



NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2024

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

I’m a Christmas guy. I do crazy lights and just love the whole season. I’m also all about supporting children. I think they are a group that can’t speak for themselves and believe it is our responsibility as adults to make sure they are supported and nurtured. So when I heard about this Christmas Store for underprivileged families that my church (VPC) was putting on, it was absolutely something I needed to do. This was how I became involved with CHO.

On Dec 7th, we will again host our Christmas Store. I’m not sure how long CHO has been doing it, at least 27 years according to lore, and this will be my 10th year participating. I have so many wonderful memories of this event. From helping a bunch of kids from Green Hedges unloading donated toys they collected, to watching a young boy with a huge smile on his face waiting in line for a bike. But one of my favorite memories is of a client from an abuse shelter, and the sincere appreciation she had that she was going to be able to give her kids something for Christmas when she didn’t think it was possible. These experiences are why I do this, why your help makes a difference. Thank you for supporting CHO and have a wonderful holiday season.

Todd



WE REMEMBER TWO VOLUNTEERS

Margaret “Peg” Boag, passed away on August 18, in Knoxville Tennessee, at age 94. A longtime member of Vienna Presbyterian Church, Peg spent over 40 years helping our neighbors. Her first volunteer job with CHO was scheduling transportation for medical appointments. Peg next served as CHO Emergency Services Coordinator, an important job she handled by herself for many years. Upon her retirement, she established a CHO fund to cover purchases of underwear (or other necessary items) for the CHO Christmas Store.

Ed Murray passed away on October 15 in Springfield Virginia. A former aerospace engineer, Ed volunteered at the Clothes Closet by picking up Goodwill bags. He was preceded in death by his wife Pat, a former co-chair of the Clothes Closet.



Peg Boag (center) with emergency services volunteers

PROFILE: WESTWOOD COUNTRY CLUB

Over the years, CHO has received significant support from the members of Westwood Country Club (the WCC), which is located on Maple Avenue in Vienna. We have been the beneficiary of small and large food drives, as well as fundraising events. Westwood members have also participated as individuals and teams in the Vienna CROP Hunger Walk, which donates part of its proceeds to CHO. Numerous other nonprofits have received support from Westwood.

WCC's Westwood Cares Committee had traditionally coordinated these activities in response to its members' desire to contribute to the community. In November 2023, the Club established an independent nonprofit, the Westwood Cares Foundation (WCF). As the Club's philanthropic arm, the WCF focuses on helping local charitable initiatives, with emphasis on food insecurity, supporting access to sports for all children, and assisting its own employees and families through scholarships.

The WCF plans to accomplish these goals in a variety of ways. They organize their own fundraisers; a Trivia Night will take place this month. The WCF will continue to assist Westwood members who support local causes. For example, the WCF contributed \$5,000 to the WCC 18-Holer Charity Match this summer, which raised over \$13,000 for CHO. Other examples include contributions to First Tee and Leveling the Playing Field, organizations that provide opportunities for underprivileged young people to participate in sports, and assisting the WCC Whirlwinds Swim Team in collecting food and household supplies for the Oakton High School Food Pantry.

We are lucky to have such an enthusiastic supporter of local causes in our community. Be on the lookout for additional activities of the Westwood Cares Foundation in the future. For more information, visit WCF's website at <https://www.westwoodcares.org>.

DECEMBER CHRISTMAS STORE and BIKE DRIVE

Christmas Store: The CHO Christmas Store event on Saturday, December 7, will provide food and gifts for needy families in our area. Invitations have been sent out, and now we need your help. Please deliver new toys for kids from infants through 8, gift cards for those 9-18, and food cards, to Vienna Presbyterian Church. Toys and cards can be dropped off in the large green bin stationed at the door of Vienna Presbyterian using the Park Street entrance. You can also deliver them on Friday, December 6, 9:30-noon, where we will be setting up the Store. Our website has a list of toy suggestions. Go to cho.va.com, then to "Services" at the top of the page, and drop down to Christmas Store.



We also need help on the day before and the day of the event. Call 703-281-7614 box # 1 to help with setup or to serve as an escort on the morning of December 7, or to make other arrangements for donations.

Bike Drive: CHO's Christmas bike collection is focusing on bikes for adults and teens who need them for transportation to work or school. Bikes will be collected through November 28 at 4 different spots: the parking lot of Antioch Christian Church (1860 Beulah Rd), or in the driveway at either 317 Church Street NE, or 218 Elmar Dr. SE, or 9807 Wintercross Ct. Contact Dan Larkins or Jeffrey Heinz at danlarkins@verizon.net or jheinz_1@yahoo.com.





For FY ending 6/30/2024. Details on CHO's finances are contained in this Newsletter. Here is a summary.

FOOD CLOSET: The Food Closet distributes basic food and household supplies collected from our community; we take referrals from Fairfax County, area churches, and individuals. During the recent fiscal year, approximately 528 families (about 1926 people) were helped. In addition to nonperishable food and household items, we also provided about \$2,876 of grocery cards.

FURNITURE: The CHO truck is used to pick up donated furniture. Furniture distribution is at the Vienna Town Yard on the second and fourth Saturday of the month, at 8 AM on a first-come, first-served basis. Beds, dressers, sofas/chairs, desks, and tables are the most wanted items. We also provide bikes when available and needed.

CLOTHES CLOSET: Over a dozen regular and numerous additional volunteers at the Clothes Closet collect and distribute clothing and other small items to approximately 27 families a month. The Closet is open by appointment.

EMERGENCY SERVICES: In this fiscal year approximately \$219,000 was spent for emergency relief to about 535 households. About 60% of the funds were for rent relief, 25% for utilities, and 15% for medical and other miscellaneous expenses.

Interfaith Thanksgiving Service & Pie Social on November 24

An Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, supported by the Shepherd's Center, will take place on Sunday, November 24, at 7 pm at Emmaus United Church of Christ, 900 Maple Ave East. It will be followed by a pie social. A special offering will be collected to benefit CHO and the Lamb Center. Hope to see you there!

2024 CROP Walk

The Vienna CROP Hunger Walk took place on a beautiful October day with around 130 walkers. CHO's Todd Hall spoke, along with Rev. Kristen McBrayer and Elder Robert Faison of Emmaus United Church of Christ, Vienna Mayor Linda Colbert, and Jessica Christensen of Church World Service (CWS). The Walk raised approximately \$17,500, one-fourth of which will go to CHO and the rest to CWS, an international nonprofit. Many thanks to lead organizer Lisa Hechtman, of Emmaus, and to all walkers!

CHO on Parade



CHO volunteers decorated and rode the CHO furniture truck in the Vienna Halloween parade. It was fun to participate in such a great town tradition!

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.

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