

Interfaith's Sweethearts

The February issue of the "Good News Letter" always highlights the sweethearts of Interfaith. Although each and every person that donates their time, talents or treasures is just as vital as the next, we love to shine a little extra light on those that go above and beyond. Between these pages, you will find some of the most amazing people – all with a servant's heart to help others. Interfaith could not exist without the help of these folks, and so many more like them. We ask God to provide a special blessing to all our supporters in 2017. And we give God all the glory for the works we do in the community, to be His hands and feet to those in need.

Volunteers Hit 30 Year Mark, by Becky O'Connor, Director of Ministries



Every night of the year, a volunteer group comes to the shelter, delicious prepared food in hand, and serves dinner to our residents. They prepare in advance a meal for up to 39 people, bring it piping hot to our kitchen, and serve it up. Temple Beth Shalom has been providing dinner to IES shelter residents for 30 years. And if that fact is not amazing enough, these two volunteers (pictured left), Kay and Karen, have been faithfully serving the entire time! Kay, the quintessential servant, is now the coordinator and ensures that the temple volunteers are organized and ready when their monthly service day arrives. And if that were not enough, Kay is a retired counselor for the Marion County School District – a job she held for 30 years!

This ministry is so vital to IES – imagine the cost of feeding our families every night. Without these faithful servants, we would most assuredly need to reduce or eliminate services. So thank you Temple Beth Shalom, thank you Kay and Karen, and thank you to our 30 other dinner providers. This is so much more than a meal.

Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed.
Proverbs 19:17

Heavenly Sweethearts, by Sonya Tyler, Director of Operations

Interfaith was started by the local faith-based community and support from local churches has always been critical to our existence. Rather than have each church provide social services, churches can provide financial support to Interfaith and thereby be obedient to the command to help those in need. Interfaith is a beautiful partnership breaking down walls of denominations and allowing people to come together as one to serve their fellow man. And when we have a special need, these churches, are only a phone call away. We are so appreciative to every church that makes Interfaith possible. In this issue we salute the 10 churches who have contributed the most in this past year. May God bless ALL of our partner churches in 2017 to do even more for His glory! A special thank you to:

- 1) First Presbyterian Church
- 2) College Road Baptist Church
- 3) Ocala West United Methodist
- 4) Christ the King Anglican Church
- 5) Ocala Palms Worship Center
- 6) Good News Church of Ocala
- 7) Church of Hope
- 8) Ocala Christian Church
- 9) First Baptist Church at the Villages
- 10) St. Matthews Lutheran Church



From the Chief Executive Officer: Karla Grimsley



Recently in a conversation with one of our employees I was reminded that Interfaith is more than just a distribution center for clothes and food. A couple of years ago we established a prayer room in our food pantry. We staff it with volunteers who will offer prayer to our clients while they are waiting for their food to be packaged. Most of our clients accept and appreciate the prayers and many of them write notes of gratitude and praise reports when prayers are answered. However I recently learned that we have a second “prayer room”. Our free clothing boutique provides a free shopping experience for anyone in need of clothing. For some it’s their only source of clean clothes because they live outside and don’t have the means to do laundry. For others it’s the ticket to getting the job or provides the appropriate clothes to wear to a new job. In 2016 over 15,000 people received clothes from our free clothing boutique. What I was pleased to learn is that there is also a lot of prayer going on in the boutique! One of the part-time staff shared with me that often people come in to look around but what they really want is just human contact, someone to acknowledge them with a kind word and sometimes they want someone to pray for them. Luckily God has blessed us with staff and volunteers in that ministry who are happy to do just that. It’s one thing to give someone a tangible gift to meet a need but it’s another to give someone hope and encouragement. I am so thankful that God has equipped Interfaith to do both. ❤️

Do nothing with selfish or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another than more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests but also for the interests of others. Philippians 2:3-4

A Tour Can Change Everything, by Tina Reid, Interim Volunteer Coordinator

When you witness the work of Interfaith, you witness how amazing the community we live in is. I was recently blessed with that opportunity. I have a heart for ministry and a few years ago I was in constant prayer about finding a way to be used by God. I had a relentless yearning to find my calling of service. God put several opportunities of outreach in my life. Most recently, it was Interfaith. Our current Volunteer Coordinator, Teesha O’Neal, had to go on maternity leave and I was blessed with the opportunity to fill in for her. I was not prepared for what I would find here at Interfaith.

When I was given my first tour I was left without words to describe it. When you learn about Interfaith, you learn about God’s love for His people. There are countless stories of God’s work and God’s timing. As I was touring this amazing facility, I was overwhelmed with verses from the Bible of God’s promises to His people. To feed them, to clothe them and love them, which can always be shown through others. That’s what Interfaith is all about. It’s incredible to see how a community can come together and take care of those in need. With this amazing staff and extraordinary volunteers, God is making sure His people are being taken care of.

I can’t urge you enough to take some time to pray about how God may be calling you to be His hands and feet. Maybe it will be through Interfaith. Please give me the opportunity to give you the same tour that was given to me, that left me inspired. There is so much here that is going on – you will be amazed you never knew. I’m excited to see how God is going to use me here at Interfaith, but I am even more excited to see how He’s going to use you. Call me, so you can answer His call for you. (352)629-8868 ext 210

When the poor and needy search for water and there is none and their tongues are parched from thirst, then I, the Lord will answer them. I, the God of Israel, will never abandon them. Isaiah 41:17

Special Thanks Goes to

Thanks to Andrew and True Value Hardware for donating paint to fix up one of our Shelter Family Rooms!

Special thanks to all that voted for Interfaith for Ocala Magazine’s the Best of the Best Awards. We are honored to be awarded BEST CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION.



The awesome ladies of the Candler Hills Ladies Golf Association dropped off a cash donation and a trunk load of hygiene items. A huge blessing!

Special thanks to Boy Scout Troop 196 & Bob Barton who visited our Warehouse with their troop and brought 641 pounds of food with them!

A HUGE thank you to all our donors through the holiday seasons, that made a huge difference for the individuals and families in need during Thanksgiving and Christmas. God bless you all!



Special Gifts

In MEMORY of:

Charlie Prestisino
By: Woody & Rita Clymer

Harry & Evelyn Dannels
By: Jean Justice

Greg McNeal
By: Kathy McCormick

Virginia Oswald
By: Fred & Carolyn Roberts
Terry Crawford

Helen Stutz
By: Linda Robinson

Russell Mantel
By: Sandra Mantel

Lucas Evans
By: John & Jarl Hagood

E L Foster
By: John & Jarl Hagood
Ann & Bobby Richardson
Jerry & Teddie Gause
Whit & Diane Palmer
Terry Crawford

Chad Bailey
Scott Lewis
By: Ann & Bobby Richardson

Morris Dittman
Jeanette Bounaventure
By: Kenneth Colen
Blaise Bonnaventure

Bettiann Gallagher
By: Jill-Ann Adams

Charles & Juanita Murray
By: Robert & Miriam Murray

Michael Wonders
By: Joyce & Calvin Wonders

Frances King
By: George and Ruth King

John Bledsoe
Otha & Clydie Gause

Ron Gause
By: Jerry and Teddie Gause

Charles Gator Lyles
By: Carolyn Grissom

Henry L Hunt
By: Shirley J Hunt

Lt Governor Jim Williams
By: Terry Crawford
Truman and Jane Sands
Fred & Carolyn Roberts

In MEMORY of (continued):

Marjorie Moxon
By: Terry Crawford
Fred & Carolyn Roberts
Ruth M Albright
Sandra and Kirby Manning

Dee Brown
By: Jerry and Deanna Brown

Jim Brown
By: John and Shirley Hankinson

In HONOR of:

Suzanne Lilly
By: Anonymous

Gwen Clair
By: Janet Rogers

Luke, Jane, Dylan & Drew DeSantis
By: Andy and Louann DeSantis

Co-workers at Hospice of Marion County
Volunteer Services & Finance Dept
By: John and Cindy Pockalny

Stella Olives
By: Enoch & Marty Hurst

Jane & Kim, Darlene, Tim & Lou
Dennis & Anita, Tom & Dominique
Bob, Jamie & Rex, Gail, Terry,
Dr Carlos Zamora Family, Jackie,
Kim & Shannon, Tim & Katy Jo,
Bob & Kathie, Nat & Angie, Jerry
Mark & Judy
By: Judith & Wayne
Wayne Davis Quarter Horses

Carlyle & Shirley Ausley
By: Howard & Ann VanDenburgh

John & Louise Moore
By: Their children and grandchildren

Debbie and Allen Muir
By: Jay Falvo

Brad Huennekens Family
By: Larry and Cathy Huennekens

Anthony and Melinda Spitek
By: Greg and Cynthia Rose

Dr and Mrs John L Peterson
Dr and Mrs Johnny Mac Smith
Mr and Mrs Robert O Moore
By: Bill and Lyn Rainbow

Dr and Mrs Richard Herden
Mr and Mrs Richard Herden
Mr and Mrs Collis Boyd
Mrs Charlotte Minnelli
Dr and Mrs Allan Dekelbaum
By: Davis and Betty Nelson

In HONOR of (continued):

Blue Monsdeoca
Aleta & Fred Fisher
Mary Alice Adkison
Grace Mitchum
Debbie Wilkinson
By: Whit & Diane Palmer

Shirley and Carlyle Ausley
By: S R Bourgeois

David Froom
By: Pam Froom

Amy Kehew
By: Ronald and Mary Lou James

Would you like to honor a loved one? The individual honored or their family will receive a letter of acknowledgement. Contact Kayla at 629-8868x202 or kayla.grimsley@iesmarion.org.

Queen of the Hug by Brenda Callahan, Store Mgr

According to Wikipedia, "the origins of the word 'hug' are unknown, but two theories exist. The first is that the verb 'hug' (first used in the 1560s) could be related to the Old Norse word *hugga*, which meant to comfort. The second theory is that the word is related to the German word *hegen* which means to foster or cherish, and originally meant to enclose with a hedge." A hug can indicate anything from love, comfort to sympathy.

Now that you know the probable origins and definition of a hug, allow me to introduce "The Queen of the Hugs," Mrs. Angie Jackson! Angie's kind and gentle spirit simply amazes everyone she comes into contact with at the Thrift Store. From the first time shopper, to our loyal frequent shoppers, all receive a hug from Angie.



We get compliments all the time that say they are so impressed with how they are welcomed and made to feel at home at the Thrift Store. All the love Angie has for our amazing Lord springs forth from her like a tidal wave. We have had shoppers that stop by just to get one of her amazing hugs, because it brightens their day.

It's easy to see that Angie is one of Interfaith's best sweethearts. Angie just celebrated her 10th year with the Interfaith Thrift Store, so stop by and grab a hug from our Thrift Store sweetheart while you're searching for the best deals in town.



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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.

More IES Sweethearts, by Jessica Rodriguez, Intake Manager



There were a lot of exciting changes in the Intake office in 2016. This department oversees the client services we provide. Our volunteers meet one on one with each client to make sure we can help their needs – from food, clothing, hygiene, medications and so much more. There’s a lot that goes on behind that scenes that keep this department hopping.

In May, I was brought on as Intake Manager and we did an overhaul of our systems to try and make our workflow better – all to be more efficient as we help our clients. As the need grows, so must we. 

In the middle of our busiest season in the fall, our software program that helps us log services we provide, was discontinued and we were without a system for over a month. Our new system, Charity Tracker, will be amazing once the dust settles, but we definitely felt frustrated during the migration from the old system to the new. With taking care of 60 – 80 families a day, the applications for service pile up really quick. Being without our system meant a back log, but a couple of sweetheart volunteers offered to help catch us up.

Dianne Akins and Lin Hendricks stepped up in our time of need in a big way. Dianne has worked in Intake and knows first hand how vital our data is, and tackled our back log like a champ. Lin, who’s been volunteering for over 2 years now also accepted this challenge and took boxes of paperwork home to work on. Lin’s great attitude was such a blessing – she saw it as a learning opportunity with the new system. Both of these ladies are sweethearts in my eyes!

And of course, all of our patient and kind Intake volunteers are amazing – they have been so understanding as we tackle these challenges. They ensure our clients get great service, pray with them when they are hurting, and make sure their needs are being met. I look forward to all the amazing things God has planned for 2017 and how we can help be his hands and feet. 