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Framing the Future

CEC has recently received an incredible donation of **850** pairs of eyewear from an anonymous out-of-state optician. This donation included eyeglass frames, prescription readers, and sunglasses. The donor's desire in making this donation is threefold: (1) help people see well, (2) help them feel better about themselves and (3) in some way help alleviate the overwhelming challenges revealed in the following statistics:

According to the website for *New Eyes for the Needy*, "millions of people in the United States struggle with uncorrected vision. Countless families do not have health insurance. Other families

**10 SIGNS THAT YOUR CHILD
MAY HAVE VISION DIFFICULTIES:**

1. Squinting, closing or covering one eye
2. Holding a book close to their face
3. Losing his/her place while reading
4. Headache, nausea, or dizziness
5. Excessive clumsiness
6. Tilting the head to one side
7. Frequent daydreaming
8. Reading with a finger as a place mark.
9. Performing below potential
10. Rubbing eyes repeatedly

are covered by public or private insurance plans that have eliminated or reduced eye care coverage in an effort to cut costs. Uncorrected vision problems can seriously affect a person's life.

- For children, not having glasses can lead to poor self-esteem, failure in the classroom, developmental delays, learning disabilities, social maladjustment, and even juvenile delinquency.
- For adults, the lack of corrective glasses can mean the difference between employment and unemployment.
- For seniors, poor vision can limit their ability to read medicine labels, navigate stairs, and perform other tasks required to lead an independent life."

According to MedicineNet.com research states 80% of what a child learns is obtained visually. Other studies show 70% of 2 million school age children who have difficulty with reading have some form of visual impairment. One in four students who entered school in the fall of 2012 had undetected vision problems that interfered with their learning. The

website also gives 10 warning signs that your child may have vision difficulties.

According to the National Center for Health Statistics 9.9 million people with vision loss in the U.S. have a family income of less than \$35,000. Consequently, countless families do not have the financial means necessary to obtain the proper care to detect and correct their vision? The exams and the eyewear are many times cost prohibitive.

In response to this generous donation and in an effort to further our mission of encouraging others, CEC is now in the process of finalizing a collaborative effort to distribute the eyewear that we believe will achieve the highest level of impact.

Spiritual Contact Lenses

Have you ever worn contact lenses? I haven't, but my son-in-law has worn them for over 30 years, and he tells me he wouldn't dare try to function without them. Every morning he places them on his eyes, and the world becomes instantly clear.

With all the lens choices available today, most people can find contacts that give them sharp, comfortable vision. Contact lenses can be divided into several classifications:

- o By material characteristics:
 - Soft (cellophane-like)
 - Rigid (formed flexible plastic).
- o By wear schedule:
 - Daily Wear
 - Overnight Wear ("Extended Wear")
- o By life-span of the lens:
 - Disposable (1 day or 2 week)
 - Planned Replacement (1 month, 3 month or 6 month)
 - Conventional (1 year or 2 year).
- o By correction modality:
 - Spherical
 - Toric
 - Astigmatic
 - Bifocal

Special corrective contact lenses include bifocal contact lenses, colored contacts, orthokeratology contact lenses that correct your vision while you sleep, theatrical contact lenses, contact lenses for astigmatism and UV-blocking contacts. With these little plastic miracles, individuals with vision impairments are offered a good alternative to going through their day-to-day activities seeing only blurry images.

Imagine if we could put in spiritual contact lenses! With these supernatural lenses we could have 20/20 vision, allowing us to see what we often overlook. With a little imagination we might

obtain a pair giving us x-ray vision. This new clarity would allow us to see through the physical roadblocks we all encounter each day. Instead of myopic self interest vision, we would be able to view the world with the multi-dimensional eye of God. We would recognize the struggles and trials of others, and be able to encourage at just the right time with just the right resource. Blindness is one of our greatest fears! This improved sight, would lessen or eliminate hesitation when we should be reaching out to others. The unknown, suddenly becomes the known!

When the Samaritan happened upon the wounded traveler, he seemed blind to the fact the man was Jewish. He did not pause to analyze how rescuing "the enemy" might come back to haunt him. Oblivious to all the potential problems, he saw one thing with 20/20 vision –

This improved sight, would lessen or eliminate hesitation when we should be reaching out to others.

the traveler's desperate need. He acted on the need alone and applied every asset within his possession to saving the man's life. The other travelers that passed by on the other side of the road had vision prob-

lems. The Samaritan was allowing God to "Correct" his vision.

When it comes to genuine compassion, a person's need should determine our response. Today, watch for a child or fellow sojourner in need and act like a "good Samaritan." Don't hold back; start looking for specific ways to be a good neighbor. Let God cover your eyes with His Spiritual Contact Lenses. And pray as you travel through life that God will continually give you opportunities to test your Spiritual Contact Lenses and your Samaritan Heart.

The 2013 Connection Wish List

Office Supplies
Furniture
Cell Phones
Clothing
Vehicles
Appliances
Household Items
Children's Books
Books

VOLUNTEERS!

For the Wear IT & Share IT Project

Clothing Racks
Shelving
Used Eyeglasses



"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up..."
first thessalonians five:eleven

WEAR IT OR SHARE IT

Project Moves to Its New Home Dana Cutter named Project Manager

From the very beginning, CEC, Inc. wanted to encourage people by meeting their needs in their present circumstances. That included collecting and distributing clothing, which most of you realize, takes up a lot of space.

Since the beginning of the project, the clothing has been stored in a double car garage in a somewhat haphazard fashion. In this project we have met local needs as well as shipping to other countries. And several different locations have been used for the sorting and packing of items being shipped out of the area.

We are excited to announce that as of January 1, 2013, the "Wear It or Share It" project has a new home. The Village Church of Christ has graciously offered us space to store and distribute the clothing for our project, and Dana Cutter, a member of the congregation, has volunteered to be the Project Manager. She will work in conjunction with the CEC Board of Directors to develop procedures that will be in the best interest of the recipients of our services. Additionally, she will organize volunteers to help her sort, distribute and pack clothing. If you are interested in volunteering for this project please contact us.

**"We are not
cisterns made for
hoarding.
we are channels
made for sharing."
-Billy Graham**

REMEMBER THOSE ITEMS COLLECTING DUST IN THE BACK OF YOUR CLOSET CAN BE A WONDERFUL BLESSING IF THEY ARE SHARED!

All donations are tax deductible.
More importantly you are
choosing to glorify God by
"STANDING BESIDE
ONE ANOTHER".

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2012, CEC RECEIVED \$1210 IN INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS TOWARDS THE MATCHING GRANT PLEDGE. AS YOU WILL REMEMBER FROM THE LAST NEWSLETTER, AN ANONYMOUS DONOR OFFERED CEC AN AMAZING FUNDRAISING TOOL BY MATCHING DOLLAR FOR DOLLAR UP TO \$2000.00 ANY FUNDS RAISED IN 2012. WE HAVE BEEN BLESSED WITH DONATIONS OVER THE YEARS, BUT THE "MATCHING FUNDS" OFFER HAS BEEN A SHOT IN THE ARM. IT HAS BEEN A HUGE MOTIVATION TO REACH OUT TO OTHERS AND EDUCATE THEM AS TO WHAT WE ACCOMPLISH AND HOW WE IMPACT LIVES.

WE ARE THANKFUL TO EACH OF YOU WHO HAVE DONATED AND WANT YOU TO REALIZE THAT BY DOUBLING YOUR DONATION WITH THIS PLEDGE IT ALLOWS US TO DOUBLE THE IMPACT THAT CEC HAS ON OTHER CHRISTIANS AND THOSE WHO ARE NOT YET CHRISTIANS.

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT CEC OR WANT TO GET INVOLVED IN OUR PROJECTS, PLEASE EMAIL ME AT kvsprad@gmail.com OR IF YOU PREFER TO CALL YOU CAN REACH ME AT 405-204-4570.

KATHRYN SPRADLEY
CEC PRESIDENT

EXCITING NEWS FOR CEC, INC

Matching Funds Amount Tops \$1200

2012-2013 BOARD MEMBERS

President—Kathryn Spradley
Vice President—Aaron Degough
Secretary—Celinda DeGough
Treasurer—Lloyd Spradley
Vicki Connor
Kathy Fox
Shelley Martin
Leota Smith

Excellence is our goal!

EXCELLENCE is

Caring more than others think is wise.
Risking more than others think is safe.
Dreaming more than others think is practical.
Expecting more than others think is possible.

VEHICLE DONATION

Another vehicle has been donated to CEC. This past month a donor took advantage of our being registered as a 501 (C) (3) nonprofit organization by donating his used vehicle to our organization. This IRS designation allows donors to use their donation as a tax deduction.

We encourage you to consider CEC when contemplating what to do with that vehicle taking up space in your driveway. You can clear up a lot of space and also take advantage of the tax deduction. The proceeds from the sale of the vehicles can be used to further the mission of CEC.

ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER

Encourage. What does it mean? The definition of ENCOURAGE is, **to inspire with hope, courage, or confidence; to give support, to foster; to stimulate or spur.** The Bible tells us "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up....." I Thessalonians 5:11. We know we need to encourage, but how do we?

There are many grand things that can be done to encourage others and make a name for yourself, but it is the little things that really count. All it takes on most days to inspire someone to hope is to give them something that is free for you to give, but can be worth more to them than a \$100 bill. SMILE! Or try giving them something that is so precious and something no one ever has enough of, TIME.

Try giving a child ten minutes of undivided attention and watch his mood be changed for the entire day. Try giving the tired clerk a smile, and watch as she lights up.

Try the little things to encourage even those who are strangers to you. Let God work through you to bring some little bit of encouragement to others.

**"I've learned that
people will forget what you said,
people will forget what you did,
but people will never forget
how you made them feel."
Maya Angelou**

Ways to Encourage Seniors

- When they call, practice creative listening
- Call them before they call you.....
let them know you care
- Take them to see a friend and allow them time to visit
- Take them to a funeral of a friend and let them tell you about their friendship
- Listen to their stories of childhood no matter how many times you have heard it
- Ask their opinion about a scripture and *really* listen
- Really listen to them whatever is on their mind
- Ask about their children and grandchildren
- Remember their family's names and situations for future conversation
- Allow them to share the sad times in their life
- Go for a walk with them in the country
- Play their favorite game with them, you may actually learn to enjoy it
- Check to make sure they have air conditioning in the summer and heat in the winter
- Ask about their family history...everyone loves to talk about their family
- Ask them to tell you about what invention has most changed their life
- Ask them to tell you about the day they became a Christian
- Bring them an old fashioned home cooked meal (whether they eat it or not)
- Find out what their favorite dessert is and surprise them with baking it for them
- Have your children color or paint them a picture
- Send them a card with pictures of your family
- Spend an hour or so cleaning their home
- Watch a sunset together

**“Infinitely more important than sharing one's material wealth is sharing the wealth of ourselves - our time and energy, our passion and commitment, and, above all, our love.”
-William E. Simon**

Encouragement 101

By Kathryn Spradley

Quite often I am asked “How do you know what to do to encourage someone?” Recently while thinking about this question, it occurred to me that it isn't as easy for some as it is for others to think of practical ways to encourage people. It reminded me that during a week-end session discussing this very topic, several friends and I held a brainstorming session to generate ideas. We focused on several specific areas of encouragement including Seniors, Children, New Christians, and Spouses. We made lists of ideas for each individual group.

As a part of our ongoing efforts through CEC, Inc. to allow God to work through us and encourage everyone we can, I thought it might be helpful to those who really want to be an encouragement to others to see what was suggested during that session. Over the course of the next several bi-yearly newsletters, I want to bring you these ideas.

The first of the topics we discussed was “Ways to Encourage Seniors.” We classified “seniors” as those who, in their later years have become dependent on others for practical help.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau in 2010 the U.S. had a total population of 308,745,538. Of that number 13.3% were over the age of 65. That would be somewhere in the neighborhood of 41 million people who qualify under the term “Senior” as of 2010. And around 10,000 people a day, everyday are being added to that number.

Yes, many of us over 65 are not dependant on others for help, but there are many within this age bracket that need help everyday for just the minor details of living.

Remember these ideas came from a brainstorming session and are in no particular sequence. These are just ideas that you might find useful in practicing I Thessalonians 5:11. And of course there will be any number of other things that could be done to encourage them. Be Creative!