

Dear W.C.,

My sister has been fighting breast cancer for the past year. After surgeries and treatments of chemo and radiation she is finally in remission. She had to give up her job and go on disability as soon as she began chemo. She thought she could continue to work through her cancer treatments but the first treatment proved her wrong. Her income dropped substantially and was not enough to pay all their bills. She had to give up her car when she couldn't make the payments and she fell behind in her utilities. I helped out where I could but I am just getting by with my three children and their father that is not always forthcoming when it comes to child support. My sister has two teenage children that have been wonderful. Her older son works to help buy food and daily necessities. Her daughter helps care for her and does all the cleaning and cooking. My sister never complains but I know they are struggling financially. Her insurance co pays and deductibles have taken most of her income. I would love to be able to help my sister and her two amazing children have a Christmas without worrying about how they are going to pay their rent and utilities and buy food. They do not want to buy gifts; they just want to be free of the stress that I know affects all of them, and celebrate her recovery. She has gone through so much this year and now that she is finally starting to feel like she will beat her cancer I want her to be able to heal and regain her strength without the constant financial stress she is under. Could you please check on my sister and see if there is a way you could make their Christmas wish come true?

Dear Readers,

I was going through the growing stack of letters I had fallen behind in while I was waiting for our matching grant funds. I had also been sick and after a few days in bed was ready to get back to helping our fellow creations during our busiest time of the year. I went through the letters already sorted and researched by several of our wonderful volunteers. They were labeled and highlighted with the most important information I needed to see, past history, needs and contact information. Several letters down I saw this letter with many highlights and personal notes from my volunteer. I knew this volunteer to have a real intuition for those most in need so I followed her lead and called the sister that had written this letter of request.

The sister answered the phone immediately and after introducing ourselves she answered many questions I had about her sister. Knowing her sister was just recovering from her cancer treatments and I was recovering from my own maladies I knew I would not be well enough to do this visit for over a week yet. I asked the sister if she would mind if I sent one of my trusted volunteers that had attended many visits with me in the past to check her sister's situation for me. The woman agreed to meet the volunteer at her sister's apartment the following day.

The rest of the visit was shared with me by the volunteer. I wrote down all the details to share with all of you. The volunteer shared she had met the sister at the appointed time and they made their introductions. The sister let her into the apartment with her own key. The volunteer noted the sister commented that she had been given a key by her sister when she was so sick so she could check on her at any time without having to wake her sister if she was resting. She said she also worried about her sister as there were many days she had been

too weak to even open the door and her children had been in school so she was all alone. On those days she would let herself in and try to just give her comfort and encourage her to stay hydrated. The sister tearfully told our volunteer, "It was hardest on those days. There was nothing I could do to offer comfort other than just be here if she needed me. She went through so much and was so strong." The volunteer said it took all her strength to not start crying along with the sister and she hadn't even met our client yet.

The women walked into the apartment as the sister called out that she had brought a visitor. Just then a woman with short tufts of hair walked into the room and hugged her sister. The woman looked questioningly at our volunteer but politely invited her inside. The sister introduced our volunteer and the women all sat to talk about The Time Is Now to Help. The volunteer said she showed the woman our website on her phone and shared a brochure. The volunteer then pulled out her list of questions and asked if she minded answering some personal questions. The woman seemed convinced we were there to help and that The Time Is Now to Help was a real charity that could possibly provide the assistance she did not know existed anywhere else.

When we met later the volunteer showed me the list of questions she had asked, using my own worksheet that I use for all our clients, and the woman's answers. The volunteer shared she knew she had to be brave to ask such personal questions of a perfect stranger. She also said she had seen me do it so many times, and seen the outcome of our good works, that she was emboldened by the opportunity to provide assistance to the struggling woman before her. The volunteer said, "I had to put my personal feelings aside and think about what was best for this woman that had endured so much that sat before me with hollow cheeks and hair that was just growing back in. I knew I had to ask these questions to get her the appropriate assistance she needed to get past this difficult situation and move on."

The volunteer told me she had asked about her income, looked at her bank statements and other supporting documents. She said she had opened her cabinets and refrigerator, noting there was some food but not any fresh fruits or vegetables, all important for your health. The volunteer had looked over the bills and medical bills. The volunteer took pictures of everything she knew I would want to see to make my final decision on the assistance we would provide. The volunteer asked about the car that had been given up when she could no longer make the payments. She asked the woman how she was getting to her medical appointments and other necessary destinations. The sister told her she had been driving her to her appointments but she had to use all her allotted days off work to do this in the past. The sister said, "Now that I do not have any more days I can safely take off work I am afraid she will not be able to get groceries or to her medical appointments." The volunteer asked the woman if she had plans of returning to work in the future. The woman said, "When I was at my sickest moments I did not think I would even live this long, much less go back to work. Now that I am feeling better and my strength is returning slowly I am starting to think about going back to work in the future. I even called my previous employer and they offered me my job back whenever I am up to returning. I would love to someday but I do not have the transportation now to get there."

The volunteer made several notes inquiring about the possibility of obtaining a vehicle for this woman. The volunteer knows how cars are always in short supply and we usually have a waiting list for available vehicles. She also knows the importance of reliable transportation for those struggling in poverty and how it is imperative for jobs and health care.

When the woman began to share her journey to fight her cancer the volunteer said she tried to not cry but the tears just began to flow. The volunteer could not even tell me the whole story without beginning to cry again. The volunteer said, "She truly was that close to death but her children are what gave her the strength to fight even harder. The woman told me how she knew her sister would finish raising her children for her and love them as her own but both her sister and children would not let her give up. She said she prayed for God's strength to get through her final rounds of chemo and he must have listened because she did it." I thanked the volunteer for her service to our fellow creations and for helping me too as I regained my own strength. She said, "I am so grateful for this opportunity to help both this wonderful woman and you. You can ask me anytime to try and fill your shoes." We both laughed at that.

When the volunteer left I began to go through all the documents and assistance sheet provided by her home visit. I could easily see the financial position this woman and her two children were in. How could this woman fully regain her health with this stressful financial burden on her shoulders? I saw her rent was overdue as well as her utilities. I could see the medical bills had been hounding her for copayments and she had also had a large deductible on her health insurance. As I saw the amounts on her medical bills I thanked God she had that insurance even if it was not an ideal plan. Her cell phone was disconnected and she still did not have transportation.

I put together a new budget and decided on what assistance would be best for her situation. I called the sister to share the news as the woman did not have a working cell phone. The sister shouted out happily when I told her we had approved what the volunteer had suggested. She was so excited to tell her sister and said she would drive over to her apartment to share the happy news. I asked the sister to call me when she was there so I could talk to the woman myself.

Fifteen minutes later the sister returned my call and handed the phone to her sister. The woman was crying on the phone saying, "You are an answer to my prayers. I did not know how we were going to ever catch up. I was constantly worrying about our utilities being disconnected, not having enough food and becoming homeless. You have lifted that burden from us. How can I ever repay you?" I told her there was no need to repay us but to just keep us in her prayers and when she got an opportunity some time in her life she could pay the good deed forward. She agreed enthusiastically. I then asked the woman about her possible return to work and her transportation needs. The woman said, "I called my employer again yesterday and they again said they would be willing to take me back and I could even begin slowly until I get my strength back. I told them I would love to do that and was looking forward to it. Now I don't know what to do about a car. There is no way I can save enough for a down payment on a car or car payments right now." I told the woman we would be willing to help her with a car as well. I heard silence on the other end of the phone and then I

heard sobbing. I gave her a moment to compose herself and asked, "I thought this news would make you happy?" The woman answered, "These are all tears of joy. That is how happy you have made me. Please thank that wonderful volunteer you sent over and also all the good people she told me about that make The Time Is Now to Help able to help people like myself." We finished our conversation and I promised to share her gratitude with all of you and call again in a few weeks, once we had a car ready and all the assistance was provided.

Several weeks later I received a call from the woman. I was happy to hear her voice and to know she had gotten the cell phone I had recommended. The woman was overjoyed to be starting her job again in a few weeks and to have been given a clean bill of health. She still had some lingering fatigue and symptoms from all she had been through but these were improving every day. The woman said, "Ever since I met your volunteer and received your assistance my strength is roaring back. I did not ever think I would see the day I felt like this again. I am so grateful for all of you and to be healthy and alive. I praise God daily for my blessings." We too praise God for the blessing of all of "You" that made this assistance possible. Thank "You" and God Bless "You".

There are many of our fellow creations turning to us for help or being referred by others. It is very important we keep our momentum of helping the poverty stricken. The Fox Charities donors recognize this and have graciously once again stepped up to help. Please remember every dollar you donate at this time will be matched by the Fox Charities Christmas Wish 2016 \$25,000 Matching Grant, not only doubling your donation but also doubling your poverty assistance. The children, the handicapped, the elderly, those that cannot fend for themselves, those living in desperate need will be crying happy tears of relief thanks to all of "You", Fox Charities and The Time Is Now to Help working together to provide poverty relief. Together "We" make a difference removing the pains of poverty for our fellow creations. 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: Barnabas Matching Grant, Fox Charities, Larry & Sally Rayner, Christine Adams, Kunes Country Auto Group, Gregg Kunes, Bess Spiva Timmons Foundation, The Harold & Bernice DeWeerd Family Foundation, Martin Business, J. Kruzan Construction & Remodeling, Lake Geneva Area Realty, Harleen Corporation, Electronic Specialties, Lake Geneva Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, Elkcast Aluminum, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Schuberth, Allen Hermansen, Elkhorn Chemical & Packaging, Gerald & Marilyn Wilkin, The Lobdells, Richard Carlson, Judy Dishneau, Barbara Kufalk, Bonnie Cowans, Shari & James Loback, Robert & Patricia Davis, Bonita Breit, Maggie Milliette, James & Mary Loftus, E. & Barbara Andres, Duane De Young, William Davit, Michael

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Honoraries: Mark & Natalie Reno in thanks for prayers answered.

Memorials: Delores Piotrowski in memory of beloved best friend Martha "Dee" Valentine and beloved parents Gene & Lottie Piotrowski. Kettle Lake Elementary Staff in memory of Sandra Woodward.

Prayer Chain: Please pray for healing for the following people: Mike, Caroline, Susan, Jennifer, Clarence, Jayden, Santana, Alex, Lily, Kaitlyn, Kynesha, Brandi's Grandma, Marilyn & Sal.

Inspiration Ministries Resale Shop: Please donate your gently used household items and furniture to the Inspiration Ministries Resale Shop. For local pick up of major items or collection appointments please call (262) 275-2264. Inspiration Ministries Resale Shop is located at N2270 State Rd. 67, Walworth, WI 53184. New hours: Monday – Saturday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Closed Sundays. Please visit often knowing your support will provide life changing assistance for the fellow creations in their care. Inspiration Ministries is home for up to 80 residents that live with multiple physical and mental challenges. I thank all of you for helping. For more information visit www.inspirationministries.org.

Please visit: www.timeisnowtohelp.org