

Donor Helps Homeless Man with Priceless Gift, Becky O'Connor, Director of Ministries

When a donation comes in our doors, we never know how it will impact someone in need, we just know it will. Read how a donation of a man's pair of shoes helped Robert.

We have friends who come and go, some we see every few months, others we see only once. They come for food, prescriptions, clothing, sometimes fellowship and prayer – a moment to connect with someone who cares. We also have friends we see every day, those experiencing long term homelessness or loss, who have no daily destination other than our parking lot benches or the group of picnic tables we call the park. They come every morning for a safe place to sit – a place to be.

Robert is our friend. He has physical and mental disabilities. He lives on the streets – what Housing and Urban Development (HUD) calls a “place not meant for human habitation”. His life is difficult. His days are long; his nights unsafe. We help him with his mail, make sure he is able to eat at the soup kitchen, offer him relationship, and sometimes stern reminders about safety. We care for him to the limit he allows. Sometimes that means making phone calls for him, or sitting down to listen to his latest story of the streets, or a smile and hug. We do not try to solve his life problems, we cannot. But we can love him. Last week that meant a new pair of shoes, and that simple pair of shoes made his day. Happy trails Robert.



Robert laces up his new shoes

Little children, let us love not in word and speech, but in action and truth. 1 John 3:18

You Can Make an Impact on May 13th to Help Hungry Families, by Volunteer Cherie Foster

 As the summer approaches and food donations to Interfaith drop, the warehouse team is getting ready for a special delivery. The 25th Anniversary of the National Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger campaign is Saturday, May 13 and you can take part right here in Marion County. Last year's record-breaking campaign was indeed a special delivery for Interfaith, with 200,000 pounds of food collected for those in need in our county.

Remember to put non-perishable food donations by your mail box on May 13th or drop them off at Interfaith.

Let's put the stamp of success on this year's drive by volunteering for this critical day. We need volunteers to help our postal carriers by collecting food during their routes. Help is also needed at our Interfaith Warehouse. Anyone wanting to volunteer (either at their local post office substation or Interfaith), contact **Steve Clem at 352-622-4204**.

Volunteers Create Amazing Donation Box by Sonya Tyler, Director of Operations



Frank and Dave

When asked to build something for our clothing donations that sometimes pile up at our office in the evenings and over the weekend, Dave Reynolds and Frank Lowe were up for the task. These two awesome guys constructed this amazing 'donation box' at home, delivered it and set it up for us. Dave is one of our long-time volunteers in our Facilities Department. Frank has helped with painting projects for us. Together, they made a wonderful blessing for us!

This is just one of many ways that volunteers can use their skills to help Interfaith. If you would like to learn more about volunteering and how you can make an impact in the lives of others, contact Tina Reid for more information at 352-629-8868x210.



From the Chief Executive Officer: Karla Grimsley



It's been a while since we've mentioned the Center for Life so I wanted to use this opportunity to give an update. As you know we purchased the Ocala Women's Center last summer and in July, Hope Clinic set up shop and started seeing low-income uninsured patients at no cost. Hope Clinic is still seeing patients 3-4 days each week with the help of local physicians and medical professionals who graciously give of their time and expertise. We are partnering in a Free Clinic Consortium now with several other entities to ensure that we all work together to maximize our efforts, provide the best care possible and help our clients progress to the Heart of Florida Health Center for their ongoing primary care. Our goals are going to require a great deal of collaboration and education for our patients but we're off to a great start! More good news, is that our next free clinic partner, FreeDOM Clinic is almost ready to begin seeing patients in our new dental clinic, also located in the Center for Life! What a blessing this is for so many suffering with dental problems.

Going forward we are ready to start on a very special project called, Charlie's Garden. This has been part of the vision since the day we stepped out on faith to purchase the Center for Life. In partnership with the Ocala Women's Pregnancy Center we hope to provide a special place where people can memorialize their unborn children. Part of the ministry of WPC is post-abortion counseling and having a special place where their clients can memorialize their babies' by name, is going to promote healing in a very significant way. Since the project is just getting off the ground we are looking for partners to help us create this beautiful space including those who own a nursery or tree farm, or have access to garden statues and/or birdbaths, fencing, fountains, gravel or mulch; pretty much any element that would go into a serenity garden. If you have any of these resources and would like to be a part of this special project, please contact me! As always you can reach me at karla@iesmarion.org or 352-209-7045.

Behold, I will bring it health and healing; I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth. Jeremiah 33:6

Community Partners Update

Wellness Classes for Community

The "Dynamic InSPIRE & EMPOWER for Wellness in a Healthy Community" is a Marion County Hospital District grant-funded project which offers a free diabetes prevention and self-management program through Dynamic Therapy & Wellness Services, Inc. (DTAWS). Dr. Stella Nemuseso, a doctor of physical therapy, serves as project director and fosters collaboration with multiple faith-based organizations, community centers, medical clinics, worksites, clubs/ groups and other stakeholders in Marion County Florida to increase awareness and education of chronic disease management throughout Marion County.

They offer free classes for weight loss, diabetes prevention and management, and Diabetes Lifestyle Coach Training. To host a free health seminar, become a diabetes lifestyle coach, or locate a class near you, please contact Dynamic Therapy and Wellness Services at (352) 533-2371 or visit their website at www.dtaws.com.



Donor Makes Awesome Mats for the Homeless, by Jessica Rodriguez, Intake Manager

Kathryn Smith is from Countryside Presbyterian Church. She hand knits plastic grocery bags together to make mats for the homeless to sleep on. Each mat is lined with a fleece blanket. Her parents who are in their 90s help her by shredding the bags and then she threads them together. Periodically she will drop off 20-25 mats, which are an amazing blessing to our homeless clients. The mats give them a clean, dry place to lay at night.

Langley Health Mobile Medical Unit

Interfaith is proud to announce its partnership with Langley Health and their mobile medical unit. The first Tuesday of every month it will be at our Marion Oaks satellite pantry location at Our Savior Lutheran Church, 260 Marion Oaks Lane, Ocala. The mobile unit will be there from 9am-2pm. No appointment is necessary. The mobile unit will see patients with insurance and without. Langley Health offers a sliding scale among different payment options. They have a doctor and a nurse on staff, and offer sick visits, wellness check-ups/ health screenings, flu shots and other vaccinations, and point-of-care testing. Please help us spread the word.



Ready to See Patients

*Be strong and
take heart, all
you who hope
in the Lord.
Psalm 31:24*

Special Gifts

In MEMORY of:

In memory of:

Lucille Griggs

By: Carolyn Grissom

Ann & Bobby Richardson

Don James

By: Shirley James

Robert McCoskey

By: Audrey McCoskey

Cindy Stafford

By: David Stafford

Jeanette Barton

By: Charlotte and Carswell Ponder

Thelma Kuperberg

By: Robert Kuperberg

Marjorie Moxon

Jon Hankinson

By: Ann & Bobby Richardson

Charles Dollar

By: Ben & Helen Hayes

Would you like to honor a loved one? Give an honorary donation in their name to Interfaith! The person honored or their family will receive a letter of acknowledgement. For more info contact Kayla at 629-8868x202 or kayla.grimsley@iesmarion.org. Mail: PO Box 992, Ocala, FL 34478.

Did you Know...

that you can receive our newsletter by email? It saves us money to send it to your inbox instead! Email Sonya@IESmarion.org and let her know you want to make the switch!

Our Thanks Goes To These Awesome Folks

Thanks to Diane McDonald and our Local AAA Club for their food drive for Interfaith that collected over 230 pounds for Food 4 Kids!

Interfaith was honored at the Cup of the Irish's St Patrick's Day celebration with food and financial donations!

Norma, a teacher at West Port High School, and her students, collected over 200 pairs of jeans that they donated to our shelter through a program she called Jeans for Teens (pictured left).



Thank you to the Marion County Tax Collector's Office for raising funds again for Interfaith and Food 4 Kids with a BUNCO event! We received \$2,000 to help Food 4 Kids and our clients. Thank you to George Albright and his awesome Charity Committee.



Special thanks to Volunteer Myron Loss from Oakcrest Baptist (pictured left), who remodeled our Warehouse bathroom and did a super job!

Thanks to Phil, Gary and the residences at Ocala Palms Food Drive for their donation of 2 1/2 tons of clothing and food!



Special thanks to the class from MTC Extended Day that took a tour of Food 4 Kids with their Program Manager, Pam Eubanks. Volunteers Jan Acquard, Rae Stover, and Jennifer Murch (below) are showing the group how to fill the backpacks with food.



Special thanks to Church of Hope for their recent drive that provided 1,251 pounds of hygiene items!



Jordan Myrick collected two bags of jackets and sweaters through her church family and school as a community service project (pictured right).



Thanks to On Top of the World Lions Club for the \$1,000 donation for Food 4 Kids. Pictured left is

President Michael Topf presenting check to Food 4 Kids Manager Ken Nelson.

Thanks to a Meadowbrook church groups God's Golden Girls and the Links Groups for the outstanding job they did recently to help the shelter – new fencing, gutters, outdoor furniture and much, much more!

Saying Good-bye to Donna, by Brenda Callahan, Thrift Store Manager



Donna takes a spin

It is with a heavy heart that I write this article. The Interfaith Thrift Store suffered a loss recently as former employee, Donna Cavanaugh, went home to be with the Lord on April 7th. Donna's passing came after a brief struggle with cancer. She helped with several areas at the store from cashiering to pricing incoming merchandise. Donna always worked with a smile and had a kind word for everyone. On special occasions, Donna's silliness would show up and she would even help test our merchandise. I remember the time she drove a peddle car through the store, or the time she dressed up like a zombie to impress her son Bobbie who loves zombie movies. Donna served Interfaith for over 10 years and her wisdom and experience will be missed. But mostly, Donna will be missed.

Another staff person spoke these words and they bear repeating, "Donna, we are not saying good bye, we are saying... 'See you later and hold us a spot in heaven. Until then, Donna, we love you!'"

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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.

High Tea Benefit for Shelter - Residents Share Stories of Life Change and New Beginnings

This year's Ladies High Tea was another wonderful event. With 17 tables adorned with lavish decor, our hostesses went above and beyond to make it extra special. This year's Golden Teapot for the best table was awarded to Evelyn Nussel.

A huge thanks to Shalom Park, The Salted Brick at Trilogy, Beautiful Moments, the CEP and Event Warehouse for making the day possible and a special thank you to Angie Clifton with Wells Fargo Bank for being our event sponsor. \$4,600 was raised to support our Homeless Shelter program for women, children and families.



Pictured is Toby Fernandez, the 2016 Golden Teapot recipient, passing it to our new winner, Evelyn Nussel



Beautiful winning table by Evelyn Nussel

Of course the stars of the day were our shelter residents who shared their stories about the challenges of homelessness. Single mom Laura, was reunited with her older son Chad while staying in our shelter, and the two were able to mend their relationship. They moved into a brand new apartment that afternoon. They shared their heartbreaking life stories and thanked our shelter staff for helping them overcome their difficulties in order to start again, together.