

Local nonprofit agencies need your help in 2010

Local nonprofits need your help

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YORK — The holiday season may be winding to a close, but there are still plenty of ways and reasons to give in 2010.

Feed the hungry

At the York Food Pantry, which is part of the York Community Service Association (YCSA), Director Tom Whalen expressed concern for the winter because of a recent lack of salvage prices at the Good Shepherd Food Bank in Sanford.

"This forces us to buy case-level stock, which costs us 2-to-1 on the dollar as opposed to 12-to-1 when we buy salvage at 13 cents a pound," said Whalen, who attributed the shortage in part to "supermarket chains being more efficient and selling off excess stock to discount stores."

Despite such shortages, he cited strong community support this holiday season in amassing "a good supply of food" heading into January. In the coming month, Whalen anticipates an increase from the 50 families the pantry has fed each week in December.

"With the cold and cutback on retail jobs, we will have more families in need," he said.

To donate to the York Food Pantry, call 351-1928.

Get thrifty

At the YCSA Thrift Shop, Shop Manager Cynthia Adams said donations have been consistent despite a lingering recession, but noted she has already seen an increased need for gently-used outerwear in the face of the recent cold weather.

"We could really use warm winter coats, especially children's hats, gloves, and winter boots," she said.

To make a donation, visit the shop at 1320 US Route 1, or call 363-2510.

Go shopping

According to Joe Galli, executive director of **Fair Tide**, 2009's designated nonprofit beneficiary of One More Referral's York Chapter, thrift stores offer people multiple ways to give back to the community.

"Whether you donate items or make a purchase at the Fair Tide Thrift Store, the proceeds benefit our program," said Galli, who said the agency's mission is to help homeless individuals and families achieve self-sufficiency.

To donate items or make a financial contribution, visit www.fairtide.org, or call 439- 6376.

Heat a home

In addition to its thrift store and food pantry, the nonprofit YSCA also provides heating assistance through its "Warm Hearts, Warm Homes" program.

Acknowledging the significant drop in the price of heating oil compared to last year's record highs, YCSA Family Services Director Lorna Ryan said the need for such assistance is still greater than ever.

"I'm seeing faces I've never seen before," Ryan said, "Beside the elderly on fixed incomes, the disabled, and the poor, I am also seeing more unemployed and underemployed families that are living pay check to pay check than ever before."

"If everybody helps just a small amount, we can help families in a big way," added Ryan, who said the program has already provided more than \$40,000 in heating assistance to 70 families in 2009.

For heating assistance, call 363-5504. To make a donation to the "Warm Hearts, Warm Homes" program, Ryan said checks can be made payable to York Community Service Association and mailed to P.O. Box 85, Cape Neddick, ME 03904.

Staying warm

Offering a wide variety of services designed to alleviate the effects of poverty and attack its underlying causes in York County, York County Community Action Corporation also offers residents heating/fuel assistance.

For more information, call 324-5762.

A hand up

Already having donated \$50,000 to seven local food pantries and two home-heating programs since opening in February of this year, Leeward Landing's mission is "to recycle, reuse and renew for charity," and "to help feed, clothe and comfort struggling low-income families of York County," said Rob Werner, president of Leeward Industries.

According to Werner, donating to Leeward Landing makes a tangible difference within the community.

"Our store will turn these donations into inexpensive merchandise and, as they are sold, the proceeds will help local food pantries and home heating assistance programs," he said.

To make a donation, visit the store at 4 U.S. Route 1, or call 361-4500.

Care for a neighbor

Hospice of York is a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization that provides free, confidential support and non-medical services to individuals with any terminal illness. Donating to or volunteering for the hospice represents another way to give back to the community.

"One thing about a donation to Hospice of York is that we are not time-centered, (because) we never know when a loved one is going to leave this Earth," said Director Dee Bickmore. "Your donation helps to keep our volunteers ready to go and reach out whenever the need arises."

Explaining the agency never charges a fee for its services, she said it is only through gifts and fundraising that Hospice of York has been able to exist.

To make a donation, please call 363-7000, or mail a check, payable to Hospice of York, to 15 Hospital Drive, York, ME, 03909.

Take care of a critter

Located in Cape Neddick, the Center for Wildlife cares for more than 1,600 animals each year.

Noting that 90 percent of the CFW's operating budget comes from individual donors, Laura Dehler, the center's development director, said the organization offers many ways for people to show their support, including purchasing a 2010 calendar, becoming a member, or volunteering time.

She also noted the popularity of the Adopt a Wildlife Ambassador Program.

"Individuals can sponsor one of our non-releasable raptors, reptiles and mammals who reside permanently at the Center," said Dehler.

To make a donation or volunteer your time, visit www.yorkcenterforwildlife.org, or call 361-1400.



Don Clark photo A porcupine is seen at The Center for Wildlife. The recession has brought a decrease in donations to the center, which rehabilitates injured wildlife for return to the wild, and educates the public with live animal presentations.