

After spending the evening listening to over forty voice mails, reading a multitude of emails and going through stacks of the weeks letters requesting our assistance I found myself slumped over at my desk. It all was so overwhelming. Where I usually can overcome my feelings of sadness and heartbreak and provide the solutions to help those in desperate need, tonight I couldn't seem to shake these feelings. The many problems and tragedies that had been shared with me tonight seemed more devastating than usual. The reason I was feeling so helpless was my inability to help these many fellow creations turning to us for assistance due to lack of funds. I read situation after situation knowing I could not help these people. I could not prevent their eviction. I could not restore utility service. I could not help with a car repair or purchase food, toiletries and household necessities for those in desperate need. I had to listen to voice mails with tear filled eyes as I heard desperate crying coming from the people leaving the messages.

I continued to sort through the mail. A volunteer helped me to research each request for authenticity, online records, previous assistance if any, and we placed them in piles according to severity of need to organize my spontaneous visits. I looked over to see the volunteer had tears in her eyes that she quickly tried to hide. I had shared with her that our funding was too low to help any of this week's requests. She picked up a letter and said, "I know, but listen to this one." She continued to read a letter containing the details of a family struggling due to the mother having a life threatening illness. The father had lost his job due to the many days taken off work to care for her and the three children, one of which is severely handicapped. No one ever plans for a life threatening illness to happen to them. How much can you prepare for these life events that alter your family and finances? When you are already working paycheck to paycheck there is not much room for savings to prepare for a life threatening emergency. I had to tell the volunteer to place that one at the top of the pile for when we hopefully received our next donation or I am able to successfully sell another property through my real estate company. This year has been better for real estate sales, and I thank God for the opportunity to work every day. The requests for help for those in desperate need always seem to outpace the flow of income.

Then I read a letter that contained the details of a senior citizen that was raising her two grandchildren due to the death of her son and daughter-in-law in a car accident after being hit by an uninsured drunk driver. She did not have enough money to purchase both children winter coats and boots. They also were behind in their utilities and rent after the grandmother had gotten pneumonia and been in and out of the emergency room several times. This grandmother and grandchildren would too be put in the pile waiting for donations to cover the assistance.

One of the voicemails I listened to contained the call back information I was waiting to hear. A mother and two children we had been providing emergency shelter for had found an affordable apartment. She hesitantly reminded me I had promised to provide first month's rent and security deposit if she was able to secure a job as well. I heard her cheerful message, "Guess what Sal? I got a job! I am so excited! Now the kids and I can have a real home again! Thank you! Thank you!" Her excitement would have been contagious if it was not for the feeling of helplessness I felt knowing we did not have the funds to provide this

opportunity. Since I never break a promise I would provide this assistance, praying to God we would receive the funds necessary. How could I let this mother that had obviously worked so hard to do what was necessary to help her family, think we had forgotten our promise? We would put an end to their ordeal of not having a place to call home while living in a very small motel room.

Another letter in this week's mail included a request for assistance written by an apartment manager for an elderly widow living in a low income apartment complex. The letter writer shared her concerns for this senior citizen including the need for a bed, she was apparently sleeping on an old recliner that looked like it came from someone's trash pile, and her living in constant pain due to needing some dental work done that she could not afford. This was what the apartment manager asked for but from years of experience I knew her needs were probably much more than just these. As is often the case I usually find much more need than our fellow Americans even request our help with. When letters ask for help with rent I usually also find food insecurity, children without sufficient clothing, needed car repairs and utilities on the verge of disconnection. I again added another letter to the top of the waiting for assistance pile.

I founded The Time Is Now to Help over twenty-five years ago with the ideals of making sure every penny donated would be used 100% to help the poverty stricken. To this day we still operate under these principles. I was tired of reading financial reports from charities I was contributing to and seeing a large portion of my donation going to administrative and marketing costs. I wanted my donations to go to the cause they were presenting in their mailings and brochures. I was so disappointed to find out that most of the charities I was donating to were using my funds to pay their staff, or even worse for more mailings containing useless "free" items that try to guilt you into donating even more. Over the years I have tried different fund-raising ideas and campaigns, never using the free item guilt tactic, but not one of them has worked as well as just asking for help when needed. It is also the one thing I have the most difficulty doing in all my nonprofit organization duties. I always provide all the operating expenses, telephones, office supplies, postage, administrative costs and much more as I never want a penny of anyone's donations to be used for these expenses. Since I know I cannot continue this mission without all of "You" I am asking now for your help. The requests far outweigh our finances.

We find ourselves entering a very special holiday season. This is supposed to be a time of happiness and joy. Together we can make it even more special by Caring and Sharing, removing the pains and suffering of those living in the desperate fears of poverty. I always feel, for those of us that are capable, it is an opportunity for us to show our feelings for our fellow creations making our creator proud. Doing good makes every day, every season even more special by living up to our true heritage of loving one another, especially for those that we expect nothing in return. Please join us in creating goodness here on earth.

I thank all of "You" every day for your support of The Time Is Now to Help. I hope you can join me in continuing our good works together, ending the pains of poverty for many in need. Thank you and God Bless you.

Health & Happiness, God Bless Everyone, W.C./Sal

Please Help: There are many coming to us in desperation. Our good fellow creations need our compassion. Together we make a big difference. Make checks payable to: The Time Is Now to Help, P.O. Box 1, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. 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 how your donation provided assistance for the poverty stricken.

A Very Special Thank You: Clarence & Marilyn Schawk Family Foundation, Bernard Labovitch, Dorothy Heffernan, Community Foundation of So. Wisconsin, Grunow Family Fund, LaVerne & Jean Reu, Christina Tyschenko, Michael & Tamela Dunn, Martin Group, John Stensland & Family, Lake Geneva Area Realty, Petco Foundation, Lake Geneva Petco, First English Lutheran Church, Daniel & Margaret Voissem, Gerald & Robin Dempsey, James & Marilnn Dyer, Roberta Hunt, Rita's Wells Street Salon, Williams Bay Lioness Club, Thomas Morrissy, Bradley Solheim, Dr. Mark & Cynthia Brower, Lake Geneva Country Meats, Donna Schwall, Gregory Swanson, Margaret Plevak, William Davit, Maureen Gleason, Mary Ann Smith, Edward Paredes, Nancy Davis, Nancy Cunniff, Alex Dahlstrom, Karin Collamore, Margaret Guidarelli, Kettle Moraine Classic Car Club, Beth & Jody Rendall, John & Vickie Geier, George & Barbara Partyka, Philip & Helen Joyce, Wayne & Maria Osborn, Dennis Schultz, Judith Caputo, Frank & Donna Scherkenbach, Glenda Hill, W.C. Family Resource Center/Food Pantry volunteers, and all the God loving volunteers of all our caring pantries, 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.

W.C. Food Pantry Update: The W.C. Food Pantry will be moving. Saturday, December 13, 2014 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. will be the last day the pantry will be open in its present location. It will open again on Wednesday, December 17, 2014 from 1 p.m.-5 p.m. at its new location: 205 E. Commerce St., Elkhorn, WI. 53121. This is in the old Aurora Clinic building off of Hwy. 67 just east of Interstate 43. The food pantry will also have special holiday hours: Closed on Christmas Eve and New Years Eve open on Tuesday, December 23rd & Tuesday December 30th, 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Their new phone number is (262) 723-4488.

Furniture Donations: Please contact Love, Inc. for all your furniture, clothing and household item donations. Call (262) 763-2743 or (262) 763-6226 to schedule pick-up.

Please visit: www.timeisnowtohelp.org