

COP needs a facility

Editor, Smithfield Times

The Christian Outreach Program has been looking for a building site for several years. It currently rents 24 storage units at \$21,600 per year. COP feels the money would be better spent on its own building. COP needs a site that's not remote, with a parking area to conduct its business, encourage women and youth volunteers to come on early evenings to help sort, bag food, shelf linens, wrap Christmas gifts, etc., and clients to pick up food, furniture, appliances, blankets, walkers and donors to drop off items.

A possible site on Great Spring Road was too far off the road, and on its first negotiations to lease the old Health Department, COP discovered it would not be allowed to knock down walls for its various needs.

Concerning COP's recent offer to buy the old Health Department building, the county's brokerage firm is suggesting that the property go on the market for \$500,000.

The county gave the YMCA \$500,000 and Red Cross \$250,000. You would expect a similar "in kind"

county consideration for COP, especially since it has become a quasi-arm of Social Services and provides low-income families with a staggering \$500,000 in goods and services each year. A COP offer to buy at \$75,000 to \$125,000 is fair, given the circumstances.

Given the age of most COP members, without a

COP building conveniently and safely located to attract a new generation, Christian Outreach will gradually decline and be gone in five years, and so will its \$500,000 per year in benefits to the downtrodden. Let's help COP like we helped YMCA.

*Malcolm P. Clark
Carrollton*