

## Life Group Creates 24-7 Station

By Pauline Garthwaite for the Aileen Glass Life Group

After 24-7 Live, came this confession from a Central Life Group Member:

“Our Life Group leader likes us to get our hands dirty and to volunteer for an activity once a month,” she wrote. “I have to admit, on previous occasions, I have raised my eyebrows and said, ‘You want us to do what?’ (I do like to stay within my comfort zone.)

“But, on this occasion, I was ‘in’ wholeheartedly. Our activity for September and October was to participate as a group to take on one of the stations for the 24-7 Live Prayer Room.”

The group’s station was the story of Elisha and the widow whose dire need was miraculously met by olive oil from God that did not run out until all the jars she had borrowed from her neighbors had been filled (2 Kings 4:1-7).

At their first planning meeting, they chose who from the group would meet with the entire 24/7 team to plan how this station would coordinate with the other eight stations in the Prayer Room. The Life Group members also started shaping the parameters and the atmosphere to be created in their station.

“We next met to delegate (sorry, I meant volunteer) who was to do what,” Pauline wrote.

“As we met over the last several weeks before the Prayer Room was to open, I came to understand that God had built us into an amazingly talented group with skills that covered every base. We had several who worked directly with the overall 24-7 Team.

“Another member drew up a timeline chart working backwards from the date of assembling and the Prayer Room’s opening. That timeline helped all of us know the ‘drop dead’ dates for what we had to do, including a list of everyone’s duties, because, as we all know, keeping Life Groups in order can be somewhat like herding cats (however, I digress).

“Another few of us took on the task of printing, cutting out, and assembling all the Bible verses to be displayed in our station. Getting that job done created a rather riotous evening, by all accounts, filled with much laughter!

“One of the men built a lovely little bench for visitors at the widow’s ‘home,’ so they could comfortably sit and pray there. Now that we have discovered his carpentry skills, he will be kept busy for quite some time! He also built the little oven which I dictated (suggested) would be part of the kind of house the lady would have in this era of history.

“My role had been to find out the background/history of the story. I love doing that kind of thing,

because it really brings the Bible alive for me. (Some in the group said it did something for them too, in that I was a fairly hard taskmaster, but, I beg to differ.) I was also to arrange the pots and jars the widow had borrowed from her neighbors just so when we set up the booth.

"Another one of our members found the cloth (shower curtains) to make the wooden door leading into the booth. Her painting job was very life-like (can a door be lifelike?) and professional.

"We all became the widow's neighbors and were given the task of assembling the pots and jars of various sizes and shapes that God would use for her miracle. We all searched for a mannequin to dress to use as the widow herself pouring the oil, but the mannequin never did materialize. God had other plans.

"We were getting rather close to the assembly date and still no mannequin, or none that cost less than a few hundred dollars over our given budget, when someone happened upon a garden furniture store and saw a fabulous fountain consisting of a lady bending over with a jar in her hands pouring out water (or oil in our case). While talking to the salesperson, explaining what we needed it for, it was discovered the store's owners also attend Central and would loan the fountain for the duration of 24-7. Is God good or what?!

"With this last thing settled, we had a trial run at one of our Life Group meetings. In a member's backyard we used lengths of plastic representing each element to go into the station so we could visualize and arrange it all before we actually would assemble it.

"As a group, we all met at Central's Chapel in Mesa at 8 a.m. that Saturday – the first day of 24-7 Live -- a tad early for some, but good sports that they all are, they did not complain too much. We found we had been short-changed by two feet in our station space, but with much laughter and helpful hints from all, including people who weren't actually part of our group, everything fell into place, including the fountain lady pouring the 'oil,' a twinkling, very realistic looking fire in the fireplace (provided by a twig/leaf concoction with a wavering light bulb), and the pots and jars all around, very professionally arranged, although I do say so myself.

"Our hope is that whoever went into this station felt the love and gratitude with which it was assembled and that the story of God's abundant provision was made manifest in people's lives.

"As a life group, we were blessed by working on this project. We would recommend it as a wonderful activity for bonding of the group, studying and living out God's Word, and 'doing life together.'"

(P.S. The Prayer Newsletter's only regret is that you can't hear Pauline's delightful English accent as she tells this 24-7 story Live.)