



KAIR

Since 1998

Keys Area Interdenominational Resources
Food Pantry and Emergency Services for those in Need in the Middle Keys

Summer 2020

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OUR COVID 19 REPOSE

In March, the world as we had known it was suddenly turned upside down. We realized that without work, people would not even have access to basic necessities such as food and medicine. We were correct. As businesses shut down, the number of people needing food skyrocketed to double what KAIR had previously assisted.

SAFETY

Our focus had to be on how to continue to help people but also keep us and our clients safe. So, we closed the building and have curbside pick-up for food and basic needs. The volunteer staff was trimmed back to a small core group trained to keep social distancing, use hand sanitizer and wear masks while working. Masks are distributed to clients who don't have one.

For clients who need more than food, their names and numbers are taken and assistance can be given by telephone interview, 3 way calling (when another agency has to be in-

FOOD

Very quickly, we learned that the food we could provide in our usual manner wasn't going to be enough. Farm Share and Feeding South Florida Food Banks were overwhelmed and supplies were short. In stepped a whole bunch of helping hands. Edna sent food through Instacart; ADK sorority sent food; monetary donations were received from so many; and Publix sent pallets of food staples. We also needed to purchase food and worked with Cheney Brothers and other food sources to minimize the cost as much as possible.

Every person who came to our door was offered the opportunity to have help applying for food stamps. We saw great success with that because families didn't need to come as often for food after being approved.

The number of food requests has lessened somewhat and the supply chain has improved as well as the support that the food banks can give.

WHAT ABOUT OTHER SERVICES?

We temporarily shut down our clothing and household goods distribution since our wonderful crew of volunteers were staying away to keep all of us safe. We have slowly been able to start this again on a limited basis.

Increasing people's resources is the best way to help someone and we have had much success in helping with that. KAIR volunteers have helped file taxes, file for the stimulus checks, apply for food stamps, apply for electric and water discount programs, keep a job bank for referrals, and last, but not least, help apply for unemployment compensation. The Florida unemployment compensation website could not handle the volume of applications and quickly crashed. It is still struggling and much help has been given to clients to work their way through this system.

WHAT COMES NEXT?

For the past four months, many people without work have not paid their rent or their utilities. The costs have mounted so high that many will not be able to catch up. There has been a moratorium on evictions and utility cut-offs but that reprieve is ending very soon. Local residents have been turning to KAIR for help. We know that we need to be part of the solution or we will have a huge increase in homelessness. As every request comes in, we are working with the client and with the utility companies or landlords for KAIR to pay a portion and the rest to be a payment plan with the client.

Of course, we're still doing all of our other services such as child care, IDs, medicine, medical treatment, etc. If you know of someone that needs our help, please have them call. We want to help if we can. We couldn't do any of this without the incredible generosity of our local community.

Thank you to all who contributed food and monies to help. Special thanks also to these foundations. We couldn't have done it without them and we still need all of you.

The Peter and Betsy Snow Family Foundation; The Marshwood Foundation; The United Way of Collier and the Keys; The Community Foundation of the Florida Keys (CFFK); The Perry Foundation; and Ocean Reef Foundation.





Sombrero Beach Run

This year was a fabulous year for the 10th Annual Sombrero Beach Run. More than 650 runners and walkers participated and spent a fun day at the beach with music, food, drink and prizes. This year, we added a "Fun Run" for the very young kids in the crowd. We're looking forward to next year and continue to look for ways to make it even better and more fun! This event helps support all of KAIR's services including the food pantry and other basic needs. Hope to see you there on March 4,



Post Office Workers Help Stamp Out Hunger!

The annual Postal Carriers Food Drive was held in May and our local carriers never disappoint. No matter how hot it is or how long of a day it makes, they collect all of the food that residents put out at the mailbox to donate to the food pantry. This year, more than 12,000 pounds were gathered and carriers who participated are as follows: J. Schaefer, P. Wofsey, M. Smith, P. Jones, Jr., T. Wofsey, T. Daniels, J. Miller, T. Atkins, L. Velasquez, L. Soto. Thank you all for giving the food pantry such a big boost!



Volunteers Make It Happen!

KAIR celebrates all of its volunteers. We couldn't do what we do without their hard work and great attitude. Pictured here are Herb Bernett and his wife Yea. Herb was one of KAIR's first volunteers and has provided thousands of hours of service over the past 18 years. Also pictured are Sandy Neiditz, Dick Cunningham, Cindy Fox, Bill Ahtes, Betty Walker, Margaret Gibson Marj Roberts, and Phyllis Michaelis. These are some of the people who keep KAIR going each day.

