



NEWSLETTER

MAY 2023

Supporting 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.

Chairman's Note NEW "HOMES" FOR CHO

We were recently notified that the building where we house our Food and Clothes Closets is going to be sold, and we need to be out by July 31st. This is sooner than we had expected, but for the last 18 months we knew this day was coming. The change in timeline forced the board to make decisions at the April board meeting so that we could be moved by July. After publicizing our need, examining local real estate options, and talking to over 30 different civic, government, religious and business organizations over the last year, we believe we have considered as many options as possible. Here is what we have decided:

As many of you know, Vienna Presbyterian Church has graciously hosted the Food and Clothes Closets in their condo for the last 10 years at no cost. Development of the new condo complex was out of their control and so we needed to move. VPC was able to find space in its church for the Food Closet, and has agreed to continue to host us, again at essentially no cost, for which we are extremely grateful.

We struggled to find space for the Clothes Closet. Many people and organizations in the community have worked with us to find a solution. With the changed timeline, we only had two viable options: either pay discounted rent at a local religious organization's building, or close the Clothes Closet until we found a cheaper solution. After considering our

extensive search for space, and faced with closing the Clothes Closet, we decided to pay rent for the first time in 54 years. We felt our clients were best served by continuing to run the Clothes Closet, and the discounted rent is acceptable.

We are working to finalize the terms of the leases, and expect to move in late June or July, when we will provide you with additional information about our new homes. As part of this process, we will be eliminating one of our storage units to offset some of the rent cost. We feel these decisions were the best we could make to serve our clients, and to support the community as CHO has done since 1969. Thank you for your continued support.

Todd

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR EVENTS THAT SUPPORT CHO!

VIVA VIENNA! May 27-29: The Rotary Club's traditional Memorial Day fundraiser. See www.viennava.gov.

Navy Federal Annual 5K: September 30: The Vienna 5K run sponsored by Navy Federal Credit Union is scheduled for kick off on Saturday **September 30, 2023**.

CROP Hunger Walk: October 1. This year's CROP Hunger Walk will take place **Sunday October 1**. For more information on the Vienna Walk or to volunteer, contact Lisa Hechtman from Emmaus United Church of Christ, Vienna, at lhechtman@gmail.com.

2022 Christmas Store

The Christmas Store was live again in 2022. Thanks to Vienna Presbyterian Church for the use of their space, to Antioch Christian Church and Bikes@Vienna for help with the bike drive, and to the churches and others that collected gift cards at various times during the year.

We helped 178 families (610 family members, over 300 children) with toys, clothes, and food & gift cards, and provided \$50 food cards to 33 seniors and those living on Social Security and disability. Our bike program and volunteers distributed almost 100 bikes. Some were given directly to recipients (mainly teens at James Madison High School identified as needing one by staff there), others to Our Lady of Good Counsel to distribute, and 10 set aside to distribute in the near future.

It was wonderful to see our clients in-person and to work with and thank our “regular” volunteers and new helpers from churches, government, and local agencies. We had 91 volunteers. We also partnered this year with Social4 Good, a local organization that collected gift cards, provided over 300 new and lightly used coats, and helped serve our guests.



Members of Social4Good at the Christmas Store

Next Generation of Volunteers Partners with CHO!

Todd Hall spoke with members of Kids Give Back, who created snack packs for our Food Closet and shared their enthusiasm for service.

We also collected over 1889 pounds of food at our Stuff the Bus collection earlier this year. Thanks to Fairfax County and the Vienna Giant, with a major shout out to the mothers and sons who are part of Young Men Giving Back, who helped to collect groceries and load the bus at Giant.

Finally, the Food Closet wants to thank an anonymous teenage volunteer who created a Google document to update our paper files!



Todd Hall with Kids Give Back



Stuff the Bus at the Vienna Giant

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

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.

SPOTLIGHT: UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF FAIRFAX

This month we focus on the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, located at 2709 Hunter Mill Road in Oakton. Their website describes the congregation as a “vital, active and progressive religious congregation of 100 + adults, teenagers, and children.” Sunday Services, which are also live-streamed, are held weekly at 10 a.m.

The mission of the congregation is to “transform ourselves, our country and the world through acts of love and justice.” The congregation has an extensive social justice program and monthly “share the plate” program that assists social justice organizations. CHO was fortunate to be a recipient last January. This month, the recipient is La Clinica Del Pueblo, which provides essential health services and programs to Latinx immigrants in the District, Maryland, and Virginia.

The congregation has a resource on its webpage called a *30-day Journey of the Heart*, which suggests 30 days of spiritual practices intended to help users gain new spiritual perspectives through everyday tasks, exercises, and contemplation. There is a robust music ministry, with a large adult choir, a youth choir, a handbell choir, and a band program with its own in-house band, Parker’s Arc, as well as lectures and groups such as a memoir writing group.

Rev. David A. Miller serves as lead minister and oversees staff resources, religious education, social justice, music & arts, and stewardship. Assistant Minister for Congregational Life Rev. Christin Green leads the pastoral care, membership & outreach, leadership development, adult programs, and small group ministries. We are happy to participate in their transformative efforts.

CHO REMEMBERS: Patricia Murray, a former co-chair of the Clothes Closet and long-time Vienna resident and Our Lady of Good Counsel parishioner, passed away this January. Even after leaving her position at the Clothes Closet, Pat and her husband Ed remained involved with CHO, and continued their contributions to the Clothes Closet and other charities. We know she has now heard the words, “well done, good and faithful servant.”

ACTIVITY REPORTS

FOOD CLOSET: During the first three months of 2023, we helped 148 families (approx. 500 people) and gave out \$525 in food cards. Call 703-281-7614 box # 1 to arrange for food donations. Current needs are dish detergent, bar soap, toothpaste, cookies, & kids’ cereal. We anticipate increased activity now that government SNAP benefits have been cut.

FURNITURE: The Furniture Program, which collects and distributes gently used furniture, operates at the sheds on Mill Street on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month. There’s been an increase in both donations and requests. Needed items are beds, tables, chairs, and small dressers.

CLOTHES CLOSET: The Clothes Closet, which collects and distributes clothing, operates on Mondays 9:30 - noon and by request. About 40 individuals came to the Closet this April, many shopping for themselves and family members. Most needed items are men’s trousers, jeans, casual work pants sizes 32 and 34, youth and boys’ pants and jeans. Call 703-679-8966 for donations or help.

EMERGENCY SERVICES: Provides for emergency rent, fuel, utility, dental, medical and other emergency costs. Our main costs are rents, but utility requests are also high. For the first three months of 2023, we provided \$50,922 of in-area emergency aid, and \$3,356 of out of area aid, to 109 in-area families and 74 out of area families. Call 703-281-7614 box # 4 for help.

CHO
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VIENNA VA 22183

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