

Passing on the Blessing, by Maxi Rodriguez, Food Distribution Manager

The Warehouse crew works hard to keep the best and freshest food possible to provide for our clients. *We receive food through donations dropped off from our awesome community, and we pick up from local grocery stores that are transitioning food out to make room for the freshest items.*

Despite best effort, sometimes the perishable donations that arrive in our warehouse end up exceeding their "best used by" dates before they can be handed out. And we don't want to give out fuzzy strawberries or other produce!

The good news is that there is a wonderful place that is grateful for any food that we cannot use. Yvonne Champagne, her daughter Maggie, and son-in-law Lukas, run the Champagne Critter Sanctuary on their 2 acre property in West Ocala. Yvonne, since childhood, has been an advocate for abandoned, handicapped, and abused animals and provides them a caring, safe place for them to heal and live out their lives. Every week, any fruit, vegetables, and bakery items that the Food Pantry has left over, is provided to the their animal sanctuary. This food is met at their fences by wagging tails, braying donkeys, and screeching macaws. The amazing work of Champagne's Critter Sanctuary is run purely on donations and with Yvonne, Maggie, and Lukas's personal income, so we are grateful to help them and not waste food. Their sanctuary started with 8 dogs and now are the proud parents of almost 50 animals – Norman the steer; Gazoo the horse; and 2 donkeys - BamBam and Barney – just to name a few. Follow them on their Facebook page at "Champagne's Critter Sanctuary" for more information. We are proud to



Being a Blessing, Even From Home, by Tina Reid, Volunteer Coordinator



It's amazing how some people go to great lengths to be a blessing. Even when kind-hearted individuals are unable to volunteer in person, they still find ways to give back. One great example of this is a message I received a few months ago: *"I would like very much to offer 50 towels per week along with hygiene for your Shower Ministry. My mom is 96 and in a wheelchair, so it's hard for her to come to Interfaith to volunteer. We would like to provide the towels and personal items from my home and deliver them to Interfaith."* What a huge blessing! We are blessed to be able to provide a shower for up to 40 people a day. I know this family would prefer to remain anonymous, but we are extremely grateful to them for all they do for our community. I want their kindness to serve as an example to us all. When you can't do every thing you'd like to help those in need, do what you can. It makes a difference!

Center for Life Helps Helene Victims

This month The Center for Life was able to *make a contribution of supplies to those in need in North Carolina.* We sent wound care items like gauze and bandages, band aids, tape and peroxide. We sent toothbrushes and toothpaste as well as some other hygiene products. We also sent a small amount of diabetic supplies. We are so blessed to have you, our donors. Your generosity made this possible.

From the Chief Executive Officer: Karla Grimsley-Greenway



This is one of my favorite times of the year. This is when the heart of the community really stands out and so much good will is happening all around us. I feel like we say “thank you” so often that it may lose its essence. Two little words seem so small to convey the huge gratitude we feel in our hearts. So I often find myself praying for God to bless our donors in a significant way, so more than anything they know that HE is well pleased with their generosity. I sincerely pray that when each of you give a can of beans, or a bag of clothing, or hygiene items or write a check or drop off an anonymous cash donation, that your heart is filled with joy and whatever concerns weigh on your mind, just melt away and are replaced with the peace that passes all understanding. I pray that every volunteer’s heart is filled up to the brim with joy every time they come and serve others. I’ve been enjoying a wonderful daily devotional by one of the people I admire most, Mother Teresa. I can only imagine the Heavenly reward she is reaping at this moment! It sure keeps things in perspective. And while we are in the season of gratitude and reflect on how truly blessed we are to be in America, even with our current struggles, there is so much suffering across the globe. And let’s not forget those close by who have lost so much in the recent storms. I read something in my devotional that brought such hope to me and I want to share it with you. From Do Something Beautiful for God, The Essential Teachings of Mother Teresa: **“There is a light in this world, a healing spirit more powerful than any darkness we may encounter. We sometimes lose sight of this force when there is suffering. The pain we witness can be overwhelming. Then suddenly, the Spirit will emerge through the lives of ordinary people who hear a call and answer with extraordinary love.”** In my work here at Interfaith, I get to witness this time after time. This Thanksgiving season I am especially grateful for those of you, “ordinary people” who show up here at Interfaith with the gift of your time and talents as well as those who show up with tangible gifts that are so critical to our mission. May God bless you for your obedience to His calling.

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Colossians 3:17

What are you thankful for?

Have you lost your job? Lost a loved one? Are you anxious about the future of our country and our world? Do you find yourself battling worry that takes over your thoughts more than you care to admit? Here is a simple exercise you can try. **Give thanks. Start thanking God for what you still have at this moment.** For some that is a beautiful home and a comfortable bed. For others, it is a safe place to sleep under a bridge and out of the rain. For some it’s that no one in your family is suffering physically. For others it may be that the person suffering is still with you and you get a little more time with them. Some have lost loved ones; be thankful for the incredible love you still have from others in your life. We all have things to be thankful for if we look for them. If you start listing the big ones and move on to the smaller ones, you might just be surprised that the list is very long. Before you know it, you forget what you were worried about. Phillipians 4:6 reminds us.... Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Thanksgiving is the key.

Change in Donation Drop off Location Reminder

Hey Awesome Community!

As we get ready to move into our new building, we’re having to change the way we take donations. Going forward, it would be super helpful if you could **please drop off ALL NON-FOOD donations at our Thrift Store at 718 N Pine, Ocala.** Our Thrift Store team will help you unload and give you a tax receipt. If you would like your donation to go to a specific ministry (clothing to our free clothing boutique, hygiene items to our shelter) please just let them know when you drop it off. They will take great care to make sure it goes where its supposed to! Food and hygiene donations will still go to the Food Warehouse at 450 NW 2nd Street, Ocala.

Thank you for making a difference in your community!



Special Gifts

In MEMORY of:

Lee Mercer

By: Dr Barbara Schwartz

Chris Richardson

By: Anne & Buddy Mackay

Sandy McBride

Walter & Mara Elliott

Peter Cobb

By: Carol Cobb

Ray & Shelby Putansu

By: Pastor Larry & Ruth Dexheimer

Chuck Smith

By: Sandy McBride

Ken Nelson

By: Phyllis Tate

Keith & Debbie Garrett

John H Moore

Ashley Hatcher

James T Casey, MD

By: Sylvia L Casey

George Sares

Lenny Johnson

Pat Lovell

June Link Wettstein

Russell Elliott

Bill Evans

By: Walter & Mara Elliott

Nathan Gilman

By: Tommy & Lynn Craggs

Jeffrey Lovell

By: Dawn Lovell

Judita Konecnik Riker

By: Elaine Frameli

Alan Cheney

By: Brandy Forman-Kraft

In HONOR of:

Sandy Fuller

By: Diane Palmer

Jessica Vega

Zoey Celeste Hess

By: Karla & Shane Greenway

Employees & Volunteers of IES

By: Winston & Karen Needham

Alan Powerstein

By: Yanique Duff Ballard

Yanique

By: Otis Kellier

Ned Giroux

By: Anonymous

Kids Helping Kids

Cornerstone School collected almost 1,500 boxes of cereal That's about 15,000 meals with their Tribes Community Service Project. Thanks again to all the teachers and families for their incredible generosity! Pictured right.



Special Thanks to...

Special thanks for these large donations (in pounds): Countryside Presbyterian: 660; First Christian Church: 247; First Assembly of God: 90; Stone Creek Bourbon Club: 55; Trinity Baptist: 83; Dept of Juvenile Justice: 39; Marion County Sheriff's office: 396; Ocala West United Methodist: 88.

Also St Paul's United Methodist: 6 boxes food, 17sets towels & laundry soap and Paradise Ministries: 48 cases oatmeal.

Barber Volunteers for Haircuts, by Michelle Collier, Shelter Mgr

This month is about giving thanks. Interfaith has so many people and organizations in our community to be thankful for. However, one young man definitely stands out for me personally and for Interfaith and his name is Craig Pitts.

I met Craig in 2018 when he was working as a barber at the mall, cutting hair and making people look their best- this also includes my sons. While doing my youngest son's hair, I spoke to Craig about my oldest son Tyler, who was experiencing some mental health challenges. My son had a huge fear of anyone being in his personal space with anything sharp, so a haircut was not an option for several months. After explaining the situation to Craig, he instructed me to bring Tyler in with all confidence that he could do it. Craig went above and beyond to gain my son's trust and was successful with a new haircut. They have been buddies ever since.

Recently one of our homeless buddies that struggles with mental illness was really in need of a haircut and a shave. I contacted Craig for assistance and without hesitation that week he went and met Tomas, and did what he does best. Tomas looked like a new man. When I thanked Craig, his response was, "It was an honor". Craig said, "Let's talk. I really want to give back more." Craig is pictured right.

Craig and his business partner Drey own Members Only Luxury Barbershop. They plan to collaborate with Interfaith by offering haircuts once or twice per month to our shelter residents, as well as our homeless clients who need their services. Our hope is to get this going in time for the grand opening of our new Help Center. They will be providing full barber services at no cost to the less fortunate. This is a well needed service for the shelter because we currently have 10 boys living with us.

Thank you Craig and Drey for your heart of servitude!



Honor Someone Special

Give a gift to someone special - an honorary or memorial donation in their name to Interfaith! The person honored (or their family) will receive a letter of acknowledgement. Please contact Kayla at 629-8868 x202 or Kayla.Hess@IESmarion.org. Mail donations to PO Box 992, Ocala, FL 34478.



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Check out our website at
www.IESmarion.org



MISSION STATEMENT

Interfaith Emergency Services is a community of faith called by God to offer emergency assistance without judgment to all persons in Marion County.

Food 4 Kids Says Thank You!
by Teesha Garcia, Manager

What does it mean to be “thankful”? According to Webster’s it’s: ‘To be conscious of benefit received.’ God’s Word tells us in Psalm 106:1 “Praise the Lord! Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever.” We are invited to praise and give thanks to the Lord because of His goodness and enduring love. Thankfulness becomes an expression of our faith.

As we enter a season of Thanksgiving, Food 4 Kids wishes to say a huge THANK YOU to Marion County residents and businesses for always showing your thankfulness for God’s blessings in your life by supporting others in His name. By doing Kingdom work to help feed nearly 2,000 children who may go hungry if not



for your help, you are showing God the Father how truly thankful you are that He meets your needs in such abundance that your cup runs over. We are thankful for all of your hearts that serve, and blessed to be a part of making a difference.

Thrift Store News,
by Shannon Pickering

At Interfaith, our ministries are closely linked behind the scenes. We share resources to be good stewards of the donations we receive to assist as many people as possible. One of those unseen programs is sending backpacks to our Social Services department where Manager Andrea Jordan can distribute them to clients in need. These backpacks make it easier for persons experiencing homelessness to keep personal items safe and dry. Please consider donating your gently used backpacks so we can continue providing much-needed items for the community. Gently used backpacks and other donations can be dropped off at Interfaith Thrift Store, located at 718 North Pine Ave, Monday through Friday 9 am to 3 pm and Saturday, 9 am to noon. And don’t forget to stop by and shop – you’ll love our selection of clothing, furniture and household items!

