

Forever Homes Provide Joy to Formerly Homeless, by Sonya Tyler, Director of Operations

With the purchase of the 14th Street Apartments, we had a lot on our plates to get them ready for tenants, as well as qualifying the existing tenants that already lived there. The exciting thing about the apartments is that they are a three-fold blessing. First, as affordable housing is quickly disappearing, we can provide 8 units that tenants can income-qualify for, allowing them a safe, affordable place to live. 5 more units are for our Permanent Supportive Housing, for our homeless friends that are receiving help from our staff to transition into a brand new home and a brand new life (a total of 11 people). The final unit has been set aside for a local law enforcement officer for free housing, in exchange for helping provide safety and oversight for the other 13 units. (If you know of an officer that would like to take advantage of free housing, please contact Karla or Sonya.)

For the 5 supportive housing units, Karla's vision was to reach out to our local church partners and have them adopt not only an apartment (from top to bottom), but also the individuals moving in. This meant furnishing an entire apartment – painting, furniture, kitchen supplies, pots & pans, sheets, towels - everything they would need for their new home. Not only did they totally make the apartments a beautiful place to live, they went above and beyond by filling their refrigerators and kitchen cabinets with food, providing baskets of hygiene supplies – even clothing! It was such an incredible transformation!

The beautiful thing to watch was the 'church' stepping outside their walls, and becoming friends with the men and women that would live in those units. Learning their preferences so that they picked the colors of their rooms, pictures on the walls, and food in the fridge. Going forward, they'll invite them to church, celebrate their birthdays, and become part of their circle. It has been one of the coolest things I've ever seen.



Sean with Meadowbrook blesses apartment

Our deepest gratitude goes to *Fort King Presbyterian*, *Central Christian Church* and *Meadowbrook Church*, for adopting our first three units and creating an amazing home for each group.

There are more blessings to come – as we fix-up other units and they become available, we have more churches ready to step up and continue the blessing, and others stepping up to offer support with costs of necessary repairs. If your church would like to get involved to help sponsor some of the repairs, we would love for you to share in this amazing project. Stay connected on social media to follow their stories and God's blessings on these amazing journeys.



Red and Jose, happy to be home



Tammy relaxes on her couch

From the Chief Executive Officer: Karla Grimsley-Greenway



Last month we celebrated our volunteers that come to Interfaith week after week and work for us. This month I want to celebrate a different kind of volunteer that also works on our behalf. I'm talking about those individuals out there that spearhead 3rd-party fundraisers for us. This is such an incredible blessing to us because they do all of the work and we just show up and collect a check! This allows me and my staff to focus on our mission. While I love putting on fundraisers, there is no way I could possibly manage enough fundraisers to meet all of the needs of our clients. Words cannot express what a gift it is when another person and/or group of people feel so passionate about helping us and our clients that they do all of the work needed to put on a car show, a golf tournament, plant sale, or food drive! I'm sharing photos of 4 groups that have most recently presented us with a donation. Ken Colen, George Albright, Steve Hawter, and Gary Nelson (along with their crews) have been supporting Interfaith in this way longer than the 11 years that I've been here. There are so many more of you out there that have done likewise and you know who you are! YOU are the people who make our ministry possible. May God bless you all abundantly.



We are beyond grateful for Ken Colen and On Top of the World Communities for making us a benefactor of their annual Ocala Open Pro-Am Golf Tournament. Thank you to all of the businesses that sponsored and the golfers that supported the event. What a generous community and a generous gift! God bless you all!

Karla and Ken pose with a \$40,000 check from the tournament (left).



The Ocala Palms Community has a champion for Interfaith named Gary Nelson. He and some of his neighbors do 2 major food drives for us each year and present us with a check! The most recent one was \$5,000!! You are awesome!

Thank you to George Albright and his wonderful team that continue to support us and other charities through fundraising events that they host! We are so grateful for this \$5,000 donation to help us serve those in need.

George and his team, pictured right with Karla at check presentation.



Moms Love our Thrift Store

Searching for that special gift for mom but can't break the bank? Stop by 718 North Pine and check out our amazing selection of purses, handbags, and wallets. Gently used and in great condition, we have a style for everyone!

Stop by and see us today, Monday through Saturday, 9 am to 4 pm!

Another champion for Interfaith, Steve Hawter (pictured right) and the Twilight Cruisers! At every car event they think of us and collect food for our pantry and every December we get toys and a big check too! We appreciate this support year after year!



Special Gifts

In MEMORY of:

Jimmy Blocker

By: Ruthanne & Tim Mizner
Buddy & Anne MacKay

Joyce Sizemore

Anthony Deltoro

By: Ruthanne & Tim Mizner

Sarah Ann Grieco

By: Frank & Pamela Stafford

Ann Marie Stanley

By: Wayne & Amy Overby
Dr & Mrs Jonathan Hanson
Peter Hanson

Nancy Cowart

By: Charlotte & Carswell Ponder

Charlotte Lawson

Biddie Kirk

By: Margaret Vandenburg

Richard Lane

By: Alpha Delta Kappa

Fidelis Kappa Chapter

Mack Dunwoody

Mary Britt

By: Ana Dunwoody

Gregory Gordon

By: Linda Gordon

Arlen Jumper

Mark Yandle

By: Mike & Diane Finn

Harry & Evelyn Dannels

By: Charlotte Justice

Charlotte Ponder

By: Caroline Burt

Rob Nation

Margaret Ann Vandenburg

Amos Lewis, Sr

Amos Lewis, Jr

Merritt D Brown, Jr

By: Noisettia Lewis

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.

Special Gifts

In HONOR of:

Bridget Lynch's birthday

By: Kathy Ross

Bill Chamber's birthday

By: Lynn & Ben Pabst

Julian Wachs

By: Anne Dahlen

Lynne Bertrand

Paulette Millhorn's Birthday

By: Ana M Dunwoody

Susan Johnson's Retirement

By: Pamela & Richard Eubanks

A Home for Gary, Squiggy and Pancho

When a homeless person seeks the services of our Rapid Rehousing Team, there is no such thing as "average" since each case will present a unique set of needs and circumstances. A classic case in point is Gary.

Gary arrived at my office in December....he had been living in his vehicle since September with a big beautiful tabby cat named Squiggy, and Pancho the Bearded Dragon. Gary's main concern really wasn't for himself, but he was mostly worried his pets were suffering with the cold at night and the hot days in his car while he worked at his job. When a client becomes homeless, they have already lost so much...their housing and most of their possessions are now history... so if we can accommodate their pets into their new apartment, it is such a meaningful moment. In Gary's case, it did make the placement a little more expensive paying pet fees, but the reward was a happier client who brings their beloved pet to a home they can share together. This is such an important step in rebuilding their lives together, and increases the long term success rate of the housing placement. And heaven knows we don't need any more abandoned animals at the overburdened Marion County Animal Shelter!

So Gary, Squiggy and Pancho were presented as a package deal to our Housing Navigator, Brittian and we prayerfully went forward searching for the perfect apartment for the little family.

It did take a while to find a pet friendly unit, but God is so faithful and presented us with an affordable apartment that even has a balcony overlooking a nice wooded area for

Squiggy's pretend hunting!

By February 1st, everyone was moved in using the ESG Rapid Rehousing Grant for startup costs and moving expenses. A wonderful church helped provide very affordable furniture, and Gary's little family now has a home. Philippians 4:9 says "*My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus*". In Gary's case, He provided not only provided for Gary, but added the bonus of Squiggy and Pancho too!

Special Thanks to...

Special thanks for these large donations (in pounds): Silver Springs Shores Moose Lodge: 475; Countryside Presbyterian Church: 45; Ocala West United Methodist Church: 328; First Presbyterian Church: 115; Grace Episcopal Church: 140; First Assembly of God: 281; American Panel: 102 of food. Also: Madison Street Academy-2nd grade, 171 pounds of food & hygiene; Linda Wall: 200 boxes of cereal; B J Rabold: 200 boxes of cereal; Van Akin: 48 pounds of hamburger; Chuck & Sue Kiger: truckload of groceries; Paradise Ministries: 20 cases of food and Happy Juice, Ocala: 80 organic cold pressed juices.



Brittian, Gloria and Gary at his new place

Brittian, Gloria and Gary at his new place

by Gloria Cribben, Housing Case Manager

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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.

Save-A-Lot Saves the Day for Food 4 Kids, by Delores Bulgín

We continue to struggle with the pandemic and the food shortages due to supplies being stuck on containers on the high seas and at shipping ports. However, the Food 4 Kids program is blessed to work with some awesome food suppliers that save the day, and our budget!

I would like to say thank you to Rodney Phillips, Store Manager and Debbie Rioseco, Assistant Store Manager (pictured right) at Save-a-Lot on Silver Spring Blvd in Ocala. Since working with them, they have stepped in to make sure that our food order is complete. If we order a particular item that is not available, they call me to let me know that we won't be getting it, or they will ask if I want to substitute it for another item of the same value and within the same perimeter of what is on our list that we provide the students. With the communication that we receive from Rodney and Debbie, we are more prepared to go elsewhere to look for any items that they can't provide so that we can continue to provide all six meals to our students over the weekend. Sometimes it is difficult to find people so willing to help their customers, but they definitely go above and beyond - especially when I must show up before opening time to pickup my food order. Accommodating my early arrival is crucial, so that I can get the food back to our warehouse so the food will be ready to get packed into the bags for students. It takes a village - and we're grateful to Rodney and Debbie for making it easier!

