

God's Hand Extended To Those In Need

## Just a Little Help by Sonya Tyler, Director of Operations



Ramonita and her son Jason came to Interfaith recently for help. Ramonita met with one of our volunteers, Della Brock, to ask for food, hygiene and clothing. While Della and Ramonita talked, Jason was directed towards our toy box so he could pick out something to play with while mom talked.

Della was so heart-broken to hear their story, she came to me and said, "You need to hear this." As I sat down with Ramonita, she began explaining that she and Jason had just moved out of a horrible mobile home that nearly cost her son his life. Ramonita said, "Our landlord refused to take care of the black mold that was covering all the walls

– it was like something out of a nightmare. The floors were so rotten, that Jason actually fell through a hole and tore a huge gash in his leg." She explained that Jason started wheezing so badly at one point, that she took him to Munroe, where they said the black mold had caused a serious infection. He was sent to Shands in Gainesville and stayed two weeks. Ramonita lost time at work while traveling between Ocala and Gainesville to stay connected with her son and his treatments. Luckily, Jason is now fine, she was able to find an apartment and relocated. She said they had left behind nearly everything they owned because it was destroyed by the mold.

Della completed her request for food and hygiene and then directed Ramonita to our free Clothing Boutique. Ramonita was also sent to our Thrift Store's Blessing Barn, where she could pick out some furniture items.

Sometimes our clients are just in tough situations and need just a little bit of help to get the ball rolling again. Sometimes, just like Ramonita, bad things happen to good people, and they are always so grateful that Interfaith was here to help. And thanks to our donors that support us – we were there that Tuesday afternoon for Ramonita and Jason. On behalf of this sweet family, and all the others like them... thank you for your love and support of Interfaith! God bless you!

## Food 4 Kids Needs Food!

Ken Nelson, our Food 4 Kids Manager, is putting out a plea for more food. Even though it's late in the school year, Ken has received requests to add more children to the program. "We never want to say no when the guidance counselor calls with a child that needs to be enrolled to receive food on the weekends in the backpack program. But lately, our funds are getting low, and we need some food drives in order to have enough."

For information about how you can help - either by filling the backpacks (like the one pictured right) or donating food- call Ken at 352-620-8239.

To help financially, please indicate "Food 4 Kids" on your donation.



## Clients Served Jan - Dec 2017

Food (Ocala)	12,416
Outreach (food):	
Reddick	
Fellowship	122
Ft McCoy	253
Marion Oaks	215
TOTAL FOOD:	2,709
Hygiene items	6,206
<i>(Totals above are per household)</i>	

Clothing	14,044
ID Cards	265
Diaper	770
"Reader" Glasses	623
Workboots	46
Gas Vouchers (medical)	251

RX Clients	1,166
RX Cost	\$126,359.77

Food 4 Kids	
Children served	1,700
Meals provided	220,016

Shelter	
Women	93
Children	97
Men	14

## How to Donate

Want to help support Interfaith in the work that we do? Please send a check payable to "Interfaith Emergency Services" at PO Box 992, Ocala, FL 34478, or give securely online at [www.IESmarion.org](http://www.IESmarion.org). Thank your for your support!

## From the Chief Executive Officer: Karla Grimsley



Every year for Valentine's Day the Interfaith Foundation honors people in our community who have made a positive impact. This year we honored Frank & Naida Rasbury and Dr. Hank Harrell, Jr. It was a wonderful luncheon and we are so grateful to those who came out in support of these special individuals. We call this event Legacies of Love because that is exactly what our honorees are leaving behind them. A legacy of working for causes they believed in because of their love for humanity. The Rasbury's have been long-time advocates for education and the arts, as well as a plethora of other important causes. Dr. Harrell was significant in making Marion County's medical community strong, but also found time to use a hammer for Habitat for Humanity.

All three of our honorees this year played a role in some medical cause, either raising money for cancer research or eradicating polio through the work of Rotary International. While none of these will go down in history as being the "one" who achieved something great, they each played a role in great things which were achieved. When it comes to our greatest social problems and needs, there is no one hero. One person can't be the cure. Most significant results take many people working over long periods of time to see the benefit. That is how people leave a legacy. That is where people get to leave a mark, even if it's just one thumb-print among many. I feel so privileged to have met our Legacies of Love honorees this year and our previous years' honorees, because they inspire me. To look back on your life and know that you were a part of something that made life better for others, is what we should all strive for. Have you thought about where you will leave a legacy of love?

*By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. John*

## Volunteer Commits His Retirement to Helping Others, by Debra Stanford, Warehouse Asst.

Marion Hess is one of our Outreach Pantry Coordinators. Although he volunteers directly for his church's pantry, Fort McCoy Baptist Church, he is a part of how Interfaith strives to meet needs.

For those that don't know – Interfaith has a total of 5 pantries in Marion County. Our satellite pantries, such as Fort McCoy Baptist, are critical for those living in outlying areas that cannot afford to come to town to get food assistance. Once a month, Fort McCoy Baptist opens their doors to their small community, and the need pours in. Marion coordinates their pantry and meets with Steve at our Warehouse to make sure they have enough food to provide to their clients.

Marion has an interesting history. He says he saw the world while he was in the US Navy. Before coming to Marion County, he spent 30 years as a Publix Store Manager in Miami. Married for 56 years, Marion has 3 children, 9 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren! Along with Marion's



9 years at Ft McCoy, he also volunteers with Habitat for Humanity and previously with Florida Disaster Relief.

***Marion said...* "When we started this pantry, the first time we gave away food we had 17 families. Today, we sometimes serve 168 families a month. Why do I do this? Not to be recognized by people, but because God has blessed my family. I can't sit, and do nothing, when there is need, and I have to stay busy. I turn 77 soon, and will continue to do what I can as long as God allows me."**

We thank Marion for his years of partnership with Interfaith and the work he's doing in his community.



## Special Gifts

### In MEMORY of:

E L Foster  
Virginia Oswald  
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By: Sally and Bo Williams

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By: Walter & Virginia Anderson

Power Plant Advisory Committee  
By: Ocala & Marion Co Chamber  
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### Honoring a Loved One

Would you like to honor a loved one? Give a honorary donation in their name to Interfaith! The person honored will receive a letter of acknowledgement. Please contact Kayla for more info at 629-8868 x202 or by email [Kayla.Grimley@IESmarion.org](mailto:Kayla.Grimley@IESmarion.org). Mail donations to PO Box 992, Ocala, FL 34478.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.  
*Joshua 1:9*

## Volunteers and Food Drives Needed, by Tina Reid, Volunteer Coordinator

The amount of work that goes into operating Interfaith every day is amazing. What's more amazing is that a lot of the credit goes to our volunteers. We have people that volunteer their time every week faithfully that we depend on to keep our ship afloat. And the best part is - every time we have a need, we get to watch God fill it. We've had volunteers tell amazing stories for how they came to Interfaith, and almost always, it was God working in their servant hearts to lead them right to the perfect spot!

We want you to be a part of seeing His work! Right now we need volunteers to sort clothing for our free Clothing Boutique. We need help in the intake office meeting with clients or packing/sorting food in the Warehouse.

Another way you can volunteer is by doing a food drive! The pantry and Food 4 Kids program are both running low on food. Food drives can also count towards community service hours needed for various things such as Girl/Boy Scouts, IB programs and college applications. Like these Howard Middle School students Daniel, Regan and Grant that did a hygiene drive for the homeless and then came and put bags together - they're awesome! (pictured right)

We can help you host a food drive with your office, group or church. Call or email me and I'll be glad to get you started. (352) 629-8868 ext. 210 or [tina.reid@iesmarion.org](mailto:tina.reid@iesmarion.org)

## Special Thanks Goes to...

Thanks to Emily Johnston and all the Wells Fargo branches for doing a peanut butter and jelly drive for Food 4 Kids! Pictured right is Emily with Ken Nelson, Food 4 Kids Manager.



Special thanks to several local businesses that have gone above and beyond by helping Interfaith with our needs... *Walton's Rental* (helping to fix our flag pole at the Center for Life) *True Value Hardware* (donated paint for the shelter) and *Brick City Pest Control* (pest control services). Please stop by these businesses and say thanks and be sure to use their services - they're awesome!

Howard Middle School students Kacia Ramsay and Keasha Davis, collected food for our Warehouse recently (pictured right).



Thanks to Pastor Austin Holland and his group from First United Methodist Church! To honor Martin Luther King Day they worked at our shelter! What an awesome gift for those who stay with us!! (Pictured above)





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Check out our website at  
[www.IESmarion.org](http://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.*

**Thrift Store Warehouse Making Progress, by Brenda Calahan, Thrift Store Manager**



The foundation has been poured and the blocks have been delivered! We are getting very excited here at the Thrift Store as the construction of our new warehouse finally begins.

The warehouse will replace the old pole barn that caught on fire in late 2015 and will create a sense of order we have never known before. The warehouse, of course, will store extra items when we get large quantities of donations at one time. This will also allow us the opportunity to stage the merchandise on the Store's main floor so we won't be over-crowded. Staff and volunteers alike are eager to see the building rise.



And by the way - make sure you come check out some of the furniture we've been getting. An unnamed furniture store has been donating some amazing couches and other awesome items to our Thrift Store - beautiful 'like-new' pieces with minor flaws that they can't sell - but we're happy too! So, stop by and shop often, and see the building progress with us.