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The Apple Newsletter

News and Highlights from
Community Help Network, Inc.



Stories from the Warehouse

(From Dian Reyome and Bonnie Meyer)

What a privilege we have in helping others. Our Household Pantry serves low-income families throughout South Lake County. In the past month, two of those families have been refugees from Ukraine. Our hearts are full of joy to be able to help these families who have fled so much danger and uncertainty.

"On a cold Saturday in January, a young man came to the pantry with his mother and grandmother. They were all refugees from Ukraine. We did their intake as we do with all our clients. The two ladies spoke no English, but the young man's English was very good. He did a great job of understanding and communicating.

We were able to help them with items from the pantry and winter coats. They were extremely grateful and gracious. We invited them to come back for our Ladle of Love."

And, they did come back and join us for lunch on Saturday the 4th of February. He brought his mother and grandmother again, along with his wife and young son.



Upcoming Events, Fundraisers and Other Fun Stuff

Saturday, February 18th; not only will we be having our free luncheon, but later that afternoon, we will host a **Soup Cook Off** from **4:00 pm – 6:00pm** **Entry fee is \$15**. You can drop off your payment or pay online. Cash Prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place winners. Winners are chosen by the amount of donations their soup receives for Community Help Network. Bonnie is challenging anyone who thinks they can beat her Cream of Mushroom Soup. She will take whoever beats her (*as if*) to dinner anywhere in Crown Point they choose.

Also, we are having a **Kids' Bake Off for our Buddy Bag Kiddos**. Lots of fun prizes for them to win. We are looking for two or three teachers or retired teachers to be judges of this event.

Give us call, 219-805-3717, if you have questions or wish to volunteer. You can also sign up to help at www.signupgenius.com.

Wednesday March 1st is our fundraiser at the new Lou Malnatis on Broadway in Crown Point. **4:00 pm til 10:00 pm** Mention **Buddy Bags** or **Community Help Network** when you order and they will donate part of the proceeds to us.

Saturday March 4th come see us at Crown Point High School at the Crown Point Community Foundation's Annual Volunteer Fair, 10:00 am until 2:00 pm. We'll have some swag for you and you can add your name and contact information to our volunteer list.

Saturday March 25th, Pancake Breakfast! From 9:00 am until 11:00 am. Pancakes, mini quiches, bacon, sausage, sausage and biscuits, and more. **Free Will Offering.**

Saturday April 8th Let us hide your Easter Eggs!!! If you do an Easter Egg hunt for your kids or grandkids, hire us to hide filled, plastic eggs outside your house. Each egg is filled with a trinket or a quarter and a fun sticker. For a mere \$50 we will hide 100 Easter Eggs around your yard. Give us a call, 219-805-3717 to make arrangements. **Hiding will commence at 7:00 pm and end at 10:00 pm.**

Ladle of Love is First and Third Saturdays of the month from 11:00 am until 1:00 pm. Food is being provided by Tavern on Main and other Crown Point Restaurants. And, it's delicious!!! Still No Charge, Free Will Offering accepted but not expected.



Buddy Bags – This program began as a mission outreach of the Crown Point First United Methodist Church in 2017. A Buddy Bag contains breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks for two days, a small number of extra items are added for longer breaks. Each Buddy Bag comes with a child-centered inspirational note. Once a month something special is added. This could be a small craft kit, school supplies or a small bag of travel size hygiene items.

When the program became too large for the church to continue to house and fund on its own, a brave group of volunteers formed Community Help Network, Inc. That was April of 2020. That September we were blessed to find the wonderful space we occupy in Crown Point, right across from the High School.

Household Pantry – Providing hygiene items, paper products and cleaning supplies to low-income families in South Lake County. Open Tuesdays 9:00 am until 1:00 pm and Saturdays 9:00 am until Noon. Let us know if you would be able to place a collection bin in your place of work or business.

Little Free Library – A large selection of books for all ages. All books are free. Open any time there are people at the warehouse.



From Bonnie’s Messy Desk

People who may have been doing fine until a job lay off, an illness, an expensive car repair or car accident, suddenly find themselves in a position they never thought they would be in. It is a position I’ve been in.

I was a stay-at-home mom with two young sons and a husband out of work. We were struggling even when he was working. Our families helped where they could, but our needs were significant. We went on food stamps and benefited from the generosity of food pantries and service organizations. It was beyond humbling for me. I felt embarrassment and shame as I stood in line at the grocery store waiting to pay with food stamps. I was so afraid someone I knew would see me.

I could not get the things my boys wanted for their birthdays or Christmas. I could not get them the clothing they wanted so they could look like the other kids. One year for Halloween I could not buy a costume for my younger son, who was two at the time, so I crocheted him a Santa suit. He was the cutest trick or treater in the neighborhood!

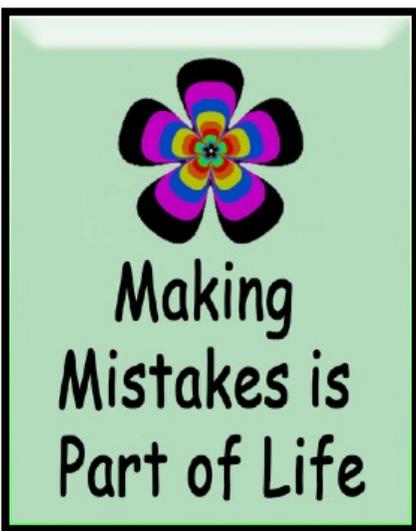
We saw better times once my husband was back to work. When you are down so long it takes time to get back up. We were behind on the rent, car payments and other bills. Just because he was gainfully employed did not mean that we were suddenly above water.

I write these things so that you may think of others who are in situations like I was. Overcoming poverty is not easy. It takes a lot of work and help from others.

I hope that when you’re considering what to donate to the next food drive, that you look beyond the dented can of lima beans that are discounted at the grocery store; that you give some thought to who may be on the receiving end. It could be your neighbor, a cousin, an old schoolmate, you just never know. One day it could be you.



Once or twice a year we include a small hygiene kit in each Buddy Bag. We pack over 600 Buddy Bags each week. That’s a lot of hygiene items! But you can help. If you’ve done any traveling, you probably have some travel size hygiene items that will fit perfectly in the kits we assemble. You can drop them off at 550 East Burrell Drive (use the loading dock, red door) or give a call, 219-805-3717, and we’ll make arrangements to get them from you. We are especially short toothbrushes and small tubes of toothpaste. Thank you!



This is a sample of the weekly inspirational notes that are placed in every Buddy Bag.

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