

## **Nova as a Furniture Robin Hood**      Jerry Barrett   July 6, 2015

Since Nova is getting old, as are many of those members from Nova's first 20 years, I thought it would be good to recall some of our early activities. A few months ago, I wrote something about the Dun Lorry Christmas sale. Here are recollections of the ACCA furniture warehouse. Please add your name to the list below of volunteers and provide any recollections of your furniture experience. What other past activities deserve a write up?

When Nova was young and new, we joined an outreach ministry of the Annandale Christian Community for Action (ACCA), which involved gathering donated used furniture and delivering it to needy families. Nova members, with members from other churches, volunteered at the ACCA warehouse at 6935 Columbia Pike in Annandale. The warehouse was an old white wooden church belonging to the Annandale United Methodist Church, which had a historical marker noting it was constructed soon after the civil war to replace an earlier church burned down during the war.

On Saturdays from 8:00AM until noon, or until the work was done, Nova volunteers worked in the warehouse, delivered and picked up furniture. The warehouse leaders sorted the requests for furniture and the offers of donated furniture before dispatching volunteers to muscle and haul furniture. Volunteers with teenage sons often showed up with disgruntled, half asleep, sans breakfast off springs.

Few Nova members had pickup trucks in those days, so often we rented a larger truck for half a day. Ted Miller share this truck experience:

I helped to haul some furniture for ACCA from time to time. I remember especially an icy Saturday in February that really should be recorded for posterity.

Clyde had rented a truck, a pretty big one, which we loaded up, then set out on our deliveries. Oops, forgot the list of stops, so we had to make a U-turn on Columbia Pike. Spotted a Baptist church with a parking lot and Clyde turned in there to make the circle. As we looped around the back of the church, we were about to pass under a portico that spanned the driveway. "Stop!" we cried in unison. But it was too late. The truck had wedged itself firmly under the portico, its top peeled back like a half-opened sardine can. Clyde tried to back out; no go, just a lot of wheel spinning on the icy pavement. Then we remembered the story about the truck stuck under an overpass. The driver, a clever fellow, got unstuck by letting just enough air out of his tires to lower the height of the truck, which allowed him to drive on through. So we let a little air out of the tires. No go. We let a little more out. Still no go. We released a little more. Clyde cautiously pressed the accelerator and the wheels spun, flinging the partially deflated tires off their rims, accompanied by great sounds of flubbering and screeching. Settled now on its steel wheels, the truck was low enough to permit us to back out of our predicament.

We dismounted to inspect the damage. Clearly, this truck was going nowhere else that day. In addition, the church's portico displayed a definite list toward the side that had been occupied by the truck. I turned to Clyde to ask the inevitable question: "Did you get the extra insurance on this rental?"

The answer, mercifully, was "Yes."