



City of Moore Oklahoma

301 N. Broadway, Moore, OK 73160 | (405) 793-5000 | www.cityofmoore.com

July 10, 2013

Mission of Love Foundation
2054 Hemlock Court
Austintown, OH 44515

Dear Kathleen, Dani, Luana, Karen, Stacy, Linda and Terri:

I would like to express not only my appreciation, but the appreciation of the many Moore, Oklahoma tornado victims. You came from far away to share your love and concern and the warmth of your beautiful quilts.

I just wanted to share a short story of how your love will impact just 1 family here in Moore. Three years ago I sold a City of Moore cemetery lot to a man named Ronnie Bivens. Ronnie's wife died of a heart attack at the age of 40 in her back yard. Ronnie was left with 3 boys to raise and care for. Over the past 3 years he has been making payments for the 3 of them to have a cemetery lot by their mother. He is a self employed tile layer and his home was very underinsured. Ronnie plans on rebuilding back in the Plaza neighborhood because of the family memories there. He is going to build it back himself with the help of friends that he has met in the construction business.

Thinking of the loss his 3 sons have sustained, I carefully picked out a quilt for each son. Another wonderful gift to his family will be a \$100.00 gift card for each child attached to each quilt. The \$100.00 gift cards were donated by an organization from Louisiana.

Because of your organizations love for others, I feel like God has planted a seed in this family's life that they will always remember.

THANK YOU LADIES FOR COMING TO MOORE, OKLAHOMA AND SHARING YOUR LOVE AND TALENTS.


Linda Stewart
Deputy City Clerk

To Kathleen Price

On July 7th 2013 I had the privilege of accompanying Kathy on a road trip to deliver comfort quilts to Moore Oklahoma tornado victims of May 20th 2013.

It was a bitter sweet trip because there was so much destruction and loss of life. Especially the children from the Plaza Towers School.

When we arrived in Moore we met with Mayor Glen Lewis and he shared with us some of the events that took place in May. He had told us about a teacher who was trying to get several students out of the building and was hit by a car that was being tossed by the tornado and trapped underneath of it. The kids survived. She had sustained a broken back and was told she would never walk again. He said in June they had a ceremony to hand out certificates of heroism and this teacher walked across the stage to receive her award. Now that's a hero in my eyes.

When we showed him the van full of over 400 quilts that we brought to hand out to the victims he was very surprised. He said when we told him we had gathered quilts donated from many states and countries, he expected to see maybe 50 to 60 quilts. But when he saw the van full of quilts he was overwhelmed. He said we could use the town hall to distribute the quilts.

So on Tuesday afternoon we were set up and ready to go. The people that worked at town hall were so very helpful. They helped set up tables to display the quilts and also put out the word on the internet so that people could come in and get a quilt. The woman at the front

desk took calls from people that couldn't come in till later and she would get a quilt for them with their names and have them set aside by her desk.

The people that came in were very humble and would ask if they had to pay for the quilts or show a FEMA card. I asked if they had damage and most would say we lost everything. I said no the quilts are free and to pick one out. Most of the people I talked with said they lost all their possessions but were thankful they were alive and would rebuild their homes. Some of the people that would come in would ask if they could take a quilt for a relative or elderly neighbor that couldn't get to city hall. They showed so much compassion for others. It was so nice to see neighbors and strangers helping one another.

We met one woman who shared her story about her son Christopher who had lost his life in the plaza towers school while saving two other little classmates. They were standing against a wall when the tornado hit and the wall started collapsing on them he pulled the classmates in front of him and tried holding the wall back. The wall broke his back and he lost his life but the two classmates were saved. This woman has now made it her mission to get safe rooms built into schools so the children will have a safe place to go if it is needed in the future.

We also met with the teacher who huddled her students under desks and saved them. She had them sing and pray to help drown out the noise that was surrounding them. When several of her students came in to get quilts they ran to her and hugged her and wouldn't let go of her. You could see the love she had for them and them for her.

I also met a man who came in for a quilt. He showed me pictures of what use to be his house and now it's just rubble. He lived across

from the Plaza Towers School. He said the shirt he had on and one other shirt was all he could salvage from the rubble. He said he wasn't home when the tornado hit but his roommate was. He said he called him to tell him to take shelter so he climbed into the bathtub. Well he showed me a picture of some rubble and said the bathtub was under all that rubble. His roommate survived with many scratches and bruises but is ok.

One woman that came in said her house was destroyed but didn't want a quilt for herself but could she get one for her 2 nieces. She said they stay with her a lot and like to snuggle together under their favorite quilt. Well the quilt was gone along with everything else she owned. And she just wanted a quilt for them so they could have one to snuggle under when they are with her.

It is so hard to imagine that in just 10 to 15 minutes your life will be changed forever. Try to picture looking around at what use to be your house and possessions and all you see is piles of rubble. Nothing that even resembles what use to be your house and your neighborhood is there. Nothing is left. No clothes, furniture, or personal items. Things we take for granted like pictures, wallets, driver's license, checkbooks and credit cards. Besides all the legal papers you have. The woman who had lost her son said she couldn't even find a picture of him to save.

This trip was such a wonderful experience. I was so glad to be a part of the wonderful things that occurred and to be able to meet such loving and caring people in Moore Oklahoma. I am grateful and blessed.

Karen Romelfanger



ROBERT K. YOSAY | THE VINDICATOR

Kathleen Price recently returned from Moore, Okla., which was devastated by a tornado May 20. She and Luana Rubin, a quilt fabric seller of Boulder, Colo., delivered aid and 400 handmade "comfort quilts" made by people in the Mission of Love network from the United States, Switzerland and England.

Mission of Love to build home

By WILLIAM K. ALCORN
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AUSTINTOWN

Kathleen Price, whose Mission of Love Foundation helps people and communities recover from hurricanes, tornadoes and other natural disasters, is like a force of nature herself.

The foundation and its network of friends put things back together one person, one family at a time, says Price of Austintown.

Residents of Moore, Okla., which was devastated by

a killer tornado May 20, are the latest Mission of Love beneficiaries.

Price recently returned from Moore where she and Luana Rubin of Boulder, Colo., distributed 400 handmade comfort quilts, made by people in the Mission of Love network from all over the United States and other nations, to first-responders, mothers, teachers and children who lost their homes.

Former Youngstown resident, Paula (Demechko) Langston, who lived on

Taft Avenue on Youngstown's South Side and moved to Oklahoma in 1980, received one of the quilts.

In a card thanking Price, Langston said: "I lost my house in the tornado and was honored to pick out a beautiful quilt for my family. We will cherish it forever, knowing the time and love someone put into making it. I was touched that you're based in Youngstown."

Price said she met with

the teacher who had her 23 students under desks, holding hands, singing and praying while the tornado passed. These and other children survived because of teachers who gave of themselves unconditionally, she said.

"It was one of the most humbling and emotional days of my life," said Price, whose Mission of Love has, over the years, distributed more than 10,000 handmade comfort quilts around the world to people devastated by tornados, hurricanes, earthquakes, war and tsunamis.

Price teams up with Rubin, who owns a business, eQuilter, that sells fabric to quilters around the world who then make quilts to be distributed to disaster victims.

The focus of the Moore mission was to make sure that people who lost a child and a home, and first-responders, received a comfort quilt.

"I rented a truck and took the quilts — 1,200 miles each way — to Moore. I'd do it again in a heartbeat. Most of the recipients had lost everything," Price said. "When they saw the quilts, many just wept. Children got big smiles and hugged and hugged the quilts. What I saw, the comfort that was given, money can't buy that."

Mission of Love now plans to build as many homes as the foundation can for people who lost not just their homes, but a child to the EF5 tornado. She will need plenty of donated materials and volunteers, however.

With peak winds estimated at 210 mph and a width of 1.3 miles at one point, the tornado stayed on the ground for 39 minutes and 17 miles.

Danni Legg, a Chock-taw American Indian and special-education teacher, was one of the people who came for a comfort blanket.

MISSION OF LOVE

How to donate

The Mission of Love Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization incorporated in Ohio 25 years ago, is seeking donations of money to purchase building supplies to build homes in Moore, Okla.

People who have building materials to donate can email Kathleen Price at kathy@missionoflove.org.

To donate money, visit www.missionoflove.org and click on "Love Donation."

Legg, who has been living in a shelter, not only lost her home and all of her possessions to the tornado, her 9-year-old son, Christopher, was killed while trying to protect two classmates. A wall collapsed and broke his back, Price said.

Christopher had battled melanoma cancer for four years and had been given a clean bill of health just two weeks before the tornado hit, Price added.

After hearing Legg's story, Price and Rubin decided that Legg would be the first person for whom Mission of Love plans to build a home.

The Mission of Love, which also has organized numerous humanitarian and medical missions, is no stranger to "putting out the word" for building materials and volunteers to put up structures.

The nonprofit organization has built homes and other buildings, including a Lakota Language School on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, home to the Oglala Sioux; homes in the wake of Hurricane Katrina; and a children's hospice facility in Guatemala.

"We get no grants or government money. It's all grass roots ... all volunteer. I put out the word via the Mission of Love network of friends, and it happens," said Price, who also is a volunteer.

MISSION OF LOVE FOUNDATION

Offering aid to those in need worldwide...

Home: 300 quilts given so far

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the house wasn't covered until it was completely destroyed by the tornado a month later. She's been staying in a shelter in Edmond for the last several weeks with her two surviving children.

She lost her 9-year-old son, Christopher, to the tornado when he left his classroom at Plaza Towers Elementary School to comfort a friend.

Not only did Legg lose her son, she lost all his belongings, and like several tornado survivors, went to Moore City Hall for a quilt.

But after listening to her story, Kathy Price and Luana Rubin decided to give Legg more than just a quilt.

Rubin from Boulder, Colo., owns eQuilter, a business that sells fabric to quilters around the world who then make quilts for her to distribute to disaster survivors. The day the tornado hit Moore, Rubin started getting calls from quilters asking what they could do.

After a month, she collected 400 handmade quilts and teamed up with Kathy Price, founder and director of Mission of Love Charities, Inc. in Youngstown, Ohio, to drive the quilts to Moore.

"The quilts were made for those who lost loved ones, lost their homes or are teachers at damaged schools. By noon Wednesday, 300 quilts had already been taken.

"Because they're all handmade, it's really just an expression of love to who-



Kyle Phillips / The Transcript

Linda Crook show off quilts at Moore City Hall on Wednesday afternoon.

ever receives it," Rubin said.

Many quilters even left personal messages on the backs of their quilts to comfort the survivors.

"The comfort that one of those quilts brings is just incredible," Price said.

But when Price learned of Legg's loss, she knew a quilt wouldn't be enough. She decided to do everything in her power to get Legg a new home.

"I can't imagine not having a home after having a loss of child," Price said.

Legg will be the first Moore tornado survivor Mission of Love has helped build a new house, but Price plans to help as many people as she can.

"We need hundreds — we're just a grassroots organization, but we have to, as a community, start with one," she said. "Let's just do it."

Price is concerned by organizations taking too much time to help survivors find new homes or have gathered vast amounts of

money and only distributed a small fraction so far. Quick and simple, Rubin and Price's strategy when a disaster hits is simply to call each other and say "OK, what are we going to do this time?"

"Because we work with so many of these disasters, a lot of times a month later, it's onto the next disaster and they forget about the people, but we have not forgotten about them," Rubin said.

Despite their help, nothing is going to fill the void left by Legg's son.

"I don't really care about money right now. I lost my son. I don't really care," Legg said.

Those who lost loved ones, who lost homes or who are teachers at damaged schools can pick up any leftover quilts from Stitching Post, 316 N. Broadway Ave. in Moore, for tornado survivors to pick up, and additional quilts will be sent to that location.

"YOU are not here to save the world, but to touch the hands that are within your reach."