



## Orphan Grain Train

### Good Tidings

News *-for and about -*

OGT Maryland

February, 2025

### Volunteer Spotlight

Orphan Grain Train is powered by volunteers and John Runyon is a reason for our success. For the past two and a half years, John has been the head of our "Boxing Team", as he organizes the pickup of boxes from various Chick-fil-A locations. As most of you know, OGT Maryland packs and ships most of our donated items in Chick-fil-A boxes. Our volunteers pick up approximately 1,000 boxes per month from local restaurants. John himself picks up boxes three times a week at the location in Annapolis. He inspects every box that comes in and recycles unusable boxes. He works with the Monday packing team, taping boxes so they can be filled. In addition, John can frequently be seen in the sorting room or the warehouse with a broom or vacuum in his hand. Our facility has never been so clean!

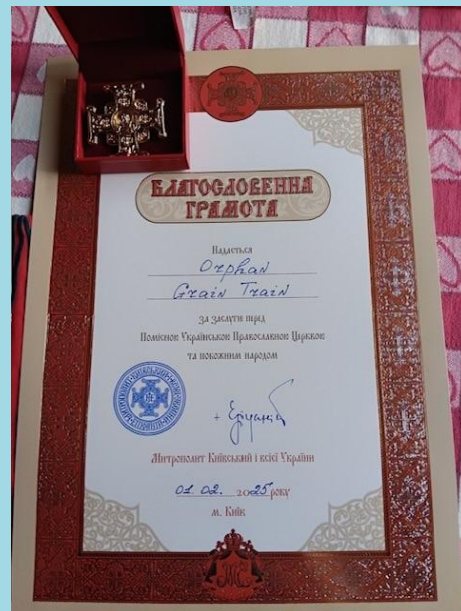


John volunteered for many years with the "Medical Equipment Ministry" at his former church in New Jersey. Upon moving to Maryland, he saw a posting in his community Facebook page about donating medical equipment to OGT. John dropped by to check us out, and as they say .... "The rest is history!" In addition to volunteering at OGT, John is a docent at the Annapolis Maritime Museum in Eastport. He also volunteers with the Cape Conservation Corps, removing damaging vines and other invasive plants and replacing them with native plants in his neighborhood parks in Cape St. Claire. When not volunteering, John and his

wife enjoy hiking, canoeing and attending art exhibits, historic sites, and theater productions around Annapolis.

John says he "loves watching empty boxes come into the warehouse and filled boxes leave the warehouse to be delivered to those in need!" We thank John for the selfless giving of his time and for his dedication to our mission of serving the less fortunate around the world.

## OGT Recognized for Humanitarian Aid to Ukraine



On Sunday, February 9th, Our Branch Manager, Bruce Coonradt, and his wife, Martha, went to St. Andrew Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral in Silver Spring. They attended a 2-hour service conducted by the head of the Ukrainian Church who came to America to visit Ukrainian Orthodox Churches. Dinner and an award ceremony followed the Mass. During the award ceremony



**Above: Bruce receiving the certificate and medallion from the Metropolitan Epiphanius of Kyiv.**

**Below: Rev. Dr. Volodymyr Steliac and his wife, Marta, who hosted the event, with the Metropolitan Epiphanius of Kyiv.**

**Orphan Grain Train Maryland Branch was recognized as a critical partner to the Ukrainian Church's humanitarian efforts. Because of this we were awarded a beautiful certificate and medallion by the head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from Ukraine.**

## **Changes are Coming**

**OGT Maryland will be experiencing some transitions this year. Bruce Coonradt, our Branch Manager for the past 4 years, will be leaving us. Bruce and his wife Martha, plan to move to North Carolina to be near family. A search committee consisting of Bruce, Elfie Eberle and Irene Giguere has been formed. Please let them know of suggestions for people you feel qualified to fill the Branch Manager position. Bruce will be with us at least through May and will be around for a while afterwards to offer help to his successor. We are thankful for all the blessings Bruce has brought to OGT - for his servant heart, his witness of faith, his ideas for structure/organization, and for his never-ending willingness to fill in when tasks needed to be completed (and to do so joyfully). We will miss him, but we know God will use him in special ways and bless him in this new life adventures. Please join us in prayer as we ask God for guidance as we search for and select a new Branch Manager.**

# Helping the Orphans of Ukraine

We are in the process of collecting items to fill a 40-foot container to be sent to the Bible Orphan Ministry in Ukraine where Alla Vasylieva and her team support children in six orphanages. The children's possessions are few and their needs are many. We thank those of you who have already contributed and ask the rest of you to consider supporting our efforts.



In addition to the school supplies and recreational items listed below, we are also collecting the following:

- baby diapers, size 0-6
- baby wipes
- sanitary pads
- toothbrushes for children and adults
- toilet paper
- bars of soap
- dry shampoos

## SCHOOL SUPPLIES

backpacks

pens and pencils

rulers

scissors

glue

paints

notebooks

folders

coloring books

## RECREATIONAL ITEMS

bicycles

scooters (Not powered)

rollerblades

skateboards

balls (all types)

Games (NO READING required)

stickers

Perhaps a group within your church would be interested in collecting some of these items. It would be a great outreach project for your youth group. All items may be dropped off at the warehouse (Monday or Tuesday mornings, 9:00 - noon, Tuesday, 5:00 - 7:00 pm, and the second Saturday of each month, 9:00 - noon). Please mark all donations for Ukraine. Thank you, in advance, for supporting this worthy cause!

## Shipment Cleared and Offloaded in Ghana

In mid-December, two truckloads of donated goods were delivered by OGT volunteers to a warehouse in Clinton, Maryland. From there, the goods were loaded into a container and sent to Accra, Ghana. The shipment was cleared and offloaded on February 6th. Dr. Akwanga expressed his thanks and appreciation ... "To all those at OGT Maryland who have made this possible, the words we carry in our hearts pale in the shadows of gratitude."



## Donated Goods Headed to Cameroon



On January 31st, OGT Maryland Branch loaded a 22,800 pound shipment to Cameroon of clothing, shoes, medical durable equipment, hygiene and school supplies, paraments, and dry food, with a total value of over \$260,000. A shout out goes to the loading team who made this gift to the people of Cameroon a reality. Furthermore, a huge thank-you goes to all those volunteers who tirelessly picked up, boxed, washed, repaired, sorted, packed, and stored all that was shipped. We have now significantly

vacated the warehouse in preparation for the Spring donation season - a strategic goal we set 12 months ago. We ask our God to now fill our warehouse with the plethora of goods needed by the people we serve - in the Name of His Son.

Upon learning of this recent shipment, our Branch received gratitude and blessings from Rev. Frouisou of Cameroon. He wrote:

*"Calvary greetings from Yaoundé in Cameroon, today, and thank you so much for the good news. We pray to the Master of the Mission to bless all our volunteers and generous donors from the OGT, who always work so hard to support the Lord's mission of compassion and love of the most vulnerable among us."*

While it is easy to get so focused on our branch processes and what it takes to keep the warehouse running, we sometimes forget that we are indeed serving as the Hands and Feet of Christ! May this simple note from Rev. Frouisou serve to reconnect us all to what matters most - our service and support to those missions that spread the Gospel to the ends of the Earth!

**AACPS Teachers Visit the Warehouse**



On Friday, February 7th, a group of 16 educators from Anne Arundel County Public Schools visited the warehouse. They wanted to serve in a global capacity and scheduled to volunteer at Orphan Grain Train. We were pleased to have Elfie serve as our speaker. There was a wealth of information, ideas, communication, and enthusiasm during the interaction between the group. It was a very productive gathering and packing session.

## Donation from Chesapeake District of LWML



We recently received a \$6,000 check from the Chesapeake District of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML), payment of the grant that was voted on in late Spring. We are grateful to our Lutheran women for this wonderful gift to our ministry.

Pictured left to right: Edi Collis, Irene Giguere, Christine Maconany (Chesapeake District President), Elfie Eberle (OGT Ambassador), Susan Porter, Nancy Kichak

## Little Things Really DO Add Up!

For years now, OGT Maryland has been saving used printer cartridges and converting them to cash and office merchandise. One might think this small thing wouldn't amount to much, but we have the figures from the past year to prove them wrong! Frank and Maurine Anchondo, who have been running our cartridge program for many years, have reported that in 2024, OGT Maryland has received \$752 in cash from Toner Buyer and \$243. in merchandise from Office Depot for a total of \$995. Who would have thought this possible?



Let's see if we can double that number in 2025! Instead of tossing your used printer cartridges in the trash, drop them off at the warehouse. It will cost you nothing, but a few minutes of your time. Please encourage you family, friends, and co-workers to save their cartridges for us, too!

A huge THANK YOU to Frank and Maurine for continuing to run our cartridge program. Your commitment to supporting our mission in this way is greatly appreciated!

## Restaurant Fundraisers

Last month our fundraiser at Brian Boru's brought in close to \$600. Thanks to all who helped make this fundraiser a success. Please consider supporting our OGT mission by dining out at Carrabba's later this month! It's such an easy way to support a very worthy cause! Hope to see you on the 25th!!



# CARRABBA'S

## ITALIAN GRILL®

Join us at **CARRABBA'S Italian Grill** for a Delicious **FUNDRAISER** to Support

**Orphan Grain Train †**



**Tuesday, February 25 – 11:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.**

**Lunch and/or Dinner, Carry-out or Dine-in**

**8030 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena**

**Clock Tower Court**

**Carrabba's - 410-863-5960**

**A portion of the proceeds will benefit Orphan Grain Train. Please let your server know you're benefiting OGT, and write OGT on your receipt. Questions for OGT? Call 410-544-6167.**

**Looking Ahead .....**

**Pastors' Breakfast**

Our Third Annual Pastors' Breakfast will be held at the warehouse on Thursday, May 1st. In addition to enjoying delicious homemade breakfast foods and baked goods, we are offering Pastors the opportunity to meet other Pastors and share what's going on in their respective churches. A short talk about our OGT Mission and a tour of the facility will be given. Further details will be coming soon.

## ATTENTION .... Thrivent Members

### Thrivent Choice Dollars Expire Soon

**thrivent**<sup>®</sup>

Your Choice Dollars expire on Monday, March 31st. Please consider directing your Choice Dollars to OGT Maryland before they expire. You can designate your Choice Dollars by going online at [www.thriventchoice.com](http://www.thriventchoice.com) or by calling 800-847-4836 and saying "choice dollars" when prompted. You must renew the distribution of your Choice Dollars every year. Your choice from a prior year does not carry over. Thank you for considering OGT Maryland as the recipient of your Choice Dollars this year!

## REFLECTION FOR TODAY



**Winter is naturally quieter, with shorter days and longer nights. This quiet can be a spiritual gift, encouraging us to step back from the noise of daily life. Silence fosters an atmosphere where we can listen to God's voice, which often speaks in whispers. Consider carving out moments of quiet prayer or contemplation during the day. Whether it's in the morning before the rush begins or in the evening as the day winds down, these silent moments can help us draw closer to God.**

## **JOIN US IN PRAYER**

**Please remember our OGT community in your prayers!**

- **Our Volunteers**
- **Our Donors and Supporters**
- **Recipients of our humanitarian aid**

**Continue to pray for our brothers and sisters in Ukraine, Israel and Palestine and for an end to these wars.**



## **USED PRINTER CARTRIDGE PROGRAM**



**Orphan Grain Train accepts your used printer cartridges as part of a recycling program that provides funding for OGT. Please continue to bring your depleted cartridges to the warehouse when you come to volunteer, donate, or visit.**

# **VOLUNTEERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!**

Orphan Grain Train is always looking for new volunteers. Many opportunities, both large and small, are available. For more information, please call 410-417-9674 or stop by the warehouse any Monday or Tuesday morning (9:00 - noon), Tuesday evening (5:00 - 7:00 p.m.), or the second Saturday of each month (9:00 - noon).



**Warehouse Location:**  
621 East-West Blvd.,  
Millersville MD 21108

**Mailing Address:**  
P.O. Box 1741  
Millersville MD 21108

**Branch Manager: Bruce Coonradt**  
Email: [bkcoonradt515@aol.com](mailto:bkcoonradt515@aol.com)  
Call us at: 410-417-9674

[Visit our website](#)

[Donate to Orphan Grain Train](#)



**Contact us for details on our  
Medical Walk Out Program  
including donations and availability.  
410-417-9674**



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