

## A Sanctuary in the Storm, by Koya Harris, Intake Manager

Today, Darlene entered the “sanctuary.” This is the term I use to describe the atmosphere I try to keep in my office, for a moment of peace from the stress of life. Darlene’s husband recently and unexpectedly had a change in his mental state. Darlene is battling health problems herself and her husband’s condition increased her own stress and health problems. She came to Interfaith because she just needed help and didn’t know what was available. When Darlene entered my office, she collapsed into a chair and begin to cry. She said, “I just feel such a release in your office. I can’t take anymore.” I let her cry and vent her frustrations. Afterwards, I was able to tell her about our gas card program that would help her husband get to an emergency appointment in Gainesville. Also, she was able to receive food from our Food Pantry for her household. She explained that she needed income and was in desperate need of work.



**“I just cant take it anymore...”**

While we were talking, my phone rang. Usually when I am with a client, I do not answer my phone, but this time I felt the urge to answer. When I did, it was one of Interfaith’s amazing donors. He explained to me that he was calling to see if I could recommend any of our clients in need of work, with experience in yard work and basic landscaping, that he could pay hourly. I didn’t know anyone right off the top of my head, but I explained that I would ask around and get back to him. While I was on the phone I kept looking at Darlene and she had a big grin on her face and she mouthed the words “thank you God.” When I hung up, she said, “I’m sorry for eavesdropping, but is that person looking for someone who does yard work? Because I do!” When I said yes, she got so happy, she almost leapt out of her chair. You see, Darlene has experience with lawncare – including a truck, a mower, leaf blower and more! We both started praising God! It’s in the moments where we feel like we can’t take anything else when God shows up and gives us the reassurance that He’s listening, and He hasn’t forgotten about us.

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.  
Hebrews 10:23

## The Old Becomes New at the Thrift Store, by Shannon Pickering, Thrift Store Manager



Do you have the vision to look at a gently used piece of furniture and turn it into something new? Can you restyle an outdated item to become new and trendy? If so, Interfaith Thrift Store will be a dream come true for you! We have donations dropped off throughout the day so there is always something new to see! From vintage 70’s style furniture to solid wood pieces, we have items for every taste, style, and budget. One of our recent shoppers came to me recently looking for old chairs to do the planter pictured left. Pinterest is full of amazing ideas – and we’ve got lots of material for your best ideas! Recently, at the Center for Life, we furnished an entire room with donated items from the store, including a bookshelf with books on health and wellness to assist our homeless community that visit. Thanks to our donors, we have treasures waiting just for you! Stop in and check us out, at 718 N Pine, Ocala. Don’t forget - we also pick up donations - give me a call at 352-351-3541.

## From the Chief Executive Officer: Karla Grimsley



Last month we celebrated our awesome volunteers that are vital to our mission. This month I would like to celebrate some of our other partners that we simply couldn't do without. The one that comes to mind this month is The Letter Carriers Union. These mailmen and women go way above and beyond one Saturday each year to make sure that our food warehouse is well-stocked for the summer months. The food from the Letter Carrier's Food Drive "Stamp Out Hunger" is county-wide drive that sustains us over the next few months and boy does this county step up! For many years, Marion County was number one in the pounds of food collected for counties our size. At its' height, this effort gave us 180,000 pounds of food in one day. Last year was a little lower than normal because some of the marketing materials weren't available to us; mainly those plastic grocery bags that show up in everyone's mailboxes. Thank goodness this year we have bags and they should be hitting mailboxes

by the 2nd week of May. Of course there is much more to this event than what goes on that one day before Mother's Day. There are weeks of planning and all of the added work of delivering the grocery bags and information post cards to EVERY mailbox in the county. There are many logistical challenges. A member of the Marion County Sheriff's office donates his time that day to transport trailers filled with food to our main warehouse. The United Way steps up and helps us tremendously with marketing to make sure the word gets out. And then the day of the event volunteers from all over the county show up at the 3 main post offices and help unload the carrier's trucks as they come in. These are partners that we never want to take for granted. So THANK YOU, to all of the letter carriers and a special thanks to Tim Legg who takes the lead in coordinating this event. We also appreciate every household that remembers to leave non-perishable foods by (or in) their mailbox on that sacred Saturday, May 11th. You might even want to leave a nice note on your mailbox to let your carrier know how much they are appreciated! Each one handles hundreds of pounds of food that day in addition to the mail and packages they already handle. What they do is back-breaking and truly selfless. This one day of the year these letter carriers are truly heroes in our county as thousands of families will be helped due to their efforts. God bless everyone involved and don't forget to put your food out!

### Volunteers Needed!

*We need volunteers for the Letter Carrier's Stamp Out Hunger Event on May 11th. One of the most important positions involves being a driver (with a helper) to pick up food in subdivisions throughout the county. We also need volunteers for 3pm-6pm shifts at Interfaith's Warehouse. For more information about both of these awesome opportunities – please contact Steve at 352-622-4204 or Steve@iesmarion.org.*

*Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Romans 12:10*

## Donors Provide Support for Those In Need, by Michelle Collier, Resident Assistant

First I would like to tell you about Kelsea and her sweet boy Adrian. Kelsea came to our shelter with no job and no daycare for her son. This is so hard for a single parent. Luckily, because of generous donors we were able to provide the funding to pay for Adrian's daycare so Kelsea could find a job. Today Kelsea is employed, paying her own daycare bill and is signing up for CNA courses to start soon.

Next we have Tammy and Braxxton. Our Director of Ministries, Jessica Rodriguez, met Tammy at Saturday morning Church in the Garden worship. After Jessica heard her story, she invited Tammy into our shelter program. Through our donors and sponsors we were able to supply the funding to have her background check and fingerprinting done. Because of this, Tammy now has been offered a position with the Marion County School Board.

I hope these stories give you some insight of the success that we are seeing day to day with our residents. None of this would be possible without the love and support from our community partners and donors, and the hard work and dedication from our residents. As a shelter staff, we are so proud of the efforts of the residents to be successful by following the program and doing their part. Thank you for helping us help others.



**Tammy and Braxxton**

## Special Gifts

### In MEMORY of:

David Varner  
By: Bill and Lois Dolin  
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Ann Van Denburgh  
Gary and Sarah Bemiller  
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Robert Weech  
By: Theresa Weech

Tina Craig  
Woody and Rita Clymer

### In HONOR of:

Bill Stracke  
By: Patsy and Jack Harward  
Izu Nwakoby, MD  
By: Woody and Rita Clymer



## Many Thanks to...

Special thanks for these recent donations of food (in pounds): Small Talk: 123, Palm Cay community: 105, Ocala West Methodist Church: 222, Community Bank: 473, Twilight Cruisers: 342, First Baptist: 523 and Cargill meat packing plant, Dodge City Kansas: 56 pounds of Angus Beef.

We're so grateful for our partnership with On Top of the World and their Charity Pro-am golf tournament at Candler Hills Golf Club. We received \$45,000 from the tournament! Pictured are Lynette Vermillion and Kenneth Colen from OTOW, Karla Grimsley and two of our Board Members - Nick and Vern.

Special thanks to Ravi Mathew from NH Jones who raised 300 pounds of hygiene for Interfaith! We love seeing our future leaders get involved in helping their community! (pictured left with volunteer Stephan).

Special thanks to these amazing restaurants that donated to our Volunteer Appreciation Week in April: Doing Dinner, Pi on Broadway, Sonny BBQ SR200 and Chick Fil A on SR 200. They provided awesome meals for our amazing volunteers! We also couldn't do this great week of appreciation without Craig and Mike of Freedom Health! Their support of Interfaith provides funding for Volunteer Week, and saves our donation dollars for those in need! Finally, we'd like to thank long time donors, Steve Hawter and the Twilight Cruisers for stopping by with some of their classic cars! We love our partners! (Twilight Cruisers pictured left).

## Amazon Shopping Makes us SMILE

Want to support Interfaith while you shop? Using the link below, when you make a purchase on Amazon, a portion of the proceeds goes to Interfaith! You can make us your designated charity of choice! And don't worry - there's no price difference if you use the link! It's a win win!

[www.smile.amazon.com/ch/59-2349840](http://www.smile.amazon.com/ch/59-2349840)

### A Special Gift

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 by email [Kayla.Grimley@IESmarion.org](mailto:Kayla.Grimley@IESmarion.org). Mail donations to PO Box 992, Ocala, FL 34478.

### From Our Website:

*"My daughter and I are sleeping in my car. I don't know what to do to get back to a life before we lost our home. Please help."*

Susan reached out to Interfaith through our website. Thanks to donors like you, our Shelter Staff is here, and able to admit her and her daughter to our shelter, where they are safe and on a road to rebuilding their lives. Your donations make a difference in the lives of others! Thank you!



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

### **Volunteers Needed, by Tina Reid**

Our Center for Life is doing amazing things! We are so blessed to be able to offer the services that are provided to help those without insurance. To offer these services, we rely on volunteers to be able to track, schedule and assist at many levels. Right now, we are in critical need of help at the Center for Life. We need volunteers for reception (greeting clients and answering phones), intake (assisting clients one on one to help provide for their needs) and data entry (experience with Microsoft programs to help track our data). These opportunities really will give you the opportunity to help people in need and potentially save a life!

Also, our Free Clothing Boutique needs volunteers as well. Help our clients shop - just 3 hours a week!

For more information, please contact me at 352-629-8868 x210 or [Tina.Reid@IESmarion.org](mailto:Tina.Reid@IESmarion.org).

### **Patching up at the Clinic**

We have addressed several issues at the Center for Life building as well as in our Hope Clinic. Some of you may recently noticed that the clinic was closed for a few days for construction. Due to multiple leaks, the building needed a new roof and Dunnrite Roofing was hired to complete the project so that we could stop the damage being done.

Due to water damage, the Hope Clinic experienced drywall damage that consisted of almost an entire section of wall located in the lobby. With superb care, Rick Basile Drywall Company did a fantastic job completing the necessary repairs quickly and professionally. Although fearful it would take a week to complete, Rick and his team swooped in and completed everything in a whopping two days! It was amazing. The team used great care in securing their work area to keep it from spreading throughout the building. We appreciated the fact that they did a great job and took great care in respecting our property. Now, we're back open in the clinic and helping clients with their many needs - including medical, dental and vision services. God is good!

**by Holly Bravo, CFL Manager**