

## 2022 ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE WEBSTER COMMUNITY CHEST

This year is the 75th Anniversary of the Webster Community Chest, which was founded in 1948 out of the World War II “Webster War Chest” which supported residents off serving their country and their families at home. Services have changed along with the needs and size of the community but we together as "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" have always pursued the same goal of helping those in need and making this an even better community.

The Chest relies upon the donations of the citizens and businesses of the greater Webster community for its operations. We are inspired by our supporters and do everything possible to ensure that they get the greatest possible value for their donations. Because our administration is entirely volunteer, almost all of our funds go directly into meeting the needs of local residents.

The pandemic has been particularly trying for those with the least resources in our community. With the shut-off of pandemic-related government programs many agencies faced demands that they could not meet and turned clients away. The Chest did not. Frankly, we faced that challenge, chose to run a deficit, and took funds out of our reserves to meet the needs we saw. We have had unprecedented demand for our services – with calls for help from more than 370 individuals and families in 2022.

Our Benefits Counselors, Tracy Dennis and Kris Lombardo, match needs to other resources in our community that can help right away and they are very successful with this. When there is no immediate recourse in a crisis or emergency, we provide direct aid. Our funds—your donations—were used to:

- prevent 49 needy and deserving Webster families from being evicted,
- prevent utility shut-off for 9 families,
- and make 12 aid payments including auto repairs and Emergency Medical Services.

We provide our services on behalf of our donors to residents in the 14580 ZIP Code area. This includes not only Webster but the northern third of Penfield as well. Many clients are single parents, disabled, or elderly. If you know of someone who might need assistance, please have them reach out to us by phone at (585) 671-2060 or by e-mail at [webcommchest@gmail.com](mailto:webcommchest@gmail.com). Any resident who is in need may contact us.

I am particularly pleased with our new Meal Center. Operating out of a small closet at The Outreach Center of United Methodist Church, we have made month-end distributions of bags containing three ready-to-prepare meals to food insecure families starting this past September. Each bag is for a family of three to four persons with larger families getting two bags. We thank two Girl Scouts-- Reis Arnold and Ainsley Smith--working on their Silver Award for putting together the November distribution and the students at OneSchool Global on Ebner Road for putting together the December distribution.

Between this and providing meal bags for the five “Little Pantries” around town since Spring, the Chest has provided 772 meal kits to needy families—well over 3,000 meals

in total. We also sponsored 920 meals to elderly and disabled individuals through Meals on Wheels. We sent 6 van loads of food to the Webster Hope food cupboard and made 9 emergency food assistance grants to families.

With your donations, we also helped two families whose homes were destroyed by fire, sent low income children to a week in summer camp, provided funds to several local organizations with programs benefiting residents, helped the Webster Museum with emergency building repairs, and more.

This year we continued to provide assistance to low income families that have children with disabilities. In partnership with a local foundation, we have made it affordable for our clients to put their children in developmental therapy programs with Heritage Christian Stables.

Our annual Shirley Miller Award is made to local graduating high school seniors to recognize exemplary efforts as young volunteers and to encourage community service in their schoolmates. The six awards made this year went to Rory Carney, Deborah Burden, Brennan Coallatin, Jacob Rothfuss, Allyson Mohrman, and Hannah Tischer.

It was exciting to throw our big family party with over 3,000 attending. That would be our annual Greater Rochester Marshmallow PEEP Art Show fund raising event. We are at it again for 2023 on March 25th and 26th so come and visit us and have a fun time. See our Peep Show website for more information and to see past shows: <http://www.rochesterpeepshow.com>. We thank our many business sponsors who find the Peep Show to be a great marketing opportunity.

I would like also to recognize the members of our Board of Directors and our officers who have all volunteered their time and skills to oversee the operations of the Chest. During 2022 these were Jessica Muratore, Sarah Reynolds, Diane Staub, Paul Staub, Christina Steve, Bonnie Reynolds, Paul Cordy, Joanne Nania, Sharon Pratt, Sarah Reynolds, Dan Robinson, Mary Kay Barrett, Barry Deane, Andy LaManna, Mary Fran Grenier, and Martin Williams. Anyone who is looking to serve our community as a volunteer should consider joining this dedicated group.

It is the people of our community who make this such a wonderful place to live! Many have been generous in donating their time to assist in the delivery of needed services and to help raise funds. If you want to help now, go to <https://webcommchest.org/> to learn more about us and to make a donation.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michael Grenier, President, Webster Community Chest