

To Pastor and Mission Committee

S.O.W.E.R.

Sharing Our Witness – Enriching Relationships Sowing the Seeds of Christian Love in Southeast Kentucky

SOWER is a West Ohio Conference VIM project which constructs new housing as part of the Henderson Settlement work camp program. Henderson Settlement, Frakes, Kentucky, is a component of the Red Bird Missionary Conference providing a multitude of services to the southern Bell and Whitley counties in Kentucky and parts of two counties in Tennessee. The Work Camp Program is one of the services provided and has repaired existing housing and built new houses (26 to date) to raise the quality of life for the owner families in the local area.

In 2009 the SOWER VIM project completed an 18' by 30' house addition for a single mother with 5 boys. The addition expanded the house to 5 bedrooms and two baths. This represented the 10th home completed by SOWER teams.

The SOWER VIM Team is in the planning stages for constructing the 11th home for a family. The approximate cost of materials to build one of the 28' x 28' houses from the ground up is approximately \$36,000. The SOWER VIM Project needs to have at least the majority of the \$36,000 in materials costs covered by pledges of support before late January 2010 to be able to commitment to building this next house. The SOWER VIM Leadership Team is requesting that the churches of West Ohio prayerfully consider supporting this worthwhile project financially with a pledge of support prior to the January '10 decision time. We realize that you may not be able to give exact numbers at this time but for planning purposes we would appreciate you letting us know by about mid December how much interest your church may have in doing a SOWER type mission project in 2010 and what level of funding may be available. If insufficient funds have been pledged/raised by January 2010 SOWER will undertake a new construction project (room addition or similar project) commensurate with the funds available.

Those that have served on SOWER work teams comment that while they have helped a family by serving they gained much from the interaction and relationships with the family and fellow team members. West Ohio Conference churches are invited to participate in this rewarding project with your prayers, your volunteer labor, and your financial support.

Work weeks for the house construction have been scheduled for May 16-22, May 23-29, July 11-17, July 18-24, August 8-14, and August 15-21 of 2010. The attached Build Schedule outlines the anticipated work to be done each week. The registration fee is \$210/person and covers food and lodging and required VIM insurance. While there is no requirement for volunteers to contribute to the cost of materials, it is suggested that each volunteer or their church contribute at least \$300 toward the cost of materials.

Please send all pledges and registrations [checks should be made out to the West Ohio Conference UMC], or questions to:

Ralph & Carolyn Brandon
SOWER VIM Team Leaders
231 McMillen Dr.
Newark, Oh 43055
740-344-5581
SOWER@wocumc.org

In Christ's Service,

Ralph & Carolyn Brandon
SOWER VIM Team Leaders

Build Schedule for S.O.W.E.R. 2010

Week 1

May 16 - 22

Frame shell

Week 2

May 23 - 29

Roofing, interior walls,
exterior doors, windows,
siding

Week 3

July 11 - 17

Install insulation and
drywall, finish siding
& soffit

Week 4

July 18 - 24

Finish drywall & paint, install
porch railing

Week 5

August 8 - 14

Finish interior trim, install
underlayment, and flooring

Week 6

August 15 - 21

Install interior doors, trim, and
kitchen cabinets

Frequently Ask Questions

- **What is SOWER** - SOWER is a West Ohio Conference VIM project that operates in conjunction with Henderson Settlement, Frakes, Kentucky, a component of the Red Bird Missionary Conference. The SOWER project works in conjunction with Henderson Settlement's Work Camp Program to enhance the lives of the people of Southeast Kentucky by improving their housing situation. The Work Camp Program has traditionally repaired existing housing to raise the quality of life for the owner families but a number of years ago it was realized that new housing was also needed because 1) in some cases the existing housing had deteriorated to the point that replacement would be more cost effective than repair, 2) the family had lost their home, or 3) lived in substandard rental housing which could not be worked on.
- **Where is Henderson Settlement** - Frakes is on KY 190 in southeastern KY about 25 miles east of Interstate 75 and 4 miles north of the Tennessee state line. The nearest towns of any consequence are Williamsburg, KY (just off of I-75 at exit 11- about 40 minutes), and Middlesboro, KY (on US 25E – about 40 minutes).
- **Housing** – Henderson has a very nice air conditioned dorm. Restroom/shower facilities are provided for each sleeping room. There are two men's and two women's sleeping rooms each of which will house up to 32 persons. Two gathering areas plus a large deck are available for "lounging". There are also 3 houses available to house work campers. Henderson Settlement tries to hire local people as much as possible so there is a dorm "housekeeper/maintenance" person who cleans the public/common areas.
- **Meals** – All meals are provided during the work camp at the dining facility. The kitchen staff cooks and cleans up. Work campers need only show up at the appointed times, pick up their meal cafeteria style and when done carry their dirty dishes to the clean up window. The food is good "down home cook'n."
- **After work hour's activities** – Programs are provided most nights to acquaint work campers with the work of The Red Bird Missionary Conference of the United Methodist Church particularly Henderson Settlement as well as the Appalachian Mountain culture.
- **Cost** – The registration fee of \$210/person covers the cost of room and board at Henderson Settlement. The registration fee does not cover any of the construction costs. An additional \$300 contribution is requested (but not required) per volunteer to help defray the cost construction materials.
- **How many volunteers are need each week** – Due to housing constraints the number of volunteers is limited to 12/week.
- **Tools** – The SOWER project as well as Henderson Settlement has a limited tool set available for those without tools. It is better if each work team brings their own (labeled) tools as this insures the tools will be available when they are needed.
- **How are recipients of the house selected** – A committee composed of primarily community people with some Henderson Settlement Staff and Red Bird Missionary Conference staff review the applications submitted and select the most deserving applicants for a running list of approved applicants. The people at the top of the list get houses as churches/groups sign up as sponsors.
- **What does the family provide** – The family must own the land and provide a well and septic system. They must also see that the foundation is erected and the plumbing and electric service is installed and inspected.
- **What size house is constructed** – The houses are 28x28 ft. (784 sq. ft.). They have two bedrooms, a bath room with laundry closet, galley style kitchen, and living area. There is a 8'x 28' front porch and 8'x 8' back porch. The house is provided with a heat pump for heating and cooling.

S.O.W.E.R. 2010 Registration

You are invited to participate in S.O.W.E.R. 2010 by volunteering for one of the work weeks. The work week dates and approximate construction phase are shown below. The registration cost for the week, which covers board and room at Henderson Settlement, is \$210 with \$105 due as a deposit at registration. The remainder of the registration fee will be due three weeks prior to the departure date.

Each of the 6 work weeks can accommodate no more than 12 volunteers with the work teams filled on an individual "first come basis". Please use the "second choice" option on the registration form to facilitate filling all openings in all weeks.

Dates for the work teams to serve at Henderson Settlement

Week	Date	Construction Goals
1	May 16 - 22	Framing/roof truss/roof deck
2	May 23-29	Roofing/siding/interior walls
3	July 11 - 17	Siding/Insulation/wall board/spackle
4	July 18 - 24	Spackling/paint/complete exterior
5	Aug 8 - 14	Flooring/paint/complete interior
6	Aug 15 - 21	Interior doors/trim/kitchen

S.O.W.E.R. 2010 Registration/Materials Donation

WOCUMC account # 10-41230-000-0510

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

Email _____

Work Week Desired _____

Second Choice _____

- \$105 Registration Deposit _____
- Materials Donation of _____

Please return to:

**Ralph Brandon
231 McMillen Dr.
Newark, OH 43055**

Please make check(s) payable to: West Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church - note on memo line the acct # 10-41230-000-0510 and that payment is for Registration Deposit or Materials Donation.