

Dear W.C.,

I am a fourteen year old high school student. I go to school with a girl that is living with her grandparents. I always wondered why she didn't want me to come over to their house. We have gotten to be good friends over the past year and last week she finally invited me over. My friend had told me they were poor and that her grandfather was sick but I had no idea people could live in a house like that. Their heat is broken and they are trying to heat it with heaters that are plugged in the wall. It isn't working that well because it was still very cold inside. My friend has lived with her grandparents most her life. She loves them very much and she told me her grandpa doesn't have long to live. I was so worried about them when I got home I asked my mom what to do. She told me I should write a letter to The Time Is Now to Help and ask you if you can help them. Can you please help my friend and her grandparents?

Dear Readers,

I love when our young people get involved with community service. It gives me hope for the future to see such compassion for our fellow creations. This young lady knew her friend's family was struggling but she did not know what to do to help them. Her mother gave her good advice in writing to The Time Is Now to Help to bring about the poverty relief she knew they needed but did not know how to provide. I was soon to find out she did indeed have cause for concern for her friend and her friends grandparents.

I went to the address provided by the letter writer. The grandmother answered my knock on her door with a look of concern on her face. When I explained who I was and I showed her my identification the grandmother admitted she had heard about The Time Is Now to Help but had never considered writing a letter on her own. When I told her who had written in their behalf the grandmother seemed even more surprised as she asked, "My granddaughters nice friend wrote to you because she was worried about us?" I confirmed she had. The grandmother shook her head in shock. After a moment she said, "What a sweet girl to be worried about us. I could tell she had a good heart and she is such a good friend to my granddaughter." I asked about the granddaughter and the grandmother confirmed what I had hoped for that she was in school.

The grandmother asked me into the small older home. Everything was older but well cared for. The home was clean but just as the young woman had noticed, it was very cool inside. I saw the electric heaters trying to keep up with the chill. When I asked about these electric heaters and the obvious lack of heat the grandmother looked ashamed as she said, "I am so embarrassed to have anyone see how we are living. My husband has been very sick and cannot keep up with the upkeep himself any longer. Our electric bill was so high last month from these heaters that we could not pay the bill. We are hoping we have enough money by April 15th to pay our bill but with two months of these heaters on the bill it is going to be too high for our tight budget." As some of you may know April 15th is when the utility companies can again start their disconnections.

The grandmother asked if I would like to be introduced to her husband, warning me he had been struggling with kidney failure for quite some time and also had dementia. The grandmother tearfully shared, "He does not have long left on this earth but thank God he does not seem to know that." I was led into the chilly bedroom and introduced to her husband who was propped up in bed on pillows and wrapped in blankets. He was pale, thin and weak. He shook my hand and asked who I was several times, obviously unable to remember. After speaking with him for several minutes the grandmother told him we would be talking in the other room and after offering him water and checking if he needed help to the restroom, we went to the living room to talk.

The grandmother told me about his failing health and their many medical expenses. We also had a very personal talk about her son and his girlfriend that had chosen drugs over caring for their own child. The grandmother said, "I was so angry at him for what I thought was abandoning my granddaughter but it actually was the best decision he could have made. I can't imagine what her life would have been like if she had been raised by our son. He can't even manage to pay his child support much less be a father. We have not seen or talked to our son in five years. Our granddaughter is the best thing that has happened to us in life." I could see the many smiles and the look of pride the grandmother had as she told me about her granddaughter. She sounded like a lovely young lady and she was a big help to her aging grandparents. The grandmother said, "She is having a hard time with her grandfather being so sick. He still remembers who she is and is always excited to hear about her day when she gets home." I was happy to hear about the special bond the grandparents and granddaughter shared. I knew the grandmother and granddaughter would need that bond to help them get through the difficult days to come.

After our personal conversation I asked to look at their financial documents and if they had a budget. The grandmother pulled out a well worn piece of paper showing their social security and a small amount of child support from her son, listed as their only income along with their monthly bills listed. I could see by looking over this budget that they just got by each month before their furnace went out and the grandfather got sick. Now it had to be even harder. The grandmother showed me the very high overdue electric bill and several other smaller bills that they were unable to pay recently. The electric bill was so high due to trying to heat the home with electric heaters. After reviewing their bills and other documents, I asked about their other needs, including food, transportation, gas, etc. The grandmother said they had one car they used to drive their granddaughter to her school functions and for medical visits. The car was in good shape but needed some repairs to make their trips safer and more reliable. We would be providing these much needed repairs.

I questioned the grandmother about their furnace and she said they had gotten a quote to replace it but it was much too high for them to afford. They just did not have the funds. I looked over the quote and then asked to see the furnace. The elderly grandmother showed me the furnace in the basement. It was older and not worth repairing. As I looked over the furnace I called one of our trusted contractors to get a quote for a new furnace. I approved the preliminary quote and made arrangements for him to replace the furnace as soon as possible. When I hung up the phone I noticed the grandmother was crying. When I asked why she was crying she said, "All these years we have taken care of our granddaughter

ourselves, even when our son did not pay his child support. We have never asked for help before. I have been so scared and worried about what would happen to us and then you arrive and ...” The grandmother was openly crying then and I could see the stress she had been under. I reached over and took her hand and squeezed it, offering some comfort, letting her know “We” would be there to ease their stress and pains of poverty.

After our full evaluation I could see they needed help with more than just the furnace replacement. They were in need of utility assistance, car repairs, additional food, gas for the grandfathers many visits for medical care and peace of mind. Our assistance made all the difference in their ability to get through the following difficult months. Our furnace replacement provided much needed heat and comfort for not only the grandfather as he faced his terminal illness, but also the teenaged granddaughter and senior grandmother. It also lowered their utility bill to a level where they could make their budget going forward. Our car repairs provided the safe transportation needed for medical care and school activities for the granddaughter. Our food provided nourishment. Our utility assistance provided lights and heat and removed the stress of impending disconnection. This assistance was all thanks to your generosity to our mission. It also was thanks to a young woman that knew someone was in need and took the time to see what she could do to get help.

We want to thank the Family Foundation for their wonderful matching grant opportunity. It is inspiring many to help by matching your donation dollar for dollar. We especially need your help now during winter helping those that are in desperate need. 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 Family Foundation 2017 \$30,000 Matching Grant and The Time Is Now to Help working together to provide poverty relief. Please donate now knowing every dollar will be matched, doubling your donation. Together “We” make a big 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: Richard H. Driehaus Charitable Lead Trust, Family Foundation, Fox Charities, Marilyn G. Schawk, Martin Business, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Schuberth, Debra Guzman, Unilock, Rhoades Foundation, Freedom Plastics Foundation, Petco Foundation, Lake Geneva Economic Development Corp., Rotary Club of Lake Geneva, Community Foundation of Southern Wisconsin, Grunow Family Fund, Deborah Halverson, Abbvie Employee Engagement, Rita’s Wells Street Salon, Justgive, Marvin & Audrey Hersko, Michael & Sally Anne Chier, Glen & Vicki Whitmore, Joanne Maggio, Jacob & Janice Friesema, Robert Ribordy, William Antii, Jeanne Allen, 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.

Memorials: Peggy Cardiff in memory of Dot Cardiff & Lisa Haydam. Arlene Clausen in memory of her dear niece Sherri & dear cousin Mary Crowell.

Prayer Chain: A big “thank you” for all of your prayers and good thoughts. We have received phone calls and letters from those that have gotten well. Some of our loved ones have had their cancer go into remission, some have had their enormous anguish of pain physically healed. The power of prayer and positive thoughts comes from the true healer, our Lord answering our prayers. Please pray for healing for the following people: Mike, Caroline, Susan, Jennifer, Clarence, Jayden, Santana, Alex, Lily, Kaitlyn, Kynesha, Brandi’s Grandma, Marilyn & Lois.

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. 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.

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