



From nothing to something

Middle school bleachers get new life

ERIC SCHUCHT
The Columbus Telegram

What is one man's trash is indeed another man's treasure.

Recently, members of First United Methodist Church in Columbus disassembled wooden bleachers in the Columbus Middle School, but they will be put to good use. The wood will be donated to the Midwest Mission Distribution Center and turned into desks for students in developing countries.

"It's really a miracle that you can re-purpose stuff like that," project leader Red Smith said. "And give it to people who otherwise don't have options to have desks and get an education. It's something I really support"

The Midwest Mission was founded in 2000 and collects, makes, assembles and restores supplies for humanitarian and disaster relief efforts

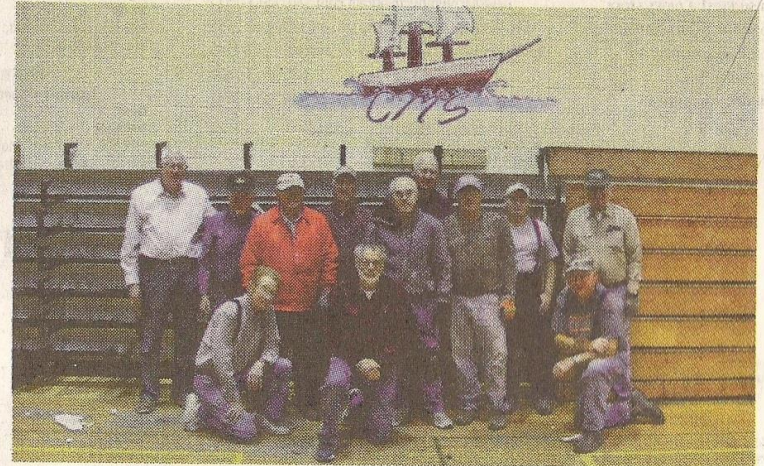
The reclaimed bleacher wood will be transported to their 30,000 square-foot-facility in Illinois, church member Doug Kalleesen said. There, it will be cleaned, repaired, sanded, and

cut into a piece that will be used to assemble desks.

"There's some gum stuck on them and a few cracks in the wood, but they were in very good shape and will be very usual for the school desks," Kalleesen said.

Smith estimates that around 50 desks can be constructed from the recycled wood. These school desks will be transported by U.S. military servicemen to remote schools in places like Africa and South America.

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DOUG KALLESEN, COURTESY PHOTO

A group of volunteers from First United Methodist Church in Columbus worked on Tuesday to dismantle old bleachers in Columbus Middle School. The wood will be recycled and turned into school desks for students in developing countries.