



Winter 2021

VOLUNTEER QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Notes from the Volunteer Coordinator

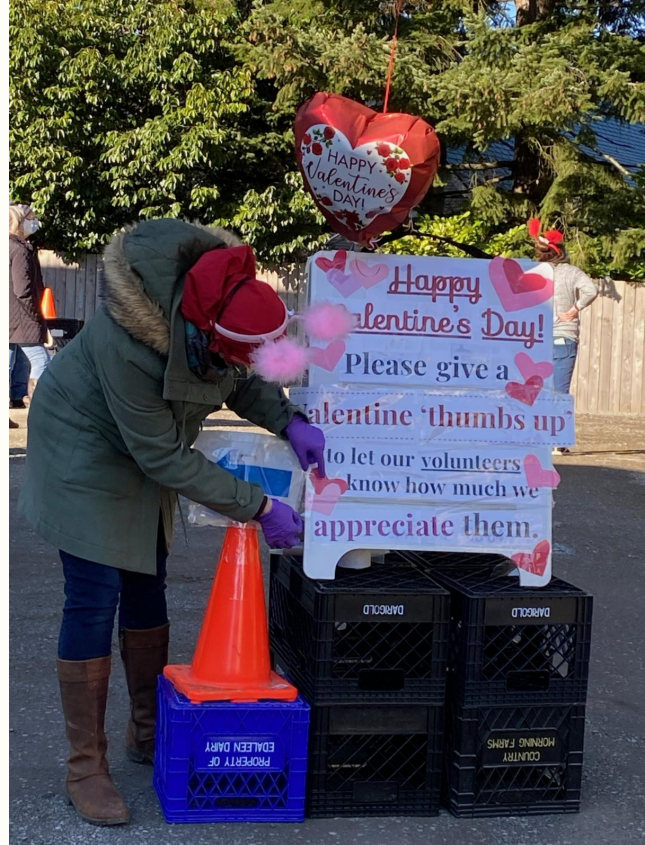
Dear Volunteers -

According to the Farmer's Almanac – volunteering will help you live longer. That is good news. Even better news is that many of you have been able to get vaccinated. The week of March 15 will mark one year since we switched to our outside distribution model. We survived the winter and are looking forward to sunshine and warmer weather and vaccinations for all.

Volunteer Spotlight

Traditionally, we ask our clients to write Valentine notes to our volunteers. It is always heartwarming to read their sincere and appreciative comments. As with all recent holidays – we had to improvise - so we asked our clients to give our volunteers a Valentine Thumbs Up! They were happy to oblige.





Food Bank News

The holidays are a fun time to be at Helpline House. Our community is generous AND creative with their donations year round but especially during the holidays. This year was no different but WE had to get creative with the distribution of those donations. Here is a brief recap of the holiday season AND end of year numbers.



THANKSGIVING – We gave out over 300 T&C gift cards for a total of \$8,325 and we gave out 126 turkeys. Assembled “holiday kits” were very popular. Clients had a choice of pie kits, green bean casserole, spice, condiments



CHRISTMAS – We gave out 690 gift cards for a total of \$17,250 through our Senior and Kids Holiday Programs. Eligible seniors were offered a choice between Ace, Rite Aid, Amazon or Safeway gift cards. Kids 18 and under had a choice between Eagle Harbor Books or Calico Cat gift cards.

and stuffing kits.

Thank you to ALL OF YOU who volunteered and donated and brightened the holiday season for many of our neighbors.

In the Year 2020

We gave out 500,154 total pounds of food.

We added 193 new households.

We gave out over 3000 Kids Pantry Bags during the 41 weeks of 2020 pandemic distribution.

Those are epic numbers for an epic year.



It's been a cold winter, but our volunteers have been creative in their approaches to staying warm on the curb. It included heated gloves, hand warmers and a nifty electric heater.



The Sakai food drive brings in over 11,000 lbs. A devoted group of teachers bring and unpack the 383 boxes!

January News

Updated Registration - January is the time we update all clients' registration information. This year we streamlined the process and have verbally updated over 250 clients' information. It seemed like a

daunting task at the outset but due to Cami's streamlined process it was almost painless. Almost. The hardest part was hearing and making ourselves heard in the wind and the rain.

Rotary/School Lunch Program - In a partnership with Rotary and the Bainbridge Island School District, Helpline House distributed supplemental bags of food during the school holidays when the school lunch program was paused. A mighty crew from Rotary packed the bags with non-perishable breakfast, snack and lunch options. Helpline House's energetic intern organized the bags on site and added cheese sticks, tortillas and frozen breakfast sandwiches before handing them out. In total during the Dec. and Feb. school breaks we gave out 159 School Lunch Bags. Plans to run the program during BISD's spring break are in the works as well. Just another example of the community working together to creatively get people food during the pandemic.

Northwest Harvest gift cards - Thank you Northwest Harvest for the 213 \$50 gift cards to Safeway. So many families expressed their gratitude for these cards.



Dead Car Batteries - Little did we know that outside distribution would include the challenge of cars with dead batteries. It is surprising how many cars we have had to push out of the way and jump start including the commodities delivery truck! Thank you to Cami for purchasing a portable charger. Life just got easier!

New Faces



Colin Gremse – Welcome to Colin Gremse. Colin joined us in

New Adventures



Dan Bacon – A much deserved thank you to SUPER Dan for his

January as our Monday/Friday employee. He helps to process Grocery Rescue and is our Curbside Runner on those days. Even though Colin has only been working here since January, he is no stranger to Helpline House. His mom, Marilyn Gremse, was the Food Bank Manager here for many years.

years of service as a volunteer and a pandemic employee. Dan has a love of life and his humor and joyful enthusiasm brightened many a dark pandemic day here at Helpline House. He is off to St. Louis on a new ice cream adventure. He recently invented a new ice cream flavor for Valentine's Day called Love Handles. It was a crowd pleaser. Best wishes to Dan and his wife Beth.



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Connect with us

