



2004 Annual Report



**Create A Better Tomorrow
Make A Difference Today**

Our Mission: *Encouraging families and individuals living in rural poverty in America to become self-sufficient and overcome the cycle of poverty by offering them friendship, education, and material aid.*



Dear Friends of The Box Project,

The Box Project is proud to present our 2004 Annual Report for your review. It was a year of great change, new beginnings, and significant accomplishments. We welcomed an experienced new Executive director, moved to Florida, and established new offices, new resources and new friends.

We're happy to report that the changes we implemented in 2004 have been successful. We have lowered our overhead costs significantly, without compromising services and programs, and we have made new friends while also strengthening bonds with our long time supporters. Our relationships with referring agencies are being clarified and solidified and we'll continue to build on those partnerships in the future.

This report contains a brief description of our programs and a brief summary of our financial condition. For a complete copy of our 2004 audit, and for a more comprehensive description of programs and services visit us online at www.boxproject.org.

During 2004, the Family Match Program matched 578 families (289 sponsor and 289 recipient families matched). Of those 289 matches, 168 of them were new sponsors getting their first match, the rest were existing sponsors taking on a second match family or a new match. Remarkably, in the first 6 months of 2005 we have already matched 374 families (187 new sponsors and 187 recipient families), so we expect to nearly double our 2004 success! A good beginning indeed.

In our 2004 winter Holiday Match Program, we made 187 matches. This program offers an opportunity to get involved without requiring a long-term commitment, and often appeals to busy families looking for an opportunity to share their lives and teach their children the value of giving.

The value of these matching programs, along with our educational programs is demonstrated in the stories we hear from sponsors and recipients. We've selected a few to share with you on the next page.

In an effort to create broader appeal, the Board of Directors established a committee to evaluate existing programs and make recommendations for improvement. The ultimate goal is to offer diverse programs that attract supporters from all walks of life and provide ways for them to help others in a way that fits their own lifestyle and giving preferences. Over time, this committee will make recommendations to develop new programs or to make improvements to existing programs taking our values and goals into consideration.

We wish to extend sincere thanks to our donors, sponsors, members and referring agencies for your steadfast support of the programs and services of The Box Project. We are energized by the success of the past year and we hope to count you among our friends for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Cindy Shearer

2003 President, Board of Directors

Stories From The Box Project

I want to tell you about a wonderful relationship that I've enjoyed with our sister family for the past 27 years. When I first wrote Annie Mae, I enclosed a check-off list so she could check off the items she needed so I'd know what to send. To my surprise, the list came back with every item checked. I couldn't imagine that there was a family anywhere who needed pots and pans, silverware, dishes, sheets, towels, and a multitude of other items; even shoes and socks and clothes for the children, of which there were four. Little by little I began sending items. I don't know what kind of an effect they had on the family and I'm not sure I always sent the right sizes or colors but I know one thing. The boxes I sent were filled with love and I know that love was received on the other end.

Annie Mae is one of the most beautiful people in the world. I never had the privilege of meeting her face to face but I still felt loved by her. She met an unfortunate death a few years ago that deeply saddened me. I still think of her often and wonder how her family is. After Annie Mae's death, I communicated with her mother, Gertrude, another very beautiful person. She'd always end her letters with "And may God bless us all."

A few weeks ago a letter came from Gertrude's family. I inside was a letter from her granddaughter saying she had gone to be with the Lord. That letter brought tears to my eyes and I thought about how important The Box Project has been to me over the years. It's brought much happiness and is certainly a beacon of light in a broken and hurting world.

Phyllis H, New York.

My life changed when I was matched with my dear friend Annie and her family over 35 years ago. At that time, I lived in an apartment in the Bronx and Annie lived in a shack in Mississippi with her 4 children and her parents.

For a time, I could no longer send boxes, but Annie stuck by me, with comforting and sage advice. In time my life got better. Annie's mother passed on and Annie's grandchildren lived with her and helped her, as did her children.

I don't even remember what things I sent to Annie over the years, but she tells me it meant a lot to her family. I have saved Annie's letters, some from as long ago as the '70s. Now and then I re-read them and recall that time. Perhaps we have been good for each other--each there when the other needed someone.

On my birthday, I received a beautiful sculpture in the African tradition. The tag reads, "She is a wise woman with a gentle countenance... gives thanks to the lord and offers him the very best of all she has". It was from one of Annie's daughters. The card just said "thanks for all the help you have given to my family".

A 35-year relationship. It has been a gift to me to have Annie in my life. Who can say who got the most out of it? I say me.

Barbara S., New Jersey

The Box Project has been a true blessing for the residents here at Spring Rock Park, a senior housing project located in the small rural town of Leeds, Maine. The supplies they receive through the thoughtfulness and generosity of their sponsor, Beta Sigma Phi Sorority, are greatly appreciated and much needed.

The help this group provides more often than not has prevented residents from having to go without certain necessary items for the month that they would otherwise not have been able to afford.

The caring group sponsoring Spring Rock Park went above and beyond this holiday season surprising each resident with a Christmas stocking with their name printed on it. Everyone had such fun with his or her treasures. One resident exclaimed, "I haven't had a Christmas Stocking in more than fifty years!" It was a joy to see.

We thank those who have been so caring and giving toward our community. It's a tough time for low-income seniors. One senior program after another is experiencing cuts making it very difficult to secure services for a segment of the population that needs services the most.

The Box Project has given us an opportunity to stretch our dollars and make ends meet. Beta Sigma Phi brings joy into the lives of people who might not experience much otherwise. You can see it on their faces! Thank you so much."

**Deneige Blaisdell
Resident Service Coordinator
Spring Rock Park**

Photos



**Family Match Program
Granddaughter from Mississippi
with Board Member**



**Staff Member and Executive
Director with Family Match
Member in Maine**



**Center Match Program
Spring Rock Park Residents from Leeds, Maine**

About The Box Project

The Box Project® matches caring individuals and families with those in need; encouraging communication, guidance and giving; and teaching the fundamentals of self-sufficiency. Whether Sponsorship comes from an individual, family, school, or business, one Sponsor can make a difference in the lives of others. While our Sponsors are located around the United States, our recipients are primarily located in areas of rural poverty, including Mississippi, Maine, Appalachia (including West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky), and the Native American reservations of South Dakota.

The Box Project, Inc. is a national, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Founded in 1962, The Box Project has been working to help people living in America's worst areas of rural poverty. We seek to ease the effects of poverty and increase mutual understanding through direct, people-to-people assistance. Through our first and most successful program, Family Match, we match volunteer Sponsors with individuals and families living in rural poverty in America. Sponsors develop long-term friendships, providing encouragement, advice, and boxes of needed supplies on a monthly basis. They communicate and send letters and boxes directly to the families they are matched with, thus eliminating the need for an intermediary and enhancing the one-to-one experience. As the families come to know each other, trust and friendships grow—providing a positive and valuable experience for both the recipient and the sponsor.

With the success of the Family Match program, we have expanded our programs to include additional sponsor opportunities. Other ways to help include becoming a Holiday Sponsor, a match only through the winter holidays and Community Center Match, which matches a sponsor or sponsor group (such as a church group or employee group) with a rural community center.

Other programs funded through donations include our Emergency Fund, providing emergency assistance to rural members of our programs, a School Supplies Fund and an Education Fund, providing financial assistance to encourage students to pursue higher education as a means to break the cycle of poverty.

Education is a core foundation of The Box Project mission. We firmly believe that education is the key to increasing self-sufficiency and breaking the cycle of poverty. Our steadfast commitment is to continue working to remove the barriers to education and make a significant impact on the areas of rural poverty that we serve.

The Box Project staff, referring agencies, and even online member communities assist members in all programs, providing support, information, ideas, and professional administrative services all along the way.

We rely on generous contributions, grants, and membership fees to support our programs. While one person may not be able to change the world, one person can change a life, right here in our own country. We welcome you to become a sponsor in support of one of our match programs, or by donating funds to support our activities, provide for emergency needs, or offer educational opportunities.

For current news and in depth information about our programs and services, or more creative ideas of ways that you can help, please visit us online at www.boxproject.org.

The Box Project Board of Directors

Year Ending 2004

Officers

President: Cindy Shearer, Bozeman, MT
Vice President: Sue Taylor, Sherman Oaks, CA
Secretary: Eva Scholfield, Toms River, NJ
Treasurer: Anne Blake, Detroit, MI

Members At Large

Ruby Blackmon, New Britain, CT
Annette Burns, Phoenix, AZ
Bernadette Henderson, Lacey, WA
Mohammed Hoque, Itta Bena, MS
Megan Hunter, Mesa, AZ
Adell Moore, Augusta, GA
Joyce Pepin, Ormond Beach, FL
Pat Schneider, Ridgefield, CT
Raymond Uses The Knife, Eagle Butte, SD
Sharon Workman, Buckfield, ME

THE BOX PROJECT, INC.
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
For the year ended December 31, 2004

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>SUPPORT AND REVENUE</u>			
Support:			
Contributions	\$ 89,392	\$ -	\$ 89,392
Membership dues	64,399	-	64,399
Direct aid fee	3,120	-	3,120
Total Support	<u>156,911</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>156,911</u>
Revenue:			
Other income	18	-	18
Interest income	222	50	272
Total Revenue	<u>240</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>290</u>
Total Public Support and Revenue before Net Assets Released from Restriction	<u>157,151</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>157,201</u>
Net Assets Released From Restrictions:			
Restrictions satisfied by payments	<u>2,535</u>	<u>(2,535)</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	<u>159,686</u>	<u>(2,485)</u>	<u>157,201</u>
<u>EXPENSES</u>			
Program Services:			
Family match	115,272	-	115,272
Class match	3,075	-	3,075
Educational awards	3,075	-	3,075
Total program services	<u>121,422</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>121,422</u>
Supporting Services:			
Management and general	<u>32,275</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>32,275</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>153,697</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>153,697</u>
Change in net assets	5,989	(2,485)	3,504
Net assets, beginning of year	<u>163,910</u>	<u>21,956</u>	<u>185,866</u>
Net assets, end of year	<u>\$ 169,899</u>	<u>\$ 19,471</u>	<u>\$ 189,370</u>

The accompanying Independent Auditors' Report and notes
should be read with these financial statements.