

Letter Carrier's Drive Brings in over 96,000 pounds!

We're so grateful to this awesome community in Marion County for the outpouring of love and support to help those in need. Every can of beans and jar of peanut butter will fill hungry bellies this summer. We could not do this without the help of our local heroes: Tim Legge (retired from USPS) and Laura Kingleman, and of course all the wonderful letter carriers that participated in the drive! Thanks also goes to the volunteers that helped pick up and deliver the food. And of course our amazing staff! It's a true blessing to see what this community can do together!



Stacked to the rafters. Amazing!

God Sends a Carpenter, by Jody Schaible, Facilities Manager/Campus Pastor



I would like to introduce you to Steve Ward. Steve comes to us by way of Crosspointe Church in Ocala. Supporters Fred and Sam Stella, heard we needed help with carpentry work on our 14th Street Apartments when we first purchased them, and knew Steve would be a blessing. And they were right! Steve is from upstate New York and after a tour in Vietnam with the Navy, he decided to start his own carpentry business. Fast forward 40 years and Steve is retired here in Ocala. When he came to us, we were in desperate need of carpentry help. He stepped in and helped us make our supportive housing and low-income apartments ready for those in need. He saved us thousands of dollars we would have paid a professional to come in to do all the repairs he was able to do for us – and even showed me how to do in the future!

Recently Steve had a health setback, and it changed the dynamic of his volunteering, but he hasn't let this stop him. He now has his sights on teaching some of the homeless job skills that can help further them along their road to dignity and success.

When writing this article, I asked Steve what his most memorable moment has been at Interfaith. Steve said, "Getting to work alongside someone who would never been given a chance elsewhere and teaching them a new trade." We are grateful to Steve and his talents he brings, as with so many of our volunteers. You'll find Steve roaming around the campus putting a smile on everyone's face as he volunteers.

Serving Marion County Since 1983

From the Chief Executive Officer: Karla Grimsley-Greenway



I want to say a special thank you to all of the people who have helped with and supported all of our fundraising efforts and events this first half of the year. From the Legacies of Love, the Brick City Beer & Wine Festival, the High Tea and then the Letter Carrier's Food Drive we have called on our community for lots of support. The way you keep showing up and being the fuel that ignites our ministry is a blessing beyond words and we are sincerely grateful.

With the Summer upon us, I will be doing something I've never done and am taking some extra time off in June. So if you're looking for me you probably won't find me here. With that said, we have an incredible team here and my assistant, Emily Pozo, or either of our other two directors, Jessica Vega or Sonya Tyler can assist you. When I get back in July I will hit the ground running gearing up for the grand opening of our new center to provide services to those experiencing homelessness. The goal is to get as many people off the streets and back into society and self-sufficiency as possible. Of course, we can't do it alone so we will be working with many local partners to wrap the necessary services around these forgotten citizens to set them up for success. To that end, we are looking to start training between 25-30 volunteers dedicated to working in this new arena. If you are interested, please contact my assistant Emily at Emily.Pozo@iesmarion.org and get on the list so we can invite you to the informational meetings and training. If you want to do real ministry and invest in the souls of people who may be lost, this is an opportunity like no other. I have been praying for months for God to speak to the right people and lay the calling before them to do this important work. Has he spoken to you? Let us know! There is much work to be done but I believe the reward is going to be great!

If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.
Isaiah 58:30

Meet Carol, An Angel of Kindness, by Andrea Jordan, Social Services Manager

Meet my volunteer Carol, who has been sorting our donations for over a year now. She is a true angel of kindness who has been selflessly providing food boxes for the underprivileged community since Thanksgiving. Her generosity knows no bounds, and she recently surprised our female staff at Interfaith with a spa-themed gift bag. We voted for Michelle, our Shelter Manager, to win the basket. Michelle works incredibly hard to maintain our shelter's 93% success rate, and Carol's thoughtfulness and appreciation for her hard work is truly inspiring. This month, Carol went above and beyond yet again by gifting all the female staff with a Mother's Day spa-themed bag and a man's bucket full of items that only a man could appreciate! Billy, who heads our shower ministry and provides around 300 showers every month, was the lucky recipient of the man's bucket. Carol's kindness extends beyond our community's needy, and she never forgets to acknowledge the hardworking people at Interfaith. She is an angel of compassion and a true testament to God's love for His people. Carol pictured right with goodies.



Stress Relief at the Center for Life, by Cherie Galloway, Manager

Janine had run up a bill at the Heart of Florida that she could not pay. She was unable to go back and see her provider. She had 3 blood pressure pills left to her name and no doctor and no prescription. She came to our office thinking that we had a doctor on staff and went into an extreme panic when she found out that we did not.

We were able to get her into Estelle Byrd Whitman Wellness center on that same day. There, she got a prescription for her blood pressure medication. That prescription was sent to Bittings Pharmacy where we were able to pay for it and any further refills. But we didn't stop there. After reviewing all the medications that she should be taking and seeing the price tag we called a Case Manager at Heart of Florida to work out her bill. Surprisingly she did not have a balance, so God must have taken care of that for her! She was able to schedule an appointment that Interfaith will pay for. We will help her maintain her medication requirements and keep her on track with her medical appointments. What a stress reducer!

Special Gifts

In MEMORY of:

The Honorable Judge Hale Stancil

By: John Fuller

Charles & Mary Wolfe
Dr Matthew DellaVecchia
Elsie Wilson
Martha Channels
John Wilson
John Dozier
Raymond & Marilyn McNeal
R Thad Boyd
Paul & Christy Czarzasty
James & Cheryl Gillyard

Joel Weldon

T Carroll Mills

John Norman

By: Winston & Karen Needham

Vera Agosta

By: Rachel and Cynthia Watts

Trusty Drake

By: Mark DeBolt

Charlotte Jean Justice

By: Terry Spray

Lee Goodson

By: Alice Goodson

Martha Kay

By: Winston & Karen Needham

Louann Mayer

Susan Greiner

Gayle Elkes

By: Luann Mayer

Susan Greiner

Janet Gonzales

Ed Cluster

Jerry Robertson

By: Susan Greiner

Terry Sanders

Grace Trice

By: Elaine Trice

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.

In HONOR of:

Merri McKenzie's 80th Birthday
By: Martin Schwartz



St John's Lutheran

Gearing up for Summer Food Program 2024 in Food 4 Kids, by Teesha Garcia, Manager

Food 4 Kids will be hosting our second annual summer backpack food program beginning June 10th and continuing for 8 weeks. Last year, in our pilot year, we had four schools participate and we learned what worked and what needed to be tweaked a bit. We did successfully help feed 128 children at 4 different schools by handing out 4,590 meals to children at risk of food insecurity.

This year, we are on target to have 13 to 15 schools participating and over 500 children that will receive backpacks each week. We are excited to be partnering with **Ocala Christian Church, Balcony Sports, Lennar Homes, Marion Therapeutic Riding Association, and Habitat for Humanity** to provide a location for families to pick up the food while schools are closed. The love and support we have witnessed from Marion County's residents, companies, organizations, churches, and non-profits are such a

notable example of what makes Marion County such a special place to live and raise children. Thank you all so much for your big hearts!

And keep those donations coming this Summer for our Backpack Program!

If you wish to get involved in helping feed children in need over summer, please reach out to Teesha at (352) 620-8239. Donations can be made at www.IESmarion.org/donate (select F4K in the dropdown) May God Bless you all abundantly!

Special Thanks to...

Special thanks for these large donations (in pounds):

First Assembly of God: 1,767; Dept of Juvenile Justice: 48; Countryside Presbyterian: 378; First Baptist Ocala: 268; The Way Church: 531; Twilight Cruisers: 2931 Ocala West United Methodist: 276; Brentwood at Fore Ranch: 929; Stone Creek Ladies Golf Assoc: 190; West Marion Moose Lodge 2356: 316; OTOW Softball & Ocala Golf Cart: 379. And College Road Baptist: 50+ care bags; Edward Jones Investments: 35+ bags of clothes and Paradise Ministries: 24 cases oatmeal

Shout out to St John Lutheran Church & School, for their recent donation of 435 pounds of food of food!



Volunteers load up to deliver backpacks



**INTERFAITH
EMERGENCY
SERVICES**

P.O. Box 992 • Ocala, FL 34478

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Check out our website at
www.IESmarion.org



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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.

Summer Volunteers Needed by Tina Reid, Volunteer Coordinator

It's summer! Which means...we need you! We have so many volunteers that are vacationing enjoying the beautiful weather as well as our snow birds that have flown the coop. All you need is 4 hours once a week to be our saving grace and help your community in need as well. Please check out our volunteer opportunities by going to our website iesmarion.org/volunteer or on our main page select "Get Involved" then "Volunteer" and select the big red button. This area has a more in-depth description of all our volunteer opportunities. If you have any questions, big or small, just reach out to me and I would love to talk with you. Happy Summer! Call me at (352) 644-9196 for more information or to schedule a tour.

Thrift Store News, by Shannon Pickering, Thrift Store Manager

The Interfaith High Tea is quite a meaningful, special event for the Hostesses who gather in fellowship to celebrate and support our shelter residents that have incredible stories to tell about their lives. Year after year, the event gets better and better, and raises more money for our homeless shelter. In the background, Interfaith Thrift Store holds an annual after-hours event for our shelter residents to find the perfect outfit to wear for the event. Colorful, flowery, dresses; fancy hats and fascinators; shoes galore. The residents can select whatever makes them feel comfortable and lovely. Our Thrift Store is proud to be able to provide clothing for our residents, and it's thanks to you as donors, for the beautiful clothing and other items that are donated to us. Thank you, Marion County, for your generosity.

We'd love for you to stop by and shop. Or call us for a pickup of gently used furniture or appliances. I'll be happy to get you scheduled! Monday through Saturday, 9 am to 4 pm. We can't wait to see you!

