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Top Stories

Once more with love, to Republic of Georgia

By Pat Hambrick
Tuesday, March 1, 2005 12:05 AM CST

Contributing writer

The Daily Citizen

The containers from the State Department didn't arrive as scheduled last weekend when the weather was warm, but they were dropped on Thursday morning and Pastor John Kachelman was on hand to oversee the loading of what is scheduled to be this year's last shipment of humanitarian aid to the Republic of Georgia from the Judsonia Church of Christ.



Harold Bridges of Judsonia Thursday uses a forklift to load one of six wooden crates of miscellaneous medical supplies to be shipped to the Republic of Georgia. (Pat Hambrick)

"We had all kinds of help lined up for last weekend, but it's working out okay. It always does," Kachelman said.

Kachelman is the national coordinator for the shipment of humanitarian aid to places such as the Republic of Georgia, Ukraine, and other parts of the former Soviet Republic, as well as victims of December's tsunami in the Far East.

He is also the minister of the Judsonia church..

"The folks in Washington were really nice about the mix-up," Kachelman said, explaining that they called three or four time apologizing for the delay.

Frances and Gene Donnell, Harold Bridges, and Jennifer and John Kachelman, all of Judsonia, along with L. J. Scoggins of Searcy, Ruth Lacey of Kensett, and three trustees from the White County Detention Center all wore heavy coats as they loaded the first of two 40-foot containers.

Did you make any New Year's resolutions this year?

Yes, I make them every year, and I'm usually pretty good at keeping them.

Yes, I make them every year, but I'm not very good at keeping them.

Yes, this is my first year to make resolutions.

Yes (other)

No, I don't make resolutions because I can't keep them.

No, I don't make resolutions because I don't believe in that sort of thing.

No, I didn't make any resolutions because I couldn't think of anything to resolve to do.

No (other)

Kachelman said he thought they would be able to finish loading both containers on Thursday.

Though this is the last load currently scheduled, Kachelman said he didn't think everything they had in the warehouse would fit into these two containers.

In addition, Harding University plans to donate used dorm furniture in the spring. Kachelman said he would need to get approval from the State Department to ship another load.

"There is enough need over there that they are willing to do what they can," he said. "There may be budget constraints if the government is going to fund the shipment."

However, Kachelman thinks a way will be found to get the remaining goods shipped. Loading the last shipment does not mean that Kachelman and his congregation at the Judsonia Church of Christ will be idle the remainder of the year.

"We've been approved to ship 15 containers to the Ukraine in 2005. We already have the collection sites lined up."

He expects one to three containers to be loaded out of this area. Other collection sites include Phoenix, Ariz.; Tallahassee, Fla.; Memphis, Tenn.; Florence, Ala.; and Elizabethtown, Ky.. Judsonia will coordinate the collections and shipping at all of the sites.

A donor has said they will have 6,000 used hospital beds to donate to that shipment, and some of those will probably be loaded out of Judsonia, he said.

"That really will occupy the year unless another tsunami hits," Kachelman said.

Just this past week a 48-foot Federal Express truck picked up personal hygiene kits collected for tsunami victims in Sri Lanka. Some have already been shipped, also coordinated by Kachelman.

"Initially they asked if we could provide 350 kits, then they challenged us to provide 700." A total of 1,001 kits were loaded from various collection points.

Kachelman has also been contacted about possibly coordinating shipments later this year to the Sudan and perhaps Somali, though those potential shipments have not yet been confirmed.

Because they need such large numbers of items, donations are usually taken from institutions rather than individuals. However, Kachelman said there are items that individuals can donate for the shipment to the Ukraine, such as wheelchairs, crutches, shower seats and bedside commodes.

Kachelman explained that things are very different in places like the Ukraine.

"There is no handicapped access. There are usually stairs, not elevators, and there is a great need for items to help individuals."

He told of a 25-year-old diabetic who had a leg amputated. She lived on the fifth floor.

"We took her a wheelchair last year," Kachelman said. "It was the first time she had been able to go outside in five years."

He said a former resident of the Ukraine now living in Washington wants to put together a project to help the disabled in the Ukraine. He is trying to find a city in the United States that has a center for disabled persons. He would like to set up sister cities in the U.S. with cities in the Ukraine, with the focus on humanitarian aid for the disabled rather than with an economic or social focus.

Anyone wanting more information about any of these projects or to donate requested items may call Kachelman's cell at (901) 626-4538.

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Index	Last Trade	Change
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DOW	10766.23	-75.37 ↓
AMEX	1509.44	-7.04 ↓
Russ 2000	634.06	-3.47 ↓
SP 500	1203.60	-7.77 ↓
NYSE	7321.23	-40.66 ↓
DOW Util	352.89	-3.17 ↓

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