

2004 - The Mustard Seed News Archive

31 December 2004 - Along with the rest of the world, we are grieving for those lost in the wake of the Asian tsunami.

We encourage those of you who stumbled on this website while searching for ways to donate clothing, to instead give money towards the relief effort. It is more efficient for the relief agencies to purchase supplies within the affected countries themselves, which will also help their economies recover.

We would like to recognize the generosity of Adam D., Norman B., Marcie H., Danielle T. and John H. who shared their holiday spirit with the Mustard Seed over the Christmas weekend with PayPal donations.

24 December 2004 - All of us at the Mustard Seed would like to wish you and your family a safe and joyful holiday season. With your help, more than 300 families in need (many of them were victims of this year's hurricanes) and over 1200 Central Florida children will be celebrating with toys and gifts from our Holiday Gift program.

Many, many thanks to those of you who opened your hearts to the Mustard Seed families through our new website PayPal connection. Carol Kane usually sends thank you letters but since PayPal donors are relatively anonymous (no contact info required), we'd like to thank them here.

We would like to recognize the generosity of Mary D., SDM, Michael Z., John G., Ian S., Karin C., Susan T., Stacy B., Gregory M., Tom W., and Glendon S.

10 December 2004 - The Mustard Seed has made its list and is checking against it twice, as the staff and volunteers spend the next week feverishly packing toys for families who signed up for the Christmas Toys program.

When all is done, we expect to have made the holidays happier for over 300 families and 1200 children. Many thanks to those companies and individuals who are helping out by adopting a family!

We are still awaiting written confirmation from the city of Orlando (they gave verbal approval on the phone) before starting to accept entry fees for the benefit **Texas Hold'Em Poker Tournament**. Keep an eye on this website ... if it comes through before Christmas, this would be an exciting present for the poker fanatic on your gift list!

7 December 2004 - REAL Radio's Monsters in the Morning had posted some photos of "**Savannah Stranded for the Mustard Seed**". You know she's got a generous (and brave!) heart to be waaaay up there for so long!

4 December 2004 - **Savannah** from REAL Radio's Monsters in the Morning promised to stay 60 ft in the air above I-4 in the Club Paris parking lot on Friday, to raise \$25,000 for the Mustard Seed. She braved the morning chill and came back down to earth at 12:45 with \$25,200 !! This will ensure that the kids to have a good Christmas, especially this year when so many of them lost all their toys in the hurricanes. Thanks, Savannah!

November 2004



Thanks to [Fairfield Resorts](#) who presented the Mustard Seed with a generous donation of \$10,000 at the Grand Opening of their new, beautiful [Bonnet Creek Resort](#) in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

Founder Carol Kane is shown here with Mustard Seed staffers Kim and Angel holding the ceremonial check.

26 November 2004 - With the help of our community partners such as **Real Radio 104.1**, The Mustard Seed is gearing up for the Children's Christmas Toys program. We are shopping for new toys and gifts and processing applications (which must be submitted in person and will be accepted until December 10th or until we have 1500 children signed up, whichever comes first). Parents will be able to pick up their gifts and use our supplies to wrap them on December 17-19.

The 8th Annual **A REAL Radio Christmas Story** to benefit The Mustard Seed, will be presented December 12, 2004 at Hard Rock Live at Universal City Walk.

The first **A Chip and a Chair Texas Hold'Em Poker Tournament** to benefit the Mustard Seed is a go! Once we receive a copy of the approval from the city, we will publish the dates and location and start accepting entry fees.


Come back and check this website for more information in the next few weeks. For those Texas Hold'Em fanatics who can't wait and want to ensure that they get one of the 250 tournament seats, call Kim at (407) 875-2040, ext 13, to pre-reserve your spot.



A Chip and a Chair (and a prayer) is said to be all that a Texas Hold'Em player needs to keep going. The Mustard Seed usually provides chairs to the homeless and disaster victims in Central Florida, but in January 2005, we'll put up a chair for your chip.

Participation is limited to 250 players. Fifty players will compete on 5 nights, with the 10 highest finishers from each night meeting for the finals in a chance to win a seat at a **World Poker Tour** event at the Reno Hilton.

16 November 2004

 has had to cancel the November 17th fundraiser due to delays in opening their new restaurant. They have instead given a generous donation to the

Mustard Seed and promised a fundraiser at a future date. Sorry for the late notice!

9 November 2004

The **UCF Cornerstone Volunteers** are holding a carwash to benefit the Mustard Seed on **Saturday, November 13th**, at the 7-11 at 4000 W. Lake Mary Blvd, (at Rinehart Road). They will shine up your vehicle for a donation to a very worthy cause.

Chipotle has set the date for the Grand Opening of their newest restaurant at 400 W. SR436 in Altamonte Springs (just west of I-4). On **Wednesday, November, 17th**. Chipotle is dedicating their Grand Opening to the Mustard Seed, collecting towels and other linens for our depleted supplies, and giving us **100%** of what they take in on that day! Come join us for a meal and bring in some linens. It's a painless and delicious way to give to the Mustard Seed.

6 November 2004 - The Mustard Seed is getting ready for this year's **Christmas Toys** program that will provide holiday gifts for the first 1500 children signed up between November 15th and December 10th. Gifts for older children are always in short supply and donations of new items for teenagers will be especially appreciated.

The **UCF Cornerstone Volunteers** are holding carwashes to benefit the Mustard Seed on Saturday, November 6th and Saturday, November 13th, at the 7-11 at 4000 W. Lake Mary Blvd, (at Rinehart Road). They will shine up your vehicle for a donation to a very worthy cause.

Chipotle is dedicating the Grand Opening of their new Altamonte Springs restaurant (on 436 west of I-4) to the Mustard Seed and giving us **100%** of what they take in on that day! The Grand Opening will be sometime in November ... when we find out the exact date we will post it here.

A Chip and a Chair is said to be all that a Texas Hold 'em fanatic needs to keep going. The Mustard Seed usually provides chairs to those in need in Central Florida, but in January 2005, we'll put up a chair for your chip in an exciting chance to win a seat at a **World Poker Tour** event. Participation is limited to 250 players.

22 October 2004 - As anticipated, the Hurricane Disaster Relief referrals are keeping the Mustard Seed very busy. We have seen 140 families in need of hurricane-related furniture assistance and over half of them have already picked up their furniture.

There has also been an unexpected surge in the numbers of non-disaster clients coming in for furniture and clothing. Our **Photo Gallery** has been expanded to include some of these other families as well as pictures from the Clothing Bank.



The **UCF Cornerstone Volunteers** are holding a carwash to benefit the Mustard Seed on Saturday, October 30th at the 7-11 at 4000 W. Lake Mary Blvd, (at Rinehart Road). They will shine up your vehicle for a donation to a very worthy cause.

Additional carwashes will be held at the same location on November 6th and 13th.

8 October 2004 - We are desperately low on towels and washcloths. Dressers are also a scarce commodity.

The Mustard Seed spends over \$300 per client family to provide them with furniture and household goods. We collect only a minimal \$35 processing fee.

To date, we have seen over 90 families in need of hurricane-related assistance, with more coming in each day. This equates to more than \$27,000 beyond our typical expenses that must come out of the Mustard Seed's limited operational budget, over just the last 6 weeks.

We have gladly taken on part of the burden of helping storm victims from the American Red Cross and FEMA, but without the benefit of additional government funding. Total contributions are down as higher profile storm-related agencies receive a bigger share of charity dollars.

Please remember The Mustard Seed when you are opening your hearts and checkbooks to help those who may not have been as lucky as you were this hurricane season.



1 October 2004 - Hurricane Jeanne ripped a piece off the Mustard Seed's aluminum awning and left us with several roof leaks in the warehouse.

Like the rest of Florida, we are waiting our turn for insurance adjusters and roofers. We count ourselves lucky to only have that minor roof damage, the inconvenience of prolonged power outages, plus a few trees down from Charley.

Our furniture donations have increased as others who came through safely try to help those who did not fare as well in the storm. Again we ask you to bear with us as we cannot pick up big donated items for several weeks while our truck is busy with furniture from hotel remodels.

We apologize if you have had problems reaching us by phone. Our phone system has been out for days at a time during the power outages.

Thank you to the employees of the Orlando office of **Hewitt Associates, LLC** who have selected the Mustard Seed as their local charity this year. On September 29th, the Hewitt Associates Foundation presented the Mustard Seed with a \$10,000 grant. This generous gift is especially appreciated now with the increase in families seeking aid after the hurricanes.

Thanks also to **Doubletree Hotel** who has offered to give us queen sized beds, lamps, and other furniture items.

25 September 2004 - Hurricane Jeanne is headed our way. Please be safe, heed all evacuation notices and stay indoors until local officials give an all clear.



On Wednesday, a truckload of mattresses from **Disney Cruise Lines** arrived at the warehouse.

Savannah and Black Bean of 104.1



Real Radio's **Monsters of the Morning** were among the volunteers who helped us to unload them.

17 September 2004 - While we are grateful to be spared the wrath of Hurricane Ivan, our thoughts are with our fellow Floridians in the Panhandle who were affected by the storm.

Thanks to the **Sheraton Safari Hotel** for a truckload of bedspreads and to the **Embassy Suites** for 250 sofas!

Picking these up is keeping our truck very busy so we apologize for not being able to schedule individual pickups for large furniture items in the near future. But we'd really appreciate donations brought to our warehouse, especially to fill our most urgent need for lamps, towels and twin-sized sheets. A reminder: please do not give us any water-damaged furniture as we must pay dump fees and waste our limited truck resources to throw them out.

11 September 2004 - Power was restored on Thursday afternoon and we are seeing a steady increase in hurricane victims coming to the Mustard Seed for help.

Hurricane families need everything! Beds and clothing are the most important to them. We have plenty of clothing but linens are running low. If you have bought new sheets recently, please give us your old ones. Flat twin sheets are especially appreciated since these cruise line mattresses are non-standard long twins.

Thanks to **Disney Cruise Lines** and **Sealy Corporation** we have beds for now, but those will go fast, as will sofas and chairs. Keep those donations coming but understand we have limited resources to pick them up. Please do not give us any water-damaged furniture as we must pay dump fees to throw them out.

8 September 2004 - The Mustard Seed was still without power today after **Hurricane Frances**. But we continue in the dark and heat using pen and paper instead of computers to organize our relief effort.

The Sealy Corporation has donated 500 brand new mattresses. They don't come with box springs, but will still be greatly appreciated by Floridians who lost their beds to rain or flood damage.

Our biggest challenge (besides no power!) is financial. Unlike other organizations, we distribute all usable donations to our Mustard Seed families and do not use a Thrift Shop to sell donated items to the public to raise money. However we still have operating expenses that must be paid and we must find funds to buy additional items for distribution (bed frames for the donated mattresses for example). The Mustard Seed depends upon the generosity of the community for cash donations to meet these financial needs.

Please remember The Mustard Seed when you are opening your hearts and checkbooks to help those who may not have been as lucky as you were this hurricane season.

27 August 2004 - Many thanks to donors who have stepped up to the plate in the wake of **Hurricane Charley**.

Disney Cruise Lines is providing 500 single mattresses. These do not come with box

springs since cruise ships do not use them, but Carol Kane has worked her magic again ... she contacted a bed frame manufacturer who talked to his steel supplier and negotiated a shipment at \$9 per frame! This will be paid from the Mustard Seed's Disaster Fund, which desperately needs additional cash because there is still a need to purchase slats or plywood bottoms to support the mattresses in the frames.

Holiday Inn and the **Red Horse Inn** have donated furniture.

In addition to **American Red Cross** disaster referrals, **FEMA** has started referring hurricane victims to The Mustard Seed. As people repair their homes or find new places to live over the next few weeks, a huge increase in furniture and clothing distribution is expected. The Mustard Seed is gearing up for this, but is still short of many basic furniture and household items.

Due to mechanical problems, we are currently down to only one truck whose top priority is to pickup big donations from the hotels. Please bear with us if we are unable to schedule your individual donor pickup for a few weeks.