

HELP CENTER NEWS

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Neighbors Helping Neighbors

A publication of the Idyllwild HELP Center PO Box 660
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THE HELP CENTER TEAM THANKS YOU FOR HELPING



Well, here we are, most of us anyway; Board Members, Consultants, Staff, Former Staff, and Volunteers. We all just want to say thank you for your support – for your donations of both money and goods for our Thrift Store, for shopping at the Thrift Store, and for volunteering when you can. We couldn't do it without your help, and please know that you've made a difference.



Speaking of volunteers, these two gentlemen, Charlie Richards on the left and Matt Kemp on the right, are the champions. Charlie comes in to work a full day at the Thrift Store four days a week and Matt comes in every afternoon five days a week. They do so because, as they put it, they love the Thrift Store, they love the staff. And the nice people who come there to shop and make donations make being there a pleasant experience



THERE ARE OPENINGS ON OUR TEAM

By Barry and Monique Zander

We hope you take advantage of the quality items offered at the HELP Center Thrift Shop, available to our community thanks to donations from you, our many supporters. Almost every day – *7 days a week* -- dozens, if not hundreds, of items are dropped off.

We, the HELP Center directors, are proud of our thrift shop staff and volunteers, who go above and beyond to cull through the donations, and choose the items we can sell. The few things we can't sell are then sent to other facilities, including other non-profit centers. Three paid staff members – working with enthusiastic volunteers – are responsible for opening those bags and boxes left at the receiving room and making decisions on how best to display the saleable items.

That's in addition to their other duties, which include working behind the counter, advising potential buyers and innovating additional ways to bring in more revenues for the most important Client Services segment of the center. Please keep in mind that the Thrift Shop is only a supportive part of the HELP Center. It enables us to help qualified seniors, the needy and disabled with food, health aids, medical assistance, firewood, counseling and other services important for their well-being.

Many Hill residents lack relatives and acquaintances living near them who could provide the types of support that might otherwise be available in a typical urban/suburban location. But they are able to function here because of the guidance, programs and the generosity of organizations like the HELP Center.

With that in mind, we ask for your involvement in making sure the Thrift Shop is able to continue supporting Client Services. If you can spare as little as an hour each week at your convenience to be part of the effort it would be greatly appreciated. Tasks can include helping inside, sorting donations, improving the aesthetics or providing information to patrons, wherever you feel you can be of help.

You'll quickly realize that you're *part of a team*, a cadre of staff and volunteers providing important services to people in the Hill community who need your help. By being involved, you'll learn more about what the HELP Center does and realize how the staff is enhancing our ability to serve the clients who depend on us to survive. Please stop by and find out how you can help. You'll find your participation rewarding.

VISIT US ON OUR WEBSITE AT idyllwildhelpcenter.org

AND BE SURE TO VISIT US ON FACEBOOK

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT WHAT WE NEED AND HAVE TO OFFER

*****Automatic monthly donations can be made using Paypal*****

'T WAS THE SEASON FOR GIVING

During the holidays many of you went out of your way to help make this time of year special for everyone, including those of us who need a little help sometimes.

Some wonderful examples of that are:

People buying raffle tickets for the Ernie Maxwell painting and Sees Suckers in order to raise money for the HELP Center.

Community supporters responding to our Unevent mailer asking for their donations. Their response was terrific, but it's not too late to participate!

The Rev Dan Rondeau, Vicar of St Hugh Episcopal Church announcing that the church is now contributing a portion of the Worship offering on the first Sunday of each month to the Idyllwild HELP Center

Once a month the St Hugh Episcopal Church and St Margaret's Episcopal Church in Palm Desert work together to gather surplus food from a number of places in the desert and bring it up to our HELP Center, then distribute it to our clients.

Stacy Kretsinger raised \$1200 to buy childrens' books to sell at the Help Center. .

The Soroptimists Club places a weekly notice in the Town Crier asking readers to donate toiletry items for the "Soroptimist Women's Cabinet" at the Help Center.

Jeanne Buchanan and Mary Livingston collect and donate food for our pantry.

For Thanksgiving –

Idyllwild Pines provided a family with a Thanksgiving dinner and boxes of food.

Idyllwild Community Church donated fifty gift certificates.

Idyllwild Bible Church donated money to purchase forty-eight \$25.00 gift certificates.

For Christmas -

The Quilters Club adopted three families.

The Rotary Anns adopted a family.

The Idyllwild Bible Church adopted families

St Hugh Episcopal Church adopted families and donated thirty hams for our clients.

The Pine Cove Property Owners Association donated gifts for three families

Idyllwild Community Church donated fifty gift certificates.

The Salvation Army donated food boxes to distribute to clients.

Idyllwild Fire Department adopted two families and donated toys.

Cal-Fire donated toys.

The Idyllwild Board of Realtors donated toys

Amber Lackey from Lake Hemet did a toy drive and donated over 100 toys.

The Help Center placed "Angel Trees" around town with ornaments marked "boy" or "girl" and an age. People then removed one or more and bought a gift for that child..

As a result of all this, not one child was a forgotten angel this year!

SOME OF WHAT WE DO AND HOW YOU CAN HELP

Food Assistance Program/Food Pantry

When grant funding is available, the Idyllwild HELP Center issues food vouchers to qualified clients. The vouchers are good at Fairway Market in Idyllwild. The amount of the voucher depends on the size of the family served. The vouchers allow clients to purchase fresh, perishable food items that we do not carry in our Food Pantry.

From our Food Pantry, qualifying clients can receive a bag of food (enough to feed their family for five days) once every week.

What our Food Pantry can always use:

Canned soups, spaghetti sauce, pasta, helper meals, canned tuna or meat, macaroni and cheese, Top Ramen, canned fruit, beef stew, cereal, juice, peanut butter, jelly or jam, and chili. Personal items: shampoo, conditioner, tooth brushes, tooth paste, bars of soap. (Please, no opened food items or containers or expired food items.)

The Idyllwild HELP Center now serves more than 600 clients! Please help us with your food donations today. Donations are accepted: Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., and at the Thrift Store on Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Utility Assistance Program

Depending upon available funds, the Idyllwild HELP Center is able to offer qualified clients vouchers to be used towards their propane or electric bill. This voucher can be used once in the life of the funding period which starts in October and goes through February. Qualifying clients must bring in their current utility bill. A check for a certain amount will be made out and mailed to their utility company. There are some restrictions regarding use of this program.

Split Firewood Assistance Program

The HELP Center is fortunate to offer this service to our qualifying clients. Thanks to the efforts of the Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council "Woodies," several tree contractors, Cal-Fire, and private donations of wood, we are able to offer client households a limited amount of split firewood, depending on the amount of firewood available and the season of the year.

Medical Care Assistance Program

Depending on available funds, mostly received in the form of grants from organizations such as the Idyllwild Community Fund, the Walt Disney Company, the Roy E. Crummer Foundation, the Mann Foundation, the California Wellness Foundation, and the Jack Scudder Memorial Fund, we are able to provide qualifying clients with vouchers for doctor appointments, dental visits, eye exams and glasses, and prescription funding. Gas vouchers for medical appointments off the Hill are also available.