



# January Volunteer Ministries

## Volunteer Opportunities Abound

The scarlet tanager and his olive-draped mate fearlessly sit outside our window. It is a pretty picture and blesses us always after the rough weather this area had in 2011. Just 45 minutes north of us, Joplin, Missouri, was hit hard by an EF5 tornado. That Sunday night, all we got in Bella Vista, Arkansas, were two huge hail storms, and about 10 inches of rain in three—too much for our hills and hollers—and flooding was big-time here! Still that was nothing to compare with Joplin and the sadness there.

On that fateful night, we were in our church packing Crisis Care Kits, filling banana boxes, all ready to send on to needs overseas...or so we thought. We had just finished working and had eaten some wonderful tacos when word arrived of the tornado and total destruction of about 1/3 of Joplin.

The Global Ministry Center was contacted, and approval was given to our church to take those kits to the Big Need in Joplin. The Crisis Care Kits were on their way quickly and happily received.\*

The area Nazarenes met—more than 800 of them—with hands and hearts to do whatever was needed. They took their own lunches, plus water and gas as those were not available nearby. They took chain saws and distributed even more Crisis Care Kits.

The restoration committee worked at Ground Zero, they said. While we don't know the full stories, we are sure God helped them. A pastor wrote that it was a work time, but was a "sobbing time" too.

This spontaneous "Work & Witness" event is only a part of what our churches do, isn't it? We have a couple in our church who serve with ROAM (RVs on a Mission), a Nazarene Lay Ministry. They helped upgrade campgrounds in neighboring states that summer. To learn more about ROAM, visit their Web site: [www.rvsonamission.org](http://www.rvsonamission.org).

Also in 2011, the North Arkansas District went to island of St. Lucia, returning with good reports of working on churches and with the people there. Work & Witness is one of the best ideas in the whole church, and we have seen it from both sides. Yes, it does work.

Makes us think of a time in Papua New Guinea (PNG) when Bob came upon his workmen in the maintenance yard on a Saturday. He reminded them that they did not have to work on that day.

"You don't understand," they said, "We are the Kudjip Nazarene Hospital Work & Witness Team," and pointed to their yellow shirts with words home-screen-printed on the fronts. "We have built three churches around here, and we are going to do the next one now."

All this without any "white skin" (to use a PNG term) knowing or directing, Bob noted, mentally awed.

"We have seen how teams come here to PNG to work," they said, "and now we want to have our own, too."

What could he say, but, "Go with all of our blessing." God leads, and Nazarenes follow very well! I read that the Swaziland churches are becoming partners with others, participating in Work & Witness in their country and the area. It just grows and grows, this plan to work and help others as you witness.

I remember how one young man in PNG must have not quite heard the correct way Work & Witness was pronounced. He kept calling it "Working Witness." Hmm...it seems he might have actually caught the better interpretation, don't you think? Seems that if we make it truly "Working Witness" it will do what the designers of the program intended.

Bob and Bessie Black  
Retired Missionaries

\* Note: In similar situations, follow this church's actions and **always** contact the Global Ministry Center for direction when you want to ship something. Whether domestic or international, there are always instructions that need to be followed.

