

# Elizabethtown Moose Reaches Out To Flood Victims

When unrelenting September rains washed out Central Pennsylvania roads and unleashed waters that flooded thousands of homes and businesses, members of the Elizabethtown (PA) Moose Family Center 596 and other community volunteers stepped up to lend some helping hands.

A multiple-county flood drive kicked into gear that brought donations of clothing, furniture, appliances, shoes, toys, bedding, electronics and other household items to fill the Lodge's massive ballroom to overflowing.

So great was the response for donations that a large donated tent was put up in the Lodge parking lot to help store the much-needed items.

Drive organizers Cindy Krut and Roxann Kline began the project more than two weeks in advance of the two-day pickup opportunity for flood victims.

"We had more than 200 arrive for the donations in just the first few hours," Krut said. "You saw a lot of volunteers sharing tears with the victims over their losses. Many escaped from their homes with just the clothes on their backs."

Kline, who has many family members who lost everything, drove hundreds of miles to pass out flyers seeking donations and to pick up many of them, and even helped to deliver items for victims.

Donations poured in so abundantly that the organizers and a few volunteers went on just a few hours sleep for nearly a week to check over the items, sort them and display them by category.

"We had great media coverage in Lancaster, Dauphin and York Counties," Krut noted. "But it was the outpouring of compassion by so many that made this so successful for our extended community."

Some Amish volunteers from nearly 40 miles away came to lend a hand with moving furniture and appliances in the labor-intensive project.

One nearby retail store alone donated over \$3,000 worth of new clothing and other items contributed ranged from high chairs, holiday decorations, ironing boards, and even a hospital bed.

Nearby Chickies Rock Moose Lodge 307 donated many goods left over from a recent Women of the Moose yard sale held at their Lodge, and nearby businesses offered their stores to be used as drop-off points for donations. A local UPS store agreed to pick up and deliver those items to the flood drive headquarters.

There were so many donated items provided that the organizers extended the originally planned five-hour pickup opportunity for victims by another four hours on that day and for 12 hours the next day.

Items that were not picked up were distributed to local shelters, church groups and fraternal organizations that were also planning flood relief drives.

"We just did not want to have any leftover items sold," Kline said. "These were donations that came from the heart and they will go to those who were the intended recipients without any charge."

The organizers were appreciative that the Lodge provided use of the ballroom and much of the parking area for the nearly two week flood drive.

"The Moose is a non-profit fraternal organization that supports children at Mooseheart and seniors at Moosehaven," Krut reflected. "But we have those same values of helping those in need in our own community."