

Dear Readers,

9/15/08

While I bring you the news of the poverty stricken throughout our communities, it can be hard for those who are helping me put my column together. I am notoriously late and last minute with the wonderful person who transcribes my sometimes rambling spoken words into written words. Then another tries to sort out those feelings and edits them into some sort of understandable presentation.

I have to admit that after helping others for almost thirty years my emotions can run rampant. When I see children, the elderly, and the handicapped in need, I often have a connection with them. I feel their despair over the lack of daily necessities. I feel their sorrow for being alone. I feel their pain when they have worked their whole life to come to their last years and find themselves taxed to the point of poverty. I feel their stress over wondering how they are going to survive from one day to the next. How can a good heart not feel their pain?

When we feel our country is under attack we bond together, and we protect what is ours. We protect our peace, our rights, our lives, and especially our loved ones. Poverty is attacking the very core of our American people. In fact, over 47 million American's are living in poverty. There are many areas with extreme poverty, such as the Appalachian Mountains, Pembroke Township, Illinois, and the inner cities of every major urban area where there are clusters of poverty. Poverty also touches every small community throughout our country. If all of us Cared and Shared for those around us, we could ease that pain and suffering.

It is far better to read about this poverty than it is to see it and feel it. Poverty is non-forgiving. 25% of American's are working full-time but not earning enough to keep a family of four living above the poverty threshold. That means 25% of American's are not able to pay for food, shelter, electricity, gas, transportation, etc. while working a full-time job.

Recently a single mom and daughter were brought to my attention. A worried neighbor wrote a letter asking me to check up on them. When I knocked on the door a frail woman answered. As I looked at the mother I thought she must have been ill for awhile. After I introduced myself and explained why I was there she invited me in. I asked them how they were

and the mother answered, "Fine." The daughter looked at her in confusion and blurted out, "She's not fine." She stared at her mother, and looked back at me with tears in her eyes. I asked, "How do you know that?" She answered, "Because she eats less food than I do." The daughter was at least half the size of the mother. I could see the mother trying to tell her little girl to be quiet as she started to cry.

With that I walked past them asking if I could look around. When I opened up the cabinets they were completely bare. When I opened the very old refrigerator it was empty, not even the usual bottle of ketchup. I turned and asked "How long has it been like this?" The mother shrugged, and the daughter said, "Forever." You have to remember in a child's eyes when weeks or months go by, it seems like forever.

I fought off my tears as best I could. It doesn't happen all the time, but when I walk into situations like this my heart just pours out on the floor. I cannot understand how our great country, with a government that squanders so much, and a large percentage of the population living quite extravagant lifestyles, how we let this silent pain and suffering of our fellow creations continue. Remember it is up to our free will to make a difference.

At that moment I said, "Would both of you please come with me? I'm feeling hungry myself. I would like to go get something to eat." Of course, I couldn't eat a bit, but it was my way to protect their pride and convince them to go with me to eat. My dear friends, how can we allow this type of pain and suffering to go on, and why do we allow it to get to this point? That is why we need to be proactive and help before it gets to this almost insurmountable suffering. There is no reason why a little child should acknowledge the pains of poverty in their parent and be so confused about why they are in that situation. Just as the mother has the love inside of her to put up with the pain of hunger to give what little there is to provide for her little girl. We need to Care and Share with what we have to prevent the pain and suffering of poverty.

I ask all of you to Care and Share what you can. When we have the ability to buy food for 18 cents a pound at Second Food Harvest, when we can spend a few dollars and buy food from our local grocery stores to share with others, when we can create a food pantry system with flexible hours for the many working poor. When the rest of us acknowledge that when the

food pantries are open for the poverty stricken, not us, they often run out of food, when we acknowledge that gas at \$3.00-\$4.00 a gallon makes it very difficult to get to work, when we acknowledge the rise in food prices due to the high cost of transporting it from the growers to the store shelves, when we acknowledge the tax burden is such that there is not enough left to go around to feed a hungry mother of a poverty stricken child. We need to realize that it is up to us to Care and Share and help our fellow American's.

Many of us have a deep abiding faith and belief system. If we feel that belief is only reserved for us, for just being good and not acting, not helping...pause and think about your beliefs. Think about the goodness that you feel, you understand that is a God-given gift. Can we feel that goodness, possess that goodness in our hearts, and just ignore those that are suffering? Please, Care and Share. What you do for others comes back to you in an acknowledgement of truly understanding your gift of life.

In the past six years we have helped over 3,000 poverty stricken fellow American's in need of a helping hand. Our job is not over; in fact it seems to be more crucial than ever before. Just as life was changed for this mother and child, feeding them at that moment, stocking their cupboards, filling a new refrigerator with food, directing them to the proper agencies that help provide for shelter, that provide money for housing, to a food pantry close enough to allow for the high gas prices and with flexible hours for this working mother. The goodness that was bestowed through us is needed for many more who are suffering now. Please be aware that turning our heads away does not mean there are enough of us out there that can provide all the help that is needed. We cannot. It is going to take each and every one of us doing our part. Please Care and Share.

Health and Happiness, God Bless Everyone, WC

Richard Driehaus \$30,000 Matching Grant: We have made our goal of matching Richard Driehaus' \$30,000 Matching Grant. Thank you to all who participated in this excellent opportunity to double your donation. In a future column we will update you on where every penny was spent.

Please Help: Make checks payable to: The Time Is Now to Help, P.O. Box 70, Pell Lake, WI 53157. The Time Is Now to Help is a federally

recognized 501(c)3 charitable organization licensed in the states of Wisconsin and Illinois. You will receive a tax deductible, itemized thank you receipt showing exactly what every penny of your donation provided for the poverty stricken.

A Special Thank You to: John & Patricia Boho, Golden State Foods Foundation for their 2nd Annual Golf Outing to benefit The Time Is Now, Shawn & Donna McLafferty, Eileen Walsh Grzenia, Ruth Przewoznik, Albert & Ellen Burnell, James & Janice Batten, Donald & Gladys Keith, Jim & Karen Goodrick, William & Jean Isaacson, Muriel Lake, Gerald & Marilyn Wilkin, George & Karen Davis, Paper Dolls, Wood's School 8th Grade Class of 2008, Butch's Automotive, J.D. Development, Dick & Jean Honeyager, Kunes Country Ford & Kunes Country Chevrolet & Cadillac, ALL of you who support The Time Is Now to Help donation boxes, and the businesses that allow our donation boxes. Anyone who would like a Time Is Now donation box in your business, please call (262)249-7000.

Desperately Needed Cars: Once again we have a desperate need for used cars. If anyone has a car they are thinking of trading in or an extra car you are not using, please think of those who are in desperate need of transportation to get them to and from work so they can provide the daily necessities for their families. Without reliable transportation it makes their situation even more desperate. Please Care & Share.

Pick 'N Save "We Care" Program: Please sign up for the "We Care" program at your local Pick 'N Save. A percentage of each purchase will go directly to The Time is Now to Help. All you have to do is designate The Time is Now, account number **832410**, on your Advantage Plus Savers Club Card application.

Goodsearch for The Time Is Now: Search the web with www.goodsearch.com and help to raise funds for The Time Is Now to Help. Just make www.goodsearch.com your homepage, pick The Time Is Now as your charity and the rest is simple. You can even shop some of your favorite online retailers. It is a fun and easy way to help the poverty stricken.

Endowments/Helping Others through Your Will: For those of you who wish to leave an endowment for the poverty stricken, we would greatly accept any gifts. Please think of those in desperate need, good people, living in fear of poverty and consider helping them through your will.

Donate Stocks/ Mutual Funds, Let the Government Contribute: Consider donating shares of appreciated stocks and mutual funds to The Time Is Now to Help and receive twice the benefits from your gift. Please call 262-249-7000 if you would like more information.

Please visit: www.TimeIsNowToHelp.org

