



The Helpers Fund Always Ready With A Helping Hand

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What we've
been up to!

Fall 2020



It has been an unusual time throughout the U.S. and the world this year with the widespread Covid-19 Pandemic.

The Helpers Fund has been no exception. We have experienced some unusual situations during this period. Our donor base has been extremely generous throughout this pandemic while our requests for assistance have remained somewhat reflective of earlier years with the exception on a small, approximately 20%, spike in requests for food distribution through the food pantry.

We have changed our food pantry operating procedures to reflect the seriousness of the virus and its ability to spread. Food Pantry distributions still take place twice a month, however, all distribution of food stuff takes place outside of the Food Pantry space. Individual bags of food are brought out to a designated location for each individual family participating in the service where they pick up their allocation.

While we have provided assistance to individuals requiring help we have found ourselves providing financial support to some of our local community organizations that have been unable to raise funds or have

found themselves falling short on required funding.

During this period of time we have assisted the Minerva Backpack program in their effort to fund their program for the 2020-2021 school year. We have also assisted a local organization in their efforts to provide returning students with backpacks filled with pens, pencils, notebooks, rulers and other required school supplies.

We have provided assistance to another local community organization so it can fulfill its annual Christmas program which is designed to make children's Christmas a little more memorable and happy. This organization has been a strong supporter of the Helpers Fund over the years and it only seemed right to help them out.

The fund provided lunches to local State Troopers, Sheriffs Deputies and health care workers as well as postal workers during the summer months of the crisis. It was our way to say thank you for their efforts in keeping us safe and providing our community with the services that are required on an everyday basis.

When the Chestertown Farmers Market opened in July we were able to initiate our program of supplying vouchers for clients of the food pantry to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. This program continued successfully through the end of the Market in September.

All of this was made possible by the strong support you provided to our organization

Assistance provided since last spring included:

General Assistance

- Provided financial assistance, through our partnership with Hudson Headwaters Health Network, to several families for medical visits, dental procedures, prescription co-pays and medically necessary materials. This assistance was provided to people in Chestertown, Pottersville and Brant Lake and totaled more than \$4020, this even during the Pandemic when medical visits were very limited and dental care was limited to emergency treatment.
- Provided \$2300 in support to local organizations that support our seniors, children and needy of the community.
- Supplied more than \$1250 in heating assistance during this period.

Food Pantry

- In excess of 60 families from Chestertown and Pottersville have participated in the Food Pantry since our last newsletter
- Purchased and distributed over 350 pounds of fresh meat at semi-monthly food distributions.

- Shared over \$3500 in TOPS cards to be used for the purchase of food and household goods not provided in the food pantry. This includes items such as dairy, produce and personal healthcare items.
- Provided more than \$1000 in vouchers to be redeemed at the Chestertown Farmers Market to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables.

This is a brief overview of some of the successful actions that were taken to assist our neighbors since our last report.

BackPack Program

The Helpers Fund has continued its sponsorship and support of the Backpack program at North Warren Central School. As in past years the program will cover approximately 30 children each week from Chestertown, Pottersville and Brant Lake.

The program continues to be effective and appreciated by those that participate in it each week.

As an added effort this year, we assisted the Minerva School District in meeting their financial requirements to provide a "Backpack Program" for their neediest students. Our support, as well as their own fundraising efforts, have insured that students in that district will participate in a Backpack Program this school year.

Thank You BBQ

This year, as a result of the Covid 19 Pandemic, we did not host our annual "Thank You Dinner". We felt that it was prudent not to bring large numbers of people in close proximity to one another.

We do however, want all of our supporters and benefactors to know how much they are appreciated and how critical their support is to the overall operations of the Helpers Fund and the Food Pantry.

Thank you for your continued support and we hope that the current situation will be

behind us in 2021 and we will once again be able to gather, break bread and say "Thank You!".

Scholarships

During the graduation season we awarded three scholarships to local students who were going to continue their education.

Those students were:

Amber Allen attending Hudson Valley Community College

Abigail Griffen attending Cazenovia College

Karli Wood attending SUNY Adirondack

We wish these and all recent graduates success in their chosen endeavors.

"Dinner For Two" Raffle



Mary Jane and Bruce Draw the Winning Ticket

This year marked the 18th year of our highly anticipated event. The raffle was held on Wednesday June 17th with three winners being drawn. Those winners were:

First Prize - Bill and Mary Tierney (Chestertown)

Second Prize - Karen and Tim Costello (Hague)

Third Prize - Margaret Keefe (Saratoga)

Congratulations to our winners and our most sincere thanks to all of you who took a chance and supported our annual effort!

Annual Holiday Drive and Gift Distribution



The Holidays are rapidly approaching

Our annual fundraising effort is currently underway. We do our best to limit the number of times that we go out asking for funds to accomplish our mission and this is our major fundraiser of the year.

As is our normal procedure we will provide two items of clothing to each adult in families participating in the Food Pantry. Additionally, four items of clothing, as well as one toy, will be given to each child under 18 in those families participating in the Food Pantry.

We encourage you to support this effort as it is the major event sponsoring all we do in the community.

Outreach

The Fund continues its commitment to step up outreach activity. The purpose of this effort is to make people in the community aware of the Helpers Fund and its mission to help those who need assistance with an unusual situation or event in their lives.

If you know of someone who may need assistance, please do not hesitate to refer them to the Helpers Fund so we can determine their eligibility for assistance.

Have them call our line at (518) 494-5565 where they can request an application. The application will be sent to them without delay.

Be Safe, Stay Well and as always ... Thank You!