise had thought her daughter was in Charlottesville, when she was actually in another part of the country.

“Knowing how distraught she was, we prayed with Denise before we left, and that seemed to help a bit. She asked for and we gave her the phone number of our church/pastor.” ■

Help From the Past — Bearing Fruit Today

In our Fall issue of the LINC, we had an update about a “Melva” who tutored a young girl faithfully for years, getting the girl into a good private school and now into college. Now, Love INC has learned of another important volunteer, though this lady probably has no idea how important her time and her donation was in the life of a traumatized mom.

In the course of going through a totally unmanageable email list with no names attached to any email addresses, Susan sent hundreds of inquiries to potential volunteers asking if they wished to remain on the Love INC email list. Here is the response she received from one:

“Are you the Susan who helped me and my daughter get a car and household supplies many, many, years ago???? Did you get married? Did you once live near Greenbrier School? I was given a

grey 1985 Nissan Maxima stick shift and this particular Susan helped me learn how to drive it! To this day, I brag to my friends that I can drive a stick shift!

“I was also given a beautiful sweater and my daughter was given clothes and toys at Christmas! I still have that sweater!!!! — although I can’t wear it now as I have gained a little weight!

“I hope this is THE SUSAN who I have been looking for! If not, I apologize, but I do appreciate the Love INC. program. It is truly God ordained!”

The ‘Susan’ now at the Love INC office is not THAT ‘Susan,’ though she can drive a stick shift! But in corresponding with the long-ago client, the Susan now at the office discovered that the recipient of the stick shift lessons, the sweater, the toys, and the car is now doing well.

She was able to get and maintain a job due to having that car. She ex-
tricated herself from the abusive relationship she had been in, thanks again to the car and the help.



She is now married to a Christian man and she and her daughter attend **Mt. Zion First African Baptist Church**. She has much to be thankful for and it started with ‘Susan.’

Love INC found the original request after some searching. It seems ‘Susan’ may have attended **First Baptist Church**, but that is all we know about this volunteer who had such an impact. Thank you, Susan, wherever you are now! ■

“Miss E. Is My Best Friend”

You would not recognize Miss E’s friend as the same woman we got to know five years ago when she called Love INC looking for food. This young woman spent more time in the hospital than on the outside. She was terrified to be on her own, suffered terrible nightmares stemming from traumatic childhood abuse, and was suicidal most of the time.

When out of the hospital — a rare thing — she went to the Blue Ridge House off Elliott Ave. as her only outlet.

Mona also found out that her obe-

sity had resulted in type two diabetes and that her former pattern of eating only fast foods had to change. She called Love INC asking for someone to teach her how to cook. That was five years ago.

A lovely woman from **First Baptist Church** volunteered to help our young woman. For THREE years they met every Saturday when she was not hospitalized and she learned to cook. Less than six months after this mentoring began, Mona called with a glowing report of Miss E’s cooking/teaching. She said “Your organi-



zation is helping me to get healthy and get on the right track.” Gradually she even gathered all the pots and pans and utensils she needed to do the job herself.

But Miss E did more than teach cooking. With her gentle patience, she prayed and taught our young woman about the Lord and how she could learn to depend on the Lord herself. Our young woman began to spend more time out of the hospital than in!

She started attending church, first Miss E’s church, then a church on her own. Unfortunately, she had

trouble “fitting in” and tried a number of churches, just continuing to look for the one that was right for her. She even volunteered at Love INC for one holiday season.

And then she got a JOB!! She now works at a local service non-profit, bringing her sparkling smile to others in need. She still winds up in the hospital from time to time; the ghosts from the past still come at her. But she is a different person altogether.

One day recently, she came by the office to tell us that she had finally found a ‘real’ prayer partner at the church she has been attending.

But she assured us that Miss E is still her “best friend.” “Every time I have been in the hospital,” she said, “Miss E has come to see me

and brings me something good that I can eat. Sometimes she will just bring something I like and sometimes she will call me and ask me what I feel like eating. But she always comes. She is my best friend.”

A CONCLUDING NOTE FROM SUSAN:

I find this an amazing story of transformation through the quiet, patient friendship of a very gentle, kindly Christian lady. When we first met her, our client was a “hopeless case,” doomed to spend her years largely institutionalized.

But through her best friend, Miss E, she has become an asset to the community. For five years Miss E has persevered with our young woman and it is God Who gets the

glory. Our young woman and Miss E don’t cook on a regular basis any longer, but Miss E is right there whenever God needs her to be.

AND A POSTSCRIPT OF OTHERS WHO HAVE STEPPED INTO MONA’S LIFE:

As was shared in the love story, Mona had periodic hospitalizations to deal with her suicidal inclinations. During one such extended stay, a volunteer from of **Liberty Worship Center** “babysat” Mona’s dog for several months — a real mission of mercy.

Just over a year ago, a volunteer from **Calvary Chapel of Charlottesville** installed new locks on her apartment doors after an unfortunate incident. ■

It Gave Me the Courage to Change

She just called to say “Thank you for loving me when no one else cared about me.” Edna went on to say that God had saved her life through the churches that loved her and cared for her when she was here in Charlottesville.

Now our churches did not go to great lengths for her in all reality; in fact, Edna had many obstacles pushing against their involvement. She lived with ‘friends,’ all hard drinking and drugging folks. She was drawn into that life in order to fit in with her ‘friends.’

But, the first visible movement away from her lifestyle surfaced when she came to **New Beginnings Christian Fellowship** on an Easter Sunday -- and first heard about God’s love for her. Absorbing that wonderful truth, she broke down in tears and gave her life to the Risen Lord that very day. Edna was, at the same time, trying to have dental and medical procedures done, but was not having success, because she did not have

the proper ID. Coming to her rescue were folks from the **Rockfish Outreach Center**, who worked with her to get a school transcript from her old grade school in North Carolina. She had not had much schooling in her life, finishing perhaps the 7th grade before going to work in the fields.

As it turned out, tracking down that transcript and getting it sent to Virginia took over two months. In the process, it was discovered that the elementary school she had attended had burned down, taking with it all the school records. But eventually a record was obtained and, with the transcript and her tattered birth certificate in her hand, Edna managed to get her Virginia ID.



Church folks faithfully drove to her home each Sunday morning to take her to church, even though she often would lean out of the upper floor window and explain in a sleepy

voice that she was not able to go to church. She would give various explanations for not being ready for church that particular Sunday. “I’ll be ready next week,” she would say. When she did come, her off and on boyfriend would occasionally accompany her.

Then one day she said she was moving back to North Carolina and she disappeared for several years. There was a message from her sometime in 2012, but with no call-back number. In January 2013, she got through to the Love INC staff and her words just tumbled out. She was doing very well now. She had been clean and sober for over two years.

She had gone into a mental hospital for a period, where her medications were adjusted. She had reapplied for disability and managed to obtain a section 8 voucher for an apartment. She had her knee replaced and gotten her dentures. She said that on the day the judge awarded her the disability claim, he actually stood up and clapped, applauding

her for getting clean and sober and getting her life together.

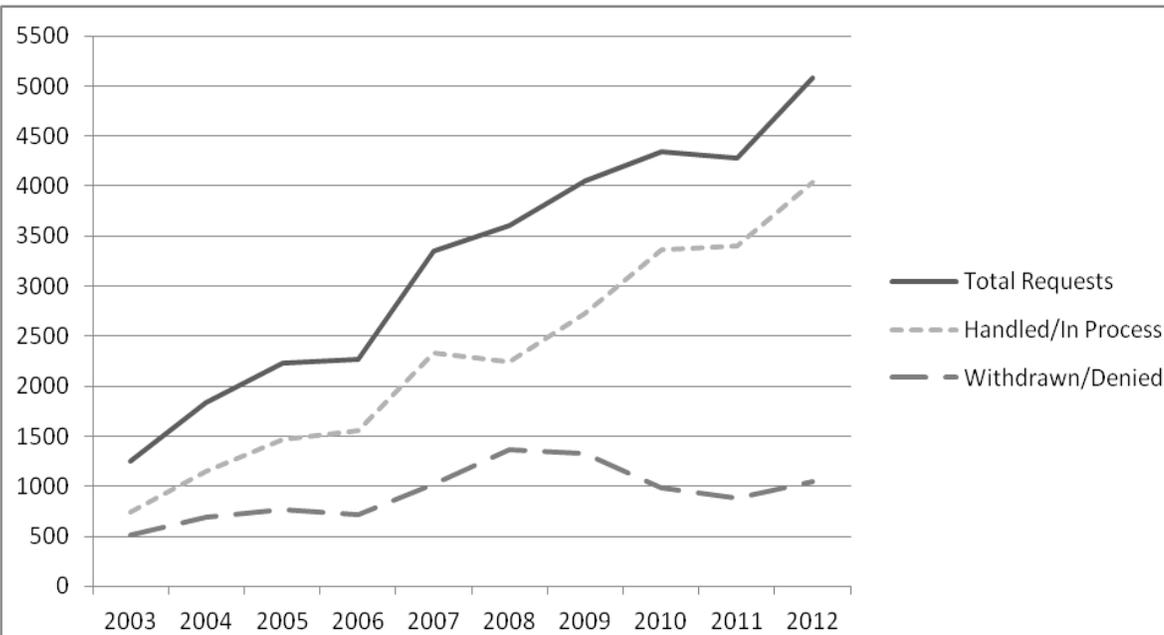
Edna went on to share that she attended **The Door Church**, that was

within walking distance of her residence, and with all the walking she had lost 50 pounds! Now she was working on the smoking issue! “Thank you for being there,” she

said. “ Just knowing that someone cared about me gave me the courage to change.” ■

The Past Decade of Ministry — Statistically

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total Requests	1249	1841	2236	2273	3347	3610	4049	4339	4285	5077
Handled/In Process	740	1149	1469	1561	2329	2250	2727	3358	3401	4034
Withdrawn/Denied	509	692	767	712	1018	1360	1322	981	884	1043
% of Requests With No Volunteers	3.8	4.6	6.4	7.2	10.2	12.1	12.2	10.9	7.9	7.4



11.8% of the total requests, with last year ending at 6.6%.

But the statistic we regret the most each month is the “*No Volunteer!*” That says that we could find no one in an agency or church able to meet those requests.

Would you pray that this would change, with am-

Over the years of Love INC’s service to the churches of the community, the number of hurting men, women and children who have been touched by the love of Christ has continued to grow from year to year. Over the past 10 year tracking of requests and results, we dis-

covered these interesting facts — depicted graphically and numerically above..

It should be noted that many callers find solutions or their circumstances change, so that they withdraw their request. Over the 10 year span, those “Denied” ranged from 5.3% to

ple volunteers in the years ahead? Pray that more believers in our community would do as the Macedonians did: *They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us* (2 Corinthians 8:5) ■





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Love INC

Love In the Name of Christ

198 Spotnap Road, Suite C-1
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Return Service Requested

Love INC is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit ministry that links people in need to volunteers from a network of area churches.

Web Site: www.loveinccville.org
E-mail: loveincoffice@embarqmail.com

I/We appreciate what the Lord is doing through the Ministry of Love In the Name of Christ of Charlottesville/Albemarle County and want to share in its support with a financial gift.

Please indicate amount:

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1000 \$ Other

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City, State _____ ZIP: _____

Church/Business (Optional): _____

... Gifts to Love INC are Tax Deductible ...
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Thank you so much for your support!

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Business Line: 434-293-6060
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