



The Flame

www.community-sharing.org

Winter 2017

5061 Duck Lake Rd.
Highland, MI 48356

Mail: P. O. Box 405
Highland, MI 48357

248-889-0347

Board of Directors

President:

Bob Willard

Vice President:

Claudia Schimetz

Treasurer:

Mary Krebs

Secretary:

Chris Burke

Directors at Large:

Tom Connelly

David Dickey

Cliff Kedzierski

Jaqi Kupfer

Marge Laruffa

Cheryl Soden

Bob Swanson

Director Emeritus:

Mel Boomer

Upcoming Events

Trivia Night

February 3, 2018

7:30 p. m.

Bakers of Milford

Garage Sale

April 18 - 21, 2018

Times Vary

Community Sharing

5061 N. Duck Lake Rd.

Highland, MI

Golf Fundraiser

June 1, 2018

Dunham Hills Golf Club

Hartland, MI

**See Website for details
on all upcoming events.**

Growing Larger, Stronger in 2018

Community Sharing Outreach Center (CS) is celebrating the new year by expanding its territory to offer support to individuals and families throughout the Huron Valley School District in 2017. The new area now covers 107+ square miles!



"We are getting bigger and better thanks to our supportive community and their generous donations and grants," says CS co-founder and board member Claudia Schimetz. "We also gained 10,000 sq. ft. of space in the move to the Duck Lake Center, which means there's more room for client



consult rooms, the food pantry, the clothing closet, garage sale storage, pet pantry, and more, so it only makes sense to utilize the space and offer services to a larger client base." The potential growth in client base means a continued consistent stream of in-

come from donations and grants is vital to fund the growing services. "We are not sure how many new clients we will receive, but know the potential for several new families is quite a bit. The support we provide includes helping clients with food and clothing as well as financial assistance for a variety of needs such as rent to avoid foreclosures, new tires for a vehicle a client drives to work, utilities, medication and more," Schimetz explains. CS is a 501 (c)(3) and volunteer-based organization which allows ninety cents of every dollar to go directly to client services.

"We are open to being creative on what type of support we lend our clients. We some-



times help pay for car repairs because a client can't work or visit our food pantry if they don't have a vehicle. We recently helped a woman with a down payment on a mobile home, joining forces with Church of the Holy Spirit - St. Vincent de Paul and her family members to raise the funds needed to secure a home for her and her daughter," Schimetz says.

CS has been reaching out to potential clients. Word of mouth will be the most important tool for getting the message out, so please share the news with potential clients and/or people in positions to refer unemployed or underemployed members of our community.

Creative Giving: Clients Secure Jobs, Financial Security

The Great Recession (2007-2009) was the longest economic downturn since World War II, according to the Federal Reserve. It was extremely severe in Michigan so the long-term impact on the state's economy took a toll on small businesses like the one owned by past CS



clients, Maria and James. Their construction company was directly hit by the decline – leaving them unable to cover the cost of food, clothes and utilities for their family of five in 2011. That's when they turned to Community Sharing.

"Community Sharing volunteers had our backs when times were tough for our family. They also had confidence in me at a time when I didn't have confidence in myself," says Maria. "I was very blessed to have this service. The help we received prevented our children from having to truly experience the hardships we felt as parents. They didn't have to wonder if there would be something for dinner or shoes when they grew out of them. With Community Sharing's support, we went from barely having anything to securing two wonderful jobs with steady incomes and the ability to provide for ourselves. Without their support, I don't know where we would be now."

They credit their success to a CS caseworker who helped Maria secure financial support to pay for her college degree. "She encouraged me to apply for school grants and loans. After earning a BS degree Maria also pursued a real estate license. James returned to the construction business and secured a job with M.J. Whelan Construction of Milford, Michigan.

To celebrate the upswing in their lives, Maria and James now give back to the community. Last fall, Maria met a family who desperately needed a place to rent. As their

realtor, she helped them find a home in White Lake and then in lieu of earning a commission she put the money toward the security deposit. "Because I had been in their position, I understood the stress of having no place to live.

Maria and James offer this advice to current clients: "Sometimes it may feel like you're going backward, but never give up and keep striving to move one foot forward. Always know you are better than you think you are. You will succeed if you try and never give up."

Barb Maher – Founder, Friend, Champion

Founder and board member Barb Maher was really excited about expanding CS to serve all of Huron Valley School District and worked hard last spring to make the transition to the new Duck Lake Center seamless for clients. Unfortunately, Barb was not able to attend the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new facility. We lost our dear friend and dedicated volunteer. It was so sudden that it's been hard to process that Barb is gone, but we know she is always with the CS family of volunteers in spirit.

Barb was passionate about her charitable works; her giving heart was huge. She was a champion in making sure hungry people were fed and she was a friend to everyone



Barb Maher (left)
pictured with co-founder Claudia Schimetz

at Community Sharing. She was a go-getter and the impetus behind so many of the CS programs, services, grants and fundraisers, often working behind the scenes. It's been a surprise to staff and volunteers alike uncovering all the significant projects she was quietly working on.

Benches in the client waiting area have been dedicated to Barb. They will serve as a daily reminder of her dedication and commitment to making people in our community feel welcome and valued.

*Tickets make great holiday
gifts for family and friends!*



*All proceeds go to assist
Community Sharing clients!*

TRIVIA NIGHT

Saturday, February 3, 2018

7:30 p.m.

Bakers of Milford

2025 S. Milford Rd., Milford

4th Annual TRIVIA NIGHT to Support Community Sharing!

TICKETS \$25/PERSON

On-line: www.community-sharing.org

In person: Community Sharing (Duck Lake Center) or Acorn Farm (Milford)

We know you are up to the 2018 Trivia Night challenge so get your ticket now! Doors open at 7 p.m. so you can check-out the auction items and purchase your raffle tickets. And, if you come hungry, there will be pulled pork sliders, a taco bar and nachos available for purchase along with a cash bar.

You don't need to be an expert to play, it's just plain fun and you might even win a prize. With a team of 10 you would be surprised at how 10 people can come up with answers to many (if not quite all) of the questions! How do you get a team of 10? You can sign up with a bunch of friends or join a table and make new friends.

Kirk and Henry will once again be the Trivia Masters, leading the crowd in a great time for a wonderful cause. Please join us! Just ask anyone who has attended in the past, and they will tell you it's a fun night! Raffle and auction items make the night more entertaining, with proceeds helping to fill the pantry at Community Sharing.

Choose your team of 10 and purchase your tickets now! When making your purchase please identify your team captain so you are seated together, or let us know if you would like join a table needing a player.

If you or your business can help with the donation of a gift item or basket, minimum \$40 value, please call Community Sharing at 248-889-0347. Gift cards, art work, beverages, or tickets to an event would be so appreciated. Thank you in advance.

2018 Spring Garage Sale

Community Sharing Outreach Center *Fundraiser*

Huge! Garage Sale

Wednesday, April 18, *Pre-Sale*, 3 – 6 p.m. (\$5 admission)

Thursday & Friday, April 19 & 20, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Saturday, April 21, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.



2018 Spring Sale at
NEW LOCATION!

Duck Lake Center
5061 N. Duck Lake Rd.,
Highland, MI

For more info, please visit www.csgaragesale.org or call 248-889-0347

We are accepting donations for the 2018 Spring Garage Sale!

Community Sharing - Duck Lake Center
5061 Duck Lake Rd.
Highland, MI 48356

Monday through Thursday - 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month - 6 to 8 p.m.
2nd Saturday of each month - 10 a.m. to Noon

(If you are a senior citizen and unable to take your donation to our office, please call 248-889-0347 to make special arrangements.)

2017 WHAT A YEAR!

As we begin 2018, it's time to reflect on our accomplishments in 2017 and set goals for the new year. Community Sharing offers vital support to families in need thanks to the generosity of the community when it comes to volunteer hours, food and clothing donations, monetary contributions and support of key fundraisers like the Empty Bowl Project, Trivia Night, golf tournament and garage sales.

Volunteers were instrumental in helping CS make its big move from the Apollo Center to the Duck Lake Center in July. We now have three times the space and will be able to expand to serve clients throughout the Huron Valley School District.

The new facility features an inviting waiting area for clients when they check-in and meeting rooms for private meetings with caseworkers. The food pantry is so spacious it feels like a grocery store. There's ample storage for volunteers to stock the shelves and organize food items. The Clothing Closet now has a room to accept and sort items with an adjoining room where items are on display for clients to browse and select clothing. Even the grounds look amazing thanks to volunteers who spent several hours pulling weeds, moving rocks and trimming shrubbery.

Two hundred and seventeen children started the new school year sporting a new outfit thanks to the expanded Back to School program led by volunteers Sara White, Helen Adams and Amanda Theriault. Each child received two new outfits, a pair of shoes, underwear, socks, personal items and snacks. Stylists at Great Clips in Milford and J Klips in Highland gave many of them haircuts to make the students feel extra special. The cuts were provided at a reduced rate and paid for by monetary donations to the Back to School fundraiser.

The Main Event for the 3rd Annual Empty Bowl Project was a great success thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, bowl painters, volunteers and event participants. They joined together in support of Community Sharing's efforts to eliminate hunger by enjoying delicious bowls of soup and bread donated by local restaurants. Trivia Night and the Golf Outing also helped fill the pantry by raising more money than ever! Please consider joining in the fun at these events this year: Trivia Night on February 3 and Golf Outing on June 1. Our spring garage sale was great last year and should prove to be bigger than ever in 2018. Please donate items and join us to shop on April 18-21.

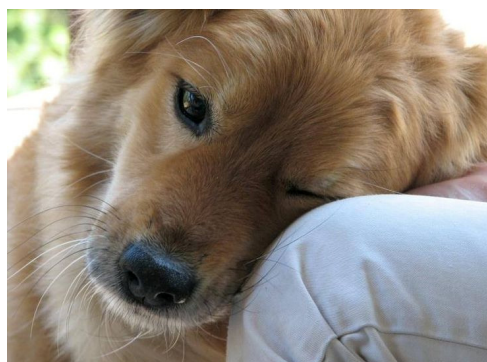
Lastly, we celebrated the holidays with the Joy of Giving program. Many people donated holiday gifts to help client families put gifts under their Christmas tree for their children.

And, in wrapping up the year, your Community Sharing Board Members wish you a wonderful new year!

Pet Pantry Keeps Clients, Pets Together

Imagine the agony of taking your pet to a shelter because you can't afford to feed him. Community Sharing's Pet Pantry helps clients keep their pets (dogs, cats, birds, ferrets, hamsters, rabbits, etc.) at home when they hit hard times.

"It's also an important extension of CS because clients may be inclined to short-change themselves on meals," explains Karen Gordinier, volunteer manager of the Pet Pantry. "We know clients who would open a can of tuna and give it to their dog before feeding themselves. Our pet



pantry allows clients and their pets to both eat healthy every day."

On average, the pantry serves 350 pets per month – offering pet food, supplies, medication as well as financial assistance for vet bills. "One of our clients always described the amusing antics of his 15-year-old dog, Buddy. Then one week he was sad because Buddy could no longer walk and would willingly carry Buddy wherever he needed to go. When it was nearing time he took Buddy to the vet and was astounded at the cost of euthanasia. "We needed to help so contacted a local vet and informed them that the Pet Pantry would pay for Buddy's last visit," says volunteer Marilyn Stepanek.

The pet pantry is independently funded and operated by volunteers, relying on donors and the generosity of businesses like Walmart and Waterfall Jewelers of White Lake. All donations are welcome including food, pet beds, leashes, puppy pads, blankets, toys, cat litter, flea and tick medication and money. "The financial support helps us purchase these necessary items and allows us to help our clients when needed. As example, worst-case scenario, we can help pets get to the "Rainbow Bridge" with the least amount of suffering," Stepanek explains.

Food Pantry Recognize CS Volunteers “Community Heroes”



Accepting the
“Make A Difference” Award:
Jay Gordinier, Mary Krebs and Bob Willard

The volunteers at CS are indeed dedicated and no doubt are heroes. They make certain that the pantry is stocked with canned goods, meat, milk, eggs, fresh fruits, vegetables and even snacks. They also make sure that seasonal clean clothing is available, and that kids have coats and boots when the weather turns cold. These are just a few of the reasons why Huron Valley Schools bestowed all Community Sharing volunteers with the “Make a Difference” 2017 award for “being true heroes in our community.”

Besides keeping the pantry stocked and the clothing closet full, volunteers make sure that students of families with limited resources don’t miss lunch during summer break. They also have a big heart for Harbor High students, who often go to school hungry, so breakfast snacks are made available. “Because of our community supporters our volunteers can help ensure kids get what they need. It’s a top priority here at Community Sharing,” says Roberta Lennie, Volunteer Coordinator.

Every once in awhile something very special comes along that catches the attention of volunteers. Recently, a disabled single mom just couldn’t meet the demands of caring for her home while caring for herself and her daughter. In stepped CS, along with another local agency, a church and a heartfelt private individual. Pulling all the resources together, volunteers were able to relocate this small family in to a safer and more suitable home. Volunteers love to step-in to help someone step-up.

The volunteers can do their jobs because our community cares enough to support Community Sharing. Your donations are always welcomed.

GOOD PRACTICES FOR OUTREACH CENTER DONATIONS

We have become an exceptional outreach center because of your support and generosity. As we wish to continue to enjoy this reputation through expansion, we need to follow three good practices for donations.

Practice #1

Provide good, healthy food for families in need. Encourage donors when cleaning out pantries to make certain they discard expired items.

Guide: If it’s not good enough for your family to eat, don’t pass it along to a family that may be desperate enough to risk eating it.

Practice #2

When providing “gently used” in-season clothing, items must be clean and in good condition. They should not have broken zippers, missing buttons, be stained or ripped.

Guide: Do the “wearable” test... Would I be seen in that? My kids?

Practice #3

Fundraising with Garage Sales is a plus but items must be purchase ready. Items should not be broken and must have all parts and pieces. Linens must not be stained or torn. Items should be usable.

Guide: Garage Sale Test - “Would my friends want to buy this from me?” If the answer is no, please recycle.

We know you will help us follow these practices and we thank you in advance.

Newsletter Editorial Team:

Marcia Black, Doris Landry-Kruse, Claudia Schimetz, Jennifer Shoemaker, Jennifer Wohletz

Email news stories to info@community-sharing.org

