



CHO Newsletter

Serving the DUNN LORING, MERRIFIELD, OAKTON & VIENNA Areas

Organized in 1969, supported by churches, civic organizations, businesses, and individuals, the Committee for Helping Others (CHO) provides simple, loving charity to persons in need of goods and services that they are unable to provide for themselves or obtain from government sources.

NOVEMBER 2020

Thoughts from the Chairman

I hope that this finds you safe and healthy. My name is Todd Hall, and I am the acting Chairman of CHO this year. And what a year it has been!

Throughout 2020, CHO has seen an increase in the number of requests for help and new families needing support. We participated with Fairfax County in distributing CARES Act money, but have exhausted those funds and are still receiving many requests for assistance. We appreciate your past support, and hope that going into the holiday season you will find it in your heart to continue to help the less fortunate.

Like many organizations, we initially struggled to operate during COVID. I am happy to say that after hard work by the team, our Food Closet and Clothes Closet are running again. We have also modified our Christmas event to try to keep everyone safe while still being able to bring some holiday spirit to those in need.

This year, a number of long-term Board members retired from CHO. I would like to say how grateful I am for your service and how much you will be missed. I also want to acknowledge the new team that has stepped up to fill their shoes. When I first started with CHO, Karl, one of the Clothes Closet Co-Chairs, told me that volunteers

In This Issue

- 1 **Thoughts from the Chairman**
- 2 **2020 Christmas Store & Bike Drive**
- 3 **CHO Activity Report**
Golden Girls, Spanish Outreach
- 4 **Support Overcomes Covid-19**
Challenges
- 5 **Our Institutional Members: Emmaus**
United Church of Christ
Furniture Program Seeks New Chair
- 6 **Annual Report FY 2019-2020**

willing to commit to chair our committees were worth their weight in gold. If *you* are looking for our next mission, CHO has opportunities that could use a “gold” volunteer.

Finally, as we head towards Thanksgiving, I would like express how much we have to be thankful for: Our amazing supporters, both entities and individuals. The daily work of our wonderful volunteers. In a time of increased need, we found increased support. It is astounding what we as a community can accomplish.

To all, have a great Thanksgiving, and a safe and wonderful holiday season!

Todd

CHO CHRISTMAS STORE ADAPTS BUT NEEDS YOUR HELP

We will have a Christmas store, but due to the pandemic, it will be impossible to hold this popular event in its normal style. Still, we did not give up. Instead of the usual Saturday gathering at Vienna Presbyterian that allows our clients to “shop” for gifts of new donated toys and other items for their families, we are arranging to offer families the opportunity to pick up grocery and other gift cards at the Vienna Presbyterian parking lot on December 5. We believe this arrangement will provide our clients with a safe opportunity to obtain some holiday cheer for their families and children.

We need your help! We have almost met our goal for grocery cards, but we have an urgent need for donations of store gift cards (e.g., for Walmart, Target). In the past, generous organizations and individuals provided a vast array of toys, coats, and other items that we distributed. To protect our clients and volunteers, this year we can only distribute gift cards.

To help, you can (1) donate cash online on our website at cho-va.com (under Help Us!) (2) mail cards to CHO, P.O. Box 233, Vienna 22183, or (3) drop your donation off at our Food Closet in the mail slot – 133 Park St., NE, Vienna. For planning purposes, we would appreciate receiving these cards by November 20, if possible.

Our goal is to raise \$35,000 to help more than 200 families have a holiday meal and provide gifts for more than 400 children from birth to age 18.

Due to the pandemic, we cannot use volunteers this year. We will miss seeing those of you who have faithfully served at the Store, but let’s make sure these families who are struggling know that the Vienna community is here helping them!

Questions – please call CHO at 703-281-7614 and leave your message in box # 1.

CHO BIKE DRIVE WILL LOOK DIFFERENT THIS YEAR



Although this year we will miss the awesome array of bikes available for distribution in the Vienna Presbyterian parking lot, our volunteers are still working to receive, repair and distribute bikes to persons who need them. We have reached out to schools and other social agencies to determine individuals who might need bikes this year and will make arrangements for delivery.

How to Help: You can donate the bikes (of all sizes) by leaving a message on the CHO furniture line (202-681-5279) or by sending an email to cho@cho-va.com. We will respond, and arrange for donors to drop off the bike at a volunteer’s home or request that we pick up the bike at their home. *Please spread the word!*





CHO ACTIVITIES REPORT - JULY 2019-JUNE 2020

FOOD CLOSET: The Food Closet distributes basic food items collected

from our community; for part of the year, only food cards were distributed due to the pandemic. The Food Closet takes referrals from Fairfax County, area churches, and individuals. During the fiscal year we helped 706 families and 2712 people. Some of this help included distribution of money from the CARES Fund in cooperation with Fairfax County.

FURNITURE: The Furniture Program, which collects and distributes gently used furniture, helped approximately 20 families with about \$2500 worth of furniture in the fiscal year. The program is closed at this time, although volunteers are providing some furniture on an as needed and as available basis. Work continues on adapting to the new storage space.

CLOTHES CLOSET: The Clothes Closet, which collects and distributes clothing, operated in late winter 2019. It was closed during the summer, but is now open on an appointment basis.

EMERGENCY SERVICES: Emergency Services helps individuals and families to meet emergency rent, fuel, utility, dental, medical bills, and other miscellaneous aid. For the fiscal year, we provided \$270,873 of emergency aid. In addition, we received \$200,000 of CARES Fund money in conjunction with Fairfax County and distributed part of that during the fiscal year. The major expenditure for emergency services continues to be rent.

MEALS ON WHEELS (MOW): MOW provides meal deliveries to persons having difficulty preparing their own food. 8122 deliveries were made in the fiscal year. For safety reasons, county personnel rather than volunteers are currently making deliveries.

HELP FROM THE GOLDEN GIRLS DURING A TIME OUT



Though their favorite pastime was canceled this season due to the pandemic, the Golden Girls softball players' hearts were not benched. The organization usually holds fundraisers for CHO during the year as a way of giving back to the town of Vienna and the community. Since the season was cancelled this year, the organization chose to donate their \$2580 registration fees to CHO.

As the letter from the organization's leadership stated:

"We hope and pray that CHO's mission is served and that we all get back on the field of life again in a short time."

OUTREACH EN ESPANOL



During the pandemic, we noticed an increase in requests through our website, particularly emails in Spanish. For example, one month we helped twelve families in a predominantly Spanish-speaking apartment complex. It has made us extremely grateful for the 2018 grant from the *Cloudbreak Foundation* that enabled us to provide translation capability on our website. Special thanks as well to our webmaster Mike Croghan, who has helped our volunteers with these requests.

You can help. If you are fluent in Spanish & English and want to help us, send a message to volunteer@cho-va.com.

OVERWHELMING SUPPORT OVERCOMES THE CHALLENGES OF COVID-19

During the summer and fall, our volunteers dealt with an extremely large number of calls for financial and food assistance. Many of our callers had never needed help before, but had lost their jobs or were faced with reduced hours due to the pandemic. At the same time, many of our traditional food drives and collections were cancelled. But while the needs of our clients were great, our supporters, both individuals and institutions, rose to the challenge.

We had a noticeable increase in individual donations this spring, and are grateful to all of you!

A number of our member churches provided us with food and gift cards on a regular basis, which allowed us to help our clients while distribution of food itself was limited due to safety concerns. The pandemic closed VIVA Vienna, but the *Rotary Club* still responded with a \$6,000 contribution. *Navy Federal Credit Union* conducted a virtual race to support CHO, and the *Annual CROP Hunger Walk* was also largely virtual, with a live kick-off where Vienna mayor Linda Colbert addressed a socially distanced crowd. *Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church* converted its usual June food drive to a drive-up event that contributed over \$19,000 in cash and grocery and gift cards for the Christmas Store, as well as a hefty supply of food. In addition to their ongoing support of CHO, we worked with *Vienna Presbyterian's Belong!* to coordinate distribution of food in the Madison High School pyramid this spring, and VPC volunteers will be manning the church parking lot at this year's Christmas Store. Helped by scouts, high school leaders and volunteers, *Fairfax County Stuff the Bus* collected 26.6 tons of food for ten community organizations, including CHO.

These are only a few examples of the outreach of our supporters during this challenging time.

To all our supporters who were creative and went the extra mile to help us, thank you !



Photos (clockwise from above): Vienna Mayor Linda Colbert & Emmaus UCC Rev. Kristen McBrayer at the CROP Walk; OLGC youth group volunteers load cars to be driven to CHO and Food for Others at the parish's September food drive; the CHO Pantry is "stuffed" after the Stuff the Bus Food Drive.

GETTING TO KNOW OUR INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS

EMMAUS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Emmaus United Church of Christ is a justice-seeking, open and affirming congregation, with an emphasis on a spirit of hospitality and a willingness to live out that welcome in meaningful ways. Founded in Vienna in 1966, Emmaus is where Rev. Anne Holmes, the first openly lesbian minister in the United Church of Christ, was ordained in 1982. Now led by Rev. Kristen McBrayer, the church has a weekly service, as well as Sunday School for children up to eighth grade and an active Youth Group.

The name Emmaus reflects the road on which Jesus appeared after His resurrection to His followers, who did not initially identify Him, reminding all that Christ's divine presence is with us, even when we don't recognize it.

CHO supporters are most familiar with the Church's activities during its annual Hunger Action Week, a church-wide focus on alleviating hunger locally, nationally and overseas. Emmaus is one of the lead organizers of the annual Vienna CROP Hunger Walk, part of whose proceeds benefit CHO.

Emmaus is an active participant in V.O.I.C.E., Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement, and in local grassroots organizations on various issues, including transportation, affordable housing, criminal justice reform, and immigration. Congregants work at the Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna and in various UCC initiatives that support international health, education, agricultural and emergency relief initiatives in 138 countries, as well as ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. The church holds a First Gifts Service during Advent, where they assemble the cradle for the Baby Jesus and bring baby shower gifts for expectant mothers and new babies in need.

CHO is proud to partner with the congregants of Emmaus who dedicate themselves to be instruments for Love in the world, welcoming all and seeking justice for all.

FURNITURE PROGRAM LOOKING FOR A CHAIR(PERSON)

Our Furniture Program is searching for a new chairperson. The job requires coordinating volunteers who pick up and deliver furniture in the local area.

For more information or to volunteer, contact Dan Larkins at Danlarkins@verizon.net, or send a message to volunteer@cho-va.com or call 703-281-7614 and leave a message at box # 2.



A dresser donated to our furniture program was provided to a family with three small children.

ANNUAL REPORT FY JULY 2019-JUNE 2020

	6/30/2019	6/30/2020	Change
Bank Accounts			
Main Checking (BB&T)	\$ 132,756	\$ 231,760	\$ 99,004
Gift Cards		\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Investments			
Moreland (Schwab)	\$ 84,953	\$ 85,285	\$ 333
Peg Boag		\$ 3,694	\$ 3,694
Total	\$ 217,709	\$ 322,739	\$ 105,030

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

Receipts

Donations	
Churches	\$ 33,084
Church Organizations	\$ 5,148
Individuals	\$ 115,685
Fairfax County CARES funds	\$ 200,000*
Other Organizations	<u>\$ 38,288</u>
	\$ 392,205
Investment Income	
Interest	\$ 351
Total Receipts	\$ 392,556

Expenditures

Administration	
CHO Telephone	\$ 968
PO Box Rental Fee	\$ 206
Bank Fees (incl VANCO)	\$ 483
Brochures and Newsletters	\$ 1,759
Chamber of Commerce Dues	\$ 150
Insurance	\$ 2,167
Postage	\$ 155
Music	\$ 150
Miscellaneous	<u>\$ 140</u>
Total Administration	\$ 6,177
Christmas Program	\$ 2,595
Clothes Closet	\$ 3,100

Furniture Program	
Truck Insurance, taxes, registration	\$ 2,021
Bikes of Vienna	<u>\$ 490</u>
Total, Furniture Program	\$ 2,511
Direct Assistance	
Groceries	\$ 2,250
Utility Assistance	
Electric	\$ 18,384
Gas	\$ 2,553
Water	<u>\$ 2,377</u>
Total Utility Assistance	\$ 23,313
Mortgage payments	\$ 3,950
Rental Assistance	\$ 228,827
Other	<u>\$ 14,803</u>
Total Direct Assistance	\$ 273,143
Total Expenditures	\$ 287,526
Change in Net Assets	\$ 105,030*

****IMPORTANT ITEM TO NOTE:***

The financial report shows a significant increase in receipts due to the \$200,000 of Fairfax County CARES Funds received in May 2020. Approximately \$88,000 of those funds was spent in June 2020; the remaining \$112,000 was distributed in July (the next fiscal year). This explains the large increase in net assets at the end of the 2019-20 fiscal year.

NOTICES:

EMAIL NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION: If you wish to receive a copy of the newsletter by email rather than paper, let us know by emailing us at cho@cho-va.com. Email copies help save us printing and postage costs and are in **color!**

DONATION ADDRESS: Please send donations to CHO's Post Office Box - P.O. Box 233, Vienna VA. 22183. Do not send donations to any other address provided to you. You can also give online at cho-va.com under Help Us!

Thank you!

C.H.O.
P.O. BOX 233
VIENNA, VA
22183

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit # 1349
Merrifield, VA

Yes, I'd like to support CHO. Enclosed is
my check for \$ _____

I'd like to volunteer for:

My name and address are:

Send to CHO, PO Box 233, Vienna VA 22183

CHO
November 2020

