

Just as we were beginning to worry about the upcoming winter months that are so hard on the senior citizens, veterans and the handicapped turning to us for assistance, we received a heartwarming phone call from the Fox Charities matching grant donors. They were overjoyed in hearing we had successfully matched their Christmas Wish \$25,000 Matching Grant. After the many years they have been encouraging donations with their matching grant motivation they are aware of the “seasons of giving”. They are also aware of the overwhelming need for poverty relief in the cold winter months, when utility bills skyrocket, the need for shelter can be life threatening and car repairs are essential, as even the option of walking or riding a bike to work can be too hazardous. That is why Fox Charities will be offering a new matching grant opportunity in 2017 called the Fox Charities New Year Wish \$25,000 Matching Grant. Now that the “season of giving” is over our donations usually dwindle down to a slow trickle. Unfortunately removing the pains of poverty is a year round endeavor, not just during the holidays. January, February and March are bitter cold and for senior citizens trying to cut back on expenses, the first things cut back on are usually food and lowering the thermostat. Having walked into many situations where I find senior citizens wearing coats and blankets indoors I know the need for utility assistance is real.

Thanks to the Fox Charities New Year Wish \$25,000 Matching Grant we will be able to provide a continuity of caring and sharing. The love and poverty relief we share with our neighbors in need will be brought to many in the next few winter months. We are so very grateful for the generosity shared with The Time is Now to Help and the assistance it provides throughout our communities, removing the pains and suffering of poverty for our fellow creations.

Dear W.C.,

My daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren are living in a terrible rental. They have been trying to get the landlord to repair the tiny home they rent for quite some time. My son-in-law is currently unable to work due to a heart valve problem. He recently had surgery and there were complications. He has been too ill to deal with the plumbing, mold and other problems the landlord refuses to repair. My daughter has been trying to get the landlord to fix the many problems but he just ignores her. He is taking advantage of them knowing they have too much to deal with right now. That is why I am turning to you. My daughter works very hard at her full-time job and caring for her husband and family. My son-in-law is going in for another surgery soon and I know it would help for them to not have the stress of this in their lives.

Dear Readers,

I work with many, many landlords as we provide our assistance. Most landlords I work with are caring and willing to help when possible. I have had landlords forgive overdue rent, provide improvements and even help with handicap modifications. I do not intend to make them out to be the bad guy in our weekly column as most are very supportive of our efforts to improve the lives of our fellow creations. The landlord in this week’s column unfortunately was not supportive or even a very nice person. I had a feeling his lack of compassion for his fellow creations extended to all areas of his life, not just the landlord part.

I visited this family to find out more details and see for myself the condition of the home they were renting. When I pulled up to the tiny home it was easy to see the many repairs that had been neglected by the landlord. There were cracks in the front window, the roof was in terrible disrepair and the sidewalks were heaving. If it was this bad on the outside I could just imagine how bad it was inside. I walked carefully over the broken sidewalk and knocked on the front door. In a moment the door was opened by who I assumed was the wife followed by two children that looked to be around ten and possibly twelve years old. They all listened as I explained who I was and why I was there. The woman said, "My mother told me she had written to you but I did not believe you would come. Please come inside." After I showed my identification I entered the home.

The woman introduced me to her two daughters that were close to the ages I had guessed at. They were polite and after greeting me they went to a room adjoining the front hall. In that small room I was introduced to the husband/father. I told him about why I was there and he said, "You really think you can help? My wife has been trying to get that landlord to fix some of these problems for the past few year. He knows I'm sick but doesn't seem to care. We have rented this house for ten years now and we have one more year on our five year lease. He will not let us out of our lease and we cannot afford another security deposit and first month's rent. We feel trapped and this stress is not helping me with my upcoming surgery."

I asked to look around the house to see what repairs it was in need of. The wife showed me the mold growing in the bathrooms and in areas of the ceiling where the roof had leaked. She opened cabinets and showed me where there were bowls and buckets under leaking pipes. I looked into the refrigerator that was not even working properly and saw little food. The cabinets were in the same condition. The wife showed me the clothing strung over the shower rod and chairs to dry because the dryer did not work. She showed me where the broken front window was leaking down the wall and causing more mold. I asked how long the home had been in that condition and learned it had fallen further and further into disrepair over the past few years. She said the landlord had never been nice but had worked with them in the past for repairs. She said, "It seems as soon as he found out my husband was sick and no longer working he became harder and harder to work with. I finally asked to be released from our lease but he said he would take legal action if we did that. We really did not know what to do. I have enough to take care of with my husband sick, working full-time and two children. He is just taking advantage of us."

We went over their budget and I saw the hit their income had taken with the husband being unable to work. The wife told me about her husband's upcoming second procedure that they hoped would fix his heart so he could return to work. She said, "It's just been a much longer recovery than either of us thought and we were not prepared financially for something like this. We just made it paycheck to paycheck. Now with only my paycheck we have had to cut back even more by lowering our thermostat and eating less food." I knew by looking at all of them that they had probably been doing all those things for a while. They were all thin and dressed in jackets and thick sweaters indoors.

I asked the wife if she would mind if I called the landlord. She was happy I offered to try and speak to the stubborn landlord. I called the landlord on the phone number she provided. He answered in an argumentative manner and the conversation went downhill from there. When I was through talking to the rude man I felt my own heart pounding so I could see why the husband was unable to talk to him. We did resolve one thing though and that was that the family would be moving out of the disgusting rental and moving into an apartment that was not full of mold and disrepair. I informed the landlord that the family would no longer be renting the home as it was uninhabitable. I had to threaten him with sharing several code violations with the proper authorities in order to have him free the family of their lease and I informed him they better be repaired before I see anyone else living in this nearly condemned home.

After the landlord shouted several profanities he hung up the phone. I turned to the husband and wife in disbelief and said, "I don't know how you dealt with that man for so long. I usually get along with most landlords and they are most times willing to work with our charity. I am happy to tell you he will be releasing you from your lease and we can now work on finding you a hospitable rental."

I made several phone calls to landlords I have good working relationships with and found a reasonably priced, just remodeled rental that the landlord would rent to this struggling family. When I hung up the phone this time there were smiles, not stressful frowns on the faces of all of us. The wife then looked concerned as she asked, "How will we be able to pay for the first month's rent and move all this with my husband so sick and going in for surgery soon?" I realized I had not told them what we would be doing to help them. I answered, "I just happen to know several good volunteers that would be happy to help you pack and move. We also have a caring group of donors that allow The Time is Now to Help to give assistance with rent and utilities. Thanks to all of them we will be able to provide you with first month's rent and security deposit." I watched as the look of shock and then relief washed over the woman's face. The husband looked down and tried to hide the fact that he was crying tears of relief. Then they hugged each other and both began to cry.

Our heartfelt assistance was given just as promised. The husband was able to go through his surgery and return to their new rental that was not filled with mold and disrepair. Their working refrigerator contained good food and their rooms were warm. They all also received new beds as we discovered old worn mattresses when the volunteers helped them move. At my last visit the family greeted me at the door with a hug and was proud to show me around their clean and fresh rental. The father was making progress and hoping to return to work in six weeks. Our assistance provided the help they needed to change their lives from stressful and struggling to a good working relationship with their new landlord that left them relieved and healthy.

There are many of our fellow creations turning to us for help or being referred by others. 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", the Fox Charities New Year Wish \$25,000 Matching Grant 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, Love & 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:** Fox Charities, Barnabas Matching Grant, Larry & Sally Rayner, Kunes Country Auto Group, Gregg Kunes, Bess Spiva Timmons Foundation, Martin Business, J. Kruzan Construction & Remodeling, Bernard Labovitch, Hufcor Foundation, Community Foundation of Southern Wisconsin, Grunow Family Fund, Wayne & Beverly Hilbelink, John Goodier, Ziegler Charitable Foundation, Edward Hechmann, Steven & Deidred Trumble, Colleen Heffernan, Gerald & Robin Dempsey, Robert Waddell, Thomas Morrissy, John & Valerie Lincoln, Kramer F&I Solutions, Kevin Kramer, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Schuberth, Peter & Anna Vanderveld Foundation, Marilyn Heiden, Frank & Anna Guske, Dennis & Marcia Wisniewski, Les & Pauline Malsch, Timothy & Eleanor Walters, Emil & Cora Moldenhauer, Franklin & Joan Jones, La Moine & Karen Martinson, Carol Calkins, Robert Ribordy, Michael & Sally Anne Chier, John & Marian McClellan, Joan Marabito Rietz, Henry & Virginia Hertl, Doreen Collins, Joyce Francis, Sarah Erskine, Sunshine Gardeners, Roger Seymour, George Gey, Karin Collamore, Cheryl Davis, JT Marty, Nancy Cunniff, E. & Barbara Andres, Duane DeYoung, William Davit, Kay Barrett, Jean Ripple, Elizabeth Gasch, Thomas & Mary Weidert, George & Lauretta Clettenberg, Eye Physicians & Surgeons, Dr. Mark & Cynthia Brower, Michael & Marianne Hurlburt, John & Marian McClellan, George Kass, Kathy Papenfus, Mary Dunham, Emily De Baere, Shari & James Loback, Carolyn May Essel, our anonymous donors and 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.

**Honoraries:** Mark & Natalie Reno in thanks for prayers answered. Diane Ripple in honor of David Ripple. Melody Fehling, Jim Gage, Sue Williams & Steve Watters in honor of Randy Thelen’s Birthday. Joe & Laura Murphy in honor of their grandchildren: Jodi, Dan, Cari, Jami, Dave & Jimmy.

**Memorials:** Sue & Mike Borden in memory of Gayle Leep. Carl & Darcy Brewster in memory of Maureen Brewster. Paul Ziegler in memory of his dear friend Dorith Brown. Annaleisa Prohuska in memory of Tara.

**Prayer Chain:** Please pray for healing for the following people: Mike, Caroline, Susan, Jennifer, Clarence, Jayden, Santana, Alex, Lily, Kaitlyn, Kynasha, 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](http://www.inspirationministries.org).

Please visit: [www.timeisnowtohelp.org](http://www.timeisnowtohelp.org)