COMPASSIONATE HEARTS GAZETTE

Nonprofit News That Matters!

A Community Newspaper Dedicated to Featuring News that Doesn't Make it to the Big-Name Newspapers

November 2020



November is National Gratitude Month: 3 Ways to Have a Gratitude Attitude During This Month

By: Sharon Schweitzer and Sophie Echeverry.

USA - November is officially National Gratitude month, and what better way to celebrate than to make an extra effort daily to thank someone in your life. It's no coincidence that gratitude month and Thanksgiving fall during 30 day period. However, gratitude means more than saying "thanks." It is a deeper feeling of satisfaction and appreciation that fulfills and nourishes from the inside out.

Practicing gratitude or reflecting on what you are grateful for has been proven to generate a positive impact in psychological, physical and interpersonal well-being. People express how reflecting and feeling grateful for their blessings is a beneficial way to deal with chaotic, stressful and tense life moments. The benefits of gratitude impact individuals in a physical, psychological and social matter, according to a study from the Greater Good Science Center at the University of California, Berkeley. People that practice gratitude on a daily basis tend to have:

- * Fewer feelings of isolation and loneliness.
- * A stronger immune system.
- * Better sleep.
- * Lowered blood pressure.
- * Reduced anxiety and depression.
- * Reduction in body aches and pains.

- * More forgiveness.
- * Increased satisfaction at work/school.

So, a slight change in mental attitude can positively affect us in many ways. As an organization seeking motivated, passionate and happy employees, these benefits serve as an inspiration to encourage "gratitude attitude" in business. Here are some creative activities you to consider implementing to boost gratitude:

On the first day of November send all your employees a gratitude email or letter. Sharing your gratitude for their hard work will make them feel special and appreciated. During the month set a daily time for employees stop, and take a minute or two to think and meditate about something or someone for which they are thankful. Plan a local community service activity that employees can attend. Schedule days (weekends) to spend time volunteering at an animal shelter, local church or food bank. Many national and global organizations implement acts of charity to show gratitude. Finding ways to give back to the community makes people work and feel better. So, don't forget the power of gratitude. Turn gratefulness and saying thank you into a habit. It creates a positive mindset and illuminates how life is a gift.

This story first appeared in https://www.protocolww.com/

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Compassionate Hearts Gazette

Nonprofit News that Matters

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Founder / Editor's Message

By: M.C. Reyes

Hi Guys!

Welcome to The Compassionate Hearts Gazette. In case you are reading this newspaper for the first time, let me share our story with you.

On May 11 of 2019, my oldest daughter graduated from college. On that day, during the commencement acts, I was not only watching her become an adult, but I was also listening to one of the most motivational speeches I have heard in my life.

You see, the guest speaker was a prior student who, after graduating, went ahead and created her own community magazine. She had no idea what she was doing. All she knew was that she wanted to run her own magazine and that nothing was going to stop her... not even her inexperience.

Fast forward two months (this was back in July 2019), there I was, running my own community newspaper. A dream that started many years ago when I got my first rejection letter for an opinion article that I had written for the Orlando Sentinel. That rejection letter did a number on me and made me stop writing for a while... until one day, I tried again and, this time, the piece was published by them and, with that, came my new desire to become a journalist and to finally create my community newspaper.

My dream of starting the newspaper came with a lot of challenges, and one of them was being stationed overseas for three years due to my husband's active-duty military status. At that time, we were sent to Zimbabwe, Africa, and my dreams of starting my beloved newspaper were put, once again, on the back burner.

In May 2016, we came back to the United States after my husband retired from the military and, after dealing with many health issues, I finally decided that it was time for me to make my dream of becoming a freelance writer for major publications come true... that was until one day, I received another rejection letter... this time from The New York Times. On that day, I again stopped writing and became involved in a program called Vet Voices to try to fill the void I had in my life.

Believe me when I say that Vet Voices was a gift sent from heaven

They not only gave my life a different meaning but also made me realize that there was a light at the end of the tunnel

During my daughter's commencement ceremony, I had another gift sent from heaven... and this time it came in the form of a fellow journalist who, like me, had a dream. But, the difference between her and I was that she made hers become a reality, even when she had all the odds against her, and I was still wondering how to make mine come true. But, her speech made me realize that it was time to do it... that it was time for me to stop procrastinating... that it was time for me to stop allowing my fears to control my dreams.

On that day, I snapped out of my self-pity and decided that it was time... that the time for making my dream come true had arrived and that I needed to put my big girl pants on and do it. And I did. Oh boy, I did. The next day after that commencement ceremony, I took the first step and created the first page of my nonprofit community newspaper, which I tentatively called The Haines City Herald, but later on that night, I changed it to The Northeast Polk Gazette after my husband asked me to think bigger, which I did.

Now, here I am, writing this piece to present to you my biggest dream, my new baby, and the result of my hard work, which I have renamed the Compassionate Hearts Gazette so that the name goes in accordance with the mission we are trying to do.

The truth is that this newspaper is not a typical newspaper. With this nonprofit community newspaper, I not only want to bring news that matters into our communities, but I also want to use it as a way to give back to our community since a portion of our ad sales will be used to support other nonprofit organizations.

I hope you guys give this newspaper a chance.. give me a chance to show you what hard work and dedication looks like. I promise you, I will not disappoint you.

Thank you in advance for your support.

With Love, Marielys Camacho-Reyes (M.C. Reyes)

Interested in making a donation to our nonprofit? Visit our website at www.compassionateheartsunited.org to find out about the ways you can support our organization.

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* Aida Betancourt, Editorial Board / Contributing Writer * Nasif Ahmed, Contributing Cartoonist * M.C. Reyes, Editorial Board / Editor-in-Chief

In The Spotlight

Meet the "Giving Tuesday" Organization: Giving Back to Communities, One Tuesday at a Time



Content Provided by the Organization's Website.

GivingTuesday was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day that encourages people to do good. Over the past seven years, it has grown into a global movement that inspires hundreds of millions of people to give, collaborate, and celebrate generosity.

Whether it's making someone smile, helping a neighbor or stranger out, showing up for an issue or people we care about, or giving some of what we have to those who need our help, every act of generosity counts and everyone has something to give.

The Big Ideas Behind GivingTuesday

In an era of global crisis and disconnection, we need new rituals to connect us. As the world's largest giving movement, we believe we can go further, faster.

According to the organization, GivingTuesday strives to build a world in which the catalytic power of generosity is at the heart of the society we build together, unlocking dignity, opportunity and equity around the globe. They believe that generosity leads to greater civic participation and other pro-social behaviors. Their mission is to build a more just and generous world.

Giving Tuesday was founded in 2012 by New York's 92nd Street Y in partnership with the United Nations Foundation. In July 2019, Giving Tuesday spun out into its own organization, led by Giving Tuesday co-founder, Asha Curran, as its CEO.

How To Get Started

Each year on, December 1, nonprofits, small businesses, corporations, schools, and faith-based organizations all over the world celebrate the global day of giving.

For more information on this organization, and/or to get all the tools, resources, and ideas your organization needs to participate in GivingTuesday this upcoming Dec 1, 2020 visit https://www.givingtuesday.org/organizations



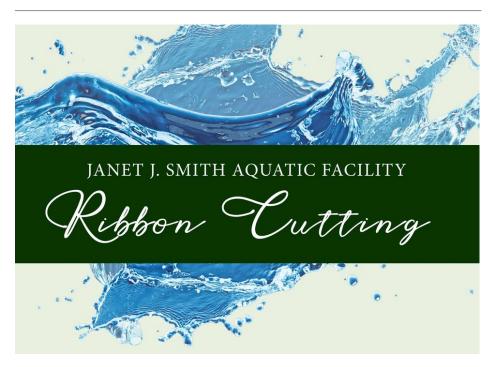


Together we give

GI₩INGTUESDAY

Keeping Up With The Community: City of Haines City

Janet J. Smith Aquatic Facility **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony**



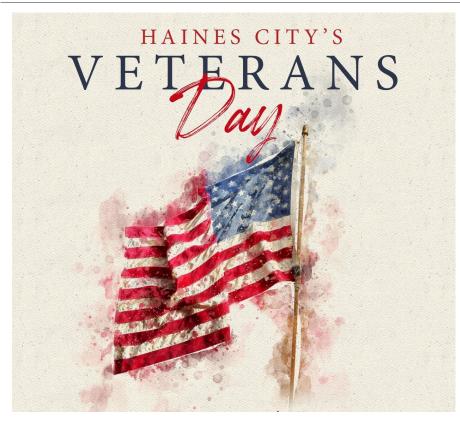
Please, join the Haines City Parks & Recreation Department and the City of Haines City on Saturday, November 14, 2020 at 12 PM EST – 2:30 PM EST for the "First Splash" at the brand new Janet J. Smith Aquatic Facility.

The Janet J. Smith Aquatic Facility is located at Ben W. Graham Park, 1900 N. 10th

Refreshments will be provided, and the pool will be open for swimming from 12:30 - 2:00 PM, weather permitting.

Haines City "Veteran Day" Ceremony

Visit us online at www.chufinc.org



Join the City of Haines City for their Veterans Day Ceremony at Railroad Park in Downtown Haines City.

The ceremony will take place on Wednesday, November 11th at 1PM.

Come celebrate the bravery and sacrifice of our United States Veterans.

Haines City Parks & Recreation Will Host Holiday Camp During Thanksgiving Break for Children Currently in Grades 1-5



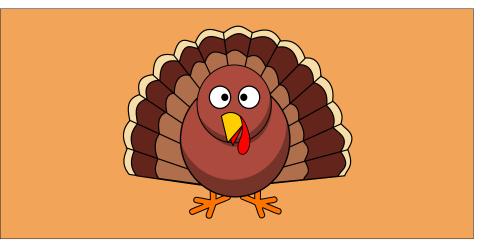
Haines City - Haines City Parks & Recreation will host Holiday Camp during Thanksgiving Break for children currently in grades 1-5.

This camp session is at the Lake Eva Community Center November 23 - 25, 2020, from 7:30AM – 5:30PM. Lunch is not provided, so campers need to bring a packed lunch and two snacks with them. The kids will go to Lake Eva Park, enjoy arts and crafts, play games, go to the basketball gym, and more.

Safety measures are in place to keep your campers, families, and our staff well during camp!

The total cost for the three days is \$30 for Haines City residents and \$45 for non-Haines City residents. Registration will be available online via Community Pass or inperson at the Lake Eva Community Center. Registration for Haines City Residents will open October 9, 2020, and will open for the public November 9, 2020.

Registration ends November 18, 2020, or until spots are filled! Spots are limited. If you have any questions about registering your child for Holiday Camp 2020, please call (863) 421-3700 for assistance.



GFWC Four Corners Junior Woman's Club October 2020 Meeting

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Photo Provided

By: Press Release.

Kissimmee - GFWC Four Corners Junior Woman's Club is meeting in-person for the October 2020 general meeting on Wednesday, October 21, 2020 at Buffalo Wild Wings, Kissimmee for lunch on the patio. Club members are wearing pink to honor breast cancer patients and survivors.

Club member, Jeanne Vollmar, updated the website, www.GFWCFourCorners.org with articles and links surrounding the Prevent Childhood Bullying movement.

On Saturday, October 17, 2020, High Vista at Ridgewood Lakes Homeowner's Association held a craft show at the Clubhouse. Several members of GFWC Four Corners Junior Woman's Club reside at Ridgewood Lakes in Davenport. Members Lexa Comstock and Jeanne Vollmar represented the Club at the craft show table and crafters donated proceeds to the Club's fundraising efforts.

The local club is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that reaches out to the Four Corners community of Polk, Osceola, Lake and Orange counties through volunteerism and charitable donations.

For additional information concerning the organization or meetings, please visit the website, www.GFWCFourCorners.org, email the club at gfwcfourcorners@aol.com, or find us on Facebook.

Would you like us to publish your organization's press release?

Send us the press release and any photos to marielyscr@chufinc.org

News from Our Friends

EEC Solutions' Youth Leadership Course Takes Students to DC



Photo Provided.

By: Press Release.

Washington, DC - The weekend of October 23-25, EEC Solutions' leadership program took a change of scenery to Washington, DC. During their time there, they were able to see national monuments, memorials and landmarks, as well as explore all of the history and natural beauty DC has to offer.

The group was able to engage with two guest speakers, Mr. Alonzo Fulgham and Ambassador Mari Carmen Aponte. Through their speeches, they learned about their professional experiences and how their life events shaped them into the person and leader they are today.

Additionally, the girls partook in a leadership workshop presented by The Compassionate Hearts United Foundation, where they furthered their presentation skills and spoke about the characteristics and actions of good/bad leaders. They ended the workshop with an empowerment exercise where each participant identified a trait/quality they admired in another participant

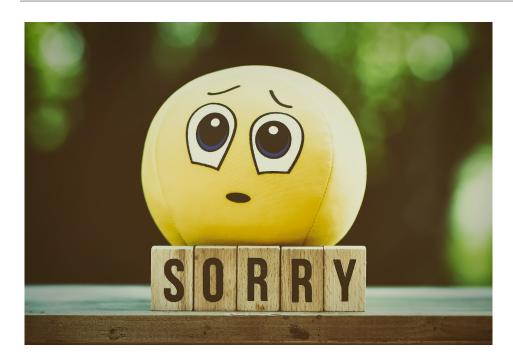
Follow EEC Solutions on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to keep up with them.

See more photos on page 8.



Mind, Body, Soul: Wholeness

Forgiveness: The Key to a Better Life



By: Aida Betancourt, Contributing Writer.

Let's face it, forgiveness is a difficult subject. A quick search on google would lead us to forgiveness being defined as "the action or process of forgiving or being forgiven." Seems quite simple, yet we tend to see it as a complicated process.

If we dig a little deeper, we find that psychologists define forgiveness as a conscious, deliberate decision to release feelings of resentment or vengeance towards a person who has harmed you, regardless of whether they actually deserve your forgiveness. Therefore, if it is a conscious and deliberate decision, then we need to understand that there is a process involved and that one has to go through path in order to reach the point of being ready to release those feelings.

It is imperative that when we try to achieve a mind, body, soul balance, we understand that we need to face forgiveness. Every single one of us has something to look back to and forgive. The more we do that, the more balance we achieve.

Why is that? There is something magical that happens when we forgive others. You see, the act of forgiveness is not necessarily for the person who offended us... it is more for us. The magic happens when we engage the process of "letting go," because this is process that leads us to internal peace.

Process

Forgiveness is not just telling the other person they are forgiven. There is a process that comes with forgiveness. This is a state you reach after you let go of anger, resentment, hostility, etc.

It is also important to differentiate between forgiveness and reconciliation. Reconciliation my come afterwards. It is not a given step in the process. When you enter the process of forgiveness, there may or may not be reconciliation.

The benefits:

Let's consider the benefits of forgiving. When we let go of grudges, bitterness, and anger we move towards:

- * Peace of mind
- * Less stress
- * Less anxiety
- * Develop healthier relationship
- * Lower depression
- * Improved self-esteem

How to develop the skill of forgiveness:

Certainly, forgiving is a choice we make... with the understanding that it is for our own mental health. Here are some tools that would help in achieving that forgiving attitude:

- * Recognize the hurtful matter
- * Acknowledge the emotions involved
- * Being empathetic / compassionate with yourself and the other person
- * Forgiving unconditionally

Forgiving allows love to come in your heart... and what better than gifting yourself that? Isn't that just a beautiful thing?

See you next month and may God bless all of you and your families.

About the Author: Aida Betancourt is an Army Veteran, and an empowering transformational life and health coach. Connect with her at www.aidabetancourt.com



News From Our "Compassionate Hearts Project" Team

Hygiene Kits Giveaway: Supporting Our Homeless Population, One Hygiene Kit at a Time





By: Staff Writer.

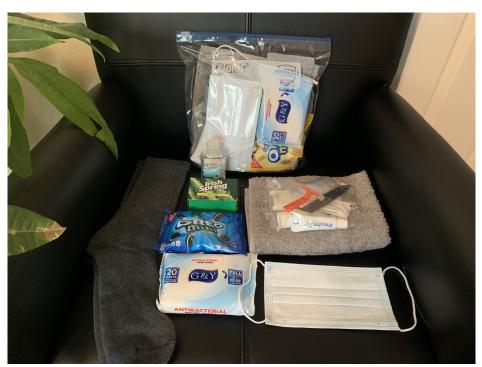
Winter Haven - During the month of November, the "Compassionate Hearts Project" Team was busy collecting personal care items for their "hygiene kits for our homeless population" charity event.

Thanks to the many donors who graciously donated money and items, the team was able to donate 48 hygiene kits and extra personal care items to The Mission of Winter Haven nonprofit organization. Below, are some of the pictures we took during the delivery of the items to this amazing organization.

If you would like to contribute to our cause, so that we can continue providing for those in need, we invite you to visit our website at www.chufinc.org to learn more about the ways in which you can help.

"If you want to touch the past, touch a rock. If you want to touch the present, touch a flower. If you want to touch the future, touch a life."

~Author Unknown~







Continuation from page 5

EEC Solutions' Youth Leadership Course Takes Students to DC









Viewpoints

Opinion: The Selfish Side of Gratitude



By: Barbara Ehrenreich.

This holiday season, there was something in the air that was even more inescapable than the scent of pumpkin spice: gratitude.

In November, NPR issued a number of brief exhortations to cultivate gratitude, culminating in an hourlong special on the "science of gratitude," narrated by Susan Sarandon. Writers in Time magazine, The New York Times and Scientific American recommended it as a surefire ticket to happiness and even better health. Robert Emmons, a psychology professor at the University of California, Davis, who studies the "science of gratitude," argues that it leads to a stronger immune system and lower blood pressure, as well as "more joy and pleasure."

It's good to express our thanks, of course, to those who deserve recognition. But this holiday gratitude is all about you, and how you can feel better.

Gratitude is hardly a fresh face on the self-improvement scene. By the turn of the century, Oprah Winfrey and other motivational figures were promoting an "attitude of gratitude." Martin Seligman, the father of "positive psychology," which is often enlisted to provide some sort of scientific basis for "positive thinking," has been offering instruction in gratitude for more than a decade. In the logic of positive self-improvement, anything that feels good — from scenic walks to family gatherings to expressing gratitude — is worth repeating.

Positive thinking was in part undone by its own silliness, glaringly displayed in the 2006 best seller "The Secret," which announced that you could have anything, like the expensive necklace you'd been coveting, simply by "visualizing" it in your possession.

The financial crash of 2008 further dimmed the luster of positive thinking, which had done so much to lure would-be homeowners and predatory mortgage lenders into a speculative frenzy. This left the self-improvement field open to more cautious stances, like mindfulness and resilience and — for those who could still muster it — gratitude.

Gratitude is at least potentially more prosocial than the alternative self-improvement techniques. You have to be grateful to someone, who could be an invisible God, but might as well be a friend, mentor or family member. The gratitude literature often advises loving, human interactions: writing a "gratitude letter" to a helpful colleague, for example, or taking time to tell a family member how wonderful they are. These are good things to do, in a moral sense, and the new gratitude gurus are here to tell us that they also feel good.

But is gratitude always appropriate? The answer depends on who's giving it and who's getting it or, very commonly in our divided society, how much of the wealth gap it's expected to bridge. Suppose you were an \$8-an-hour Walmart employee who saw her base pay elevated this year, by company fiat, to \$9 an hour. Should you be grateful to the Waltons, who are the richest family in America? Or to Walmart's chief executive, whose annual base pay is close to \$1 million and whose home sits on nearly 100 acres of land in Bentonville, Ark.? Grateful people have been habitually dismissed as "chumps," and in this hypothetical case, the term would seem to apply.

Perhaps it's no surprise that gratitude's rise to self-help celebrity status owes a lot to the conservative-leaning John Templeton Foundation. At the start of this decade, the foundation, which promotes free-market capitalism, gave \$5.6 million to Dr. Emmons, the gratitude researcher. It also funded a \$3 million initiative called Expanding the Science and Practice of Gratitude through the Greater Good Science Center at the University of California, Berkeley, which co-produced the special that aired on NPR. The foundation does not fund projects to directly improve the lives of poor individuals, but it has spent a great deal, through efforts like these, to improve their attitudes.

It's a safe guess, though, that most of the people targeted by gratitude exhortations actually have something to be grateful for, such as Janice Kaplan, the author of the memoir "The Gratitude Diaries," who spent a year appreciating her high-earning husband and successful grown children. And it is here that the pro-social promise of gratitude begins to dim. True, saying "thank you" is widely encouraged, but much of the gratitude advice involves no communication or interaction of any kind.

Consider this, from a yoga instructor on CNN.com: "Cultivate your sense of gratitude by incorporating giving thanks into a personal morning ritual such as writing in a gratitude journal, repeating an affirmation or practicing a meditation. It could even be as simple as writing what you give thanks for on a sticky note and posting it on your mirror or computer. To help you establish a daily routine, create a 'thankfulness' reminder on your phone or computer to pop up every morning and prompt you."

Who is interacting here? "You" and "you."

The Harvard Mental Health Letter begins its list of gratitude interventions with the advice that you should send a thank-you letter as often as once a month, but all the other suggested exercises can be undertaken without human contact: "thank someone mentally," "keep a gratitude journal," "count your blessings," "meditate" and, for those who are so inclined, "pray."

So it's possible to achieve the recommended levels of gratitude without spending a penny or uttering a word. All you have to do is to generate, within yourself, the good feelings associated with gratitude, and then bask in its warm, comforting glow. If there is any loving involved in this, it is self-love, and the current hoopla around gratitude is a celebration of onanism.

Yet there is a need for more gratitude, especially from those who have a roof over their heads and food on their table. Only it should be a more vigorous and inclusive sort of gratitude than what is being urged on us now. Who picked the lettuce in the fields, processed the standing rib roast, drove these products to the stores, stacked them on the supermarket shelves and, of course, prepared them and brought them to the table? Saying grace to an abstract God is an evasion; there are crowds, whole communities of actual people, many of them with aching backs and tenuous finances, who made the meal possible.

The real challenge of gratitude lies in figuring out how to express our debt to them, whether through generous tips or, say, by supporting their demands for decent pay and better working conditions. But now we're not talking about gratitude, we're talking about a far more muscular impulse — and this is, to use the old-fashioned term, "solidarity" — which may involve getting up off the yoga mat.

Barbara Ehrenreich is the founding editor of the Economic Hardship Reporting Project. This story first appeared in https://www.nytimes.com/

Editorial Commentary: Let's Be Grateful, Even When We Don't Feel Like It



Cartoon By: Nasif Ahmed, Contributing Cartoonist. @NasifAhmed3

By: M.C. Reyes, Editor-in-Chief and Member of the Editorial Board.

There have been many times in my life when I have questioned if good things only happen to certain people. I mean, yes, good things happen to all of us, but what I mean is like REALLY good things. Things like winning the lottery, getting that amazing job that we have always dreamed of, that the man or woman of our dreams comes knocking on our door expressing eternal love to us... that kind of things... things that seem to good to be true, you know.

Well, with the passing of the years, I have come to the realization that our happiness shouldn't be attached to the things we want to get, but instead to the things that we did get... does that make any sense to you guys? Well, it does to me.

For years and years, I felt like something was missing in my life... like there was this "thing" that I needed to get or achieve that was going to make me happy for the rest of my life, but the problem was that, with every year that passed, that certain "thing" never came and I found myself not being happy, which, at the same time, made me ungrateful or unappreciative for the things I did have in my life, or the things I did achieve during that year. It wasn't until that moment that I realized that me not being able to appreciate the things I had in my life was the reason why my life felt so empty, so bland, so unlucky. Right there I realized that I was the one bringing all that bad energy into my life and that, if I wanted to change the way I was feeling, I needed to start appreciating the things I did have in my life. This would allow me to feel better about myself, which, in the end, was what helped me to shift my approach in life and get some of the things I always dreamed of having.

So today, I invite you to be grateful of the things that you have in your life, even when the world tries to make you feel like you are missing something in life to be able to be happy. Life, as we came to see in 2020, will bring many challenges... challenges and experiences that may make you feel like there is no light at the end of the tunnel. But, if you stay positive and do not allow those challenges to define who you are as a person, your chances of changing the outcome of your life will increase dramatically. Yes, you may never win the lottery, or find the "perfect" job, or that prince or princess you have been waiting for may never knock on your door, but at least you will make sure that whatever you have going on in your life will help you be happy with who you are and where you are going in your life.

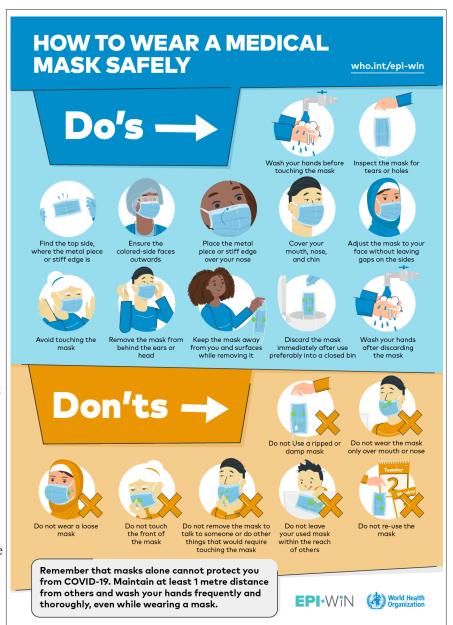
Editorial Commentary

This doesn't mean that you will stop dreaming, or working towards a better you... no, that's not what I mean. What I am trying to say is that being grateful for the things that we have in our lives will help us stay in a better state of mind and will bring us closer to achieving or getting those things that we have always dreamed of... in other words, being grateful will help you steer the pot so that good things start coming into your life.

So, next time you feel like complaining about the things you have not been able to achieve or get in your life, or in your career try to shift that negative thought and start being grateful for what you do have and I promise you that, by training your mind to always see the silver lining of each situation, your chances of getting closer to those dreams that have not materialized yet will increase... and you want to know why? Well, let me tell you... because you will face life with a different mindset... and, at the end of the day, that will help you shift the course of your life and make it a better one, not only for you, but also for those around you.

As a wise woman once said...

"Be thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough." ~ Oprah Winfrey ~



We Want to Hear from you

As part of our commitment with our community,

The Compassionate Hearts Gazette would like to share your opinions and views with our readers. Submit your letters to the editor or opinion pieces to marielyscr@chufinc.org for a chance to have your submissions published in our newspaper.

Hand Sanitizer Available Locally



For more information, contact:

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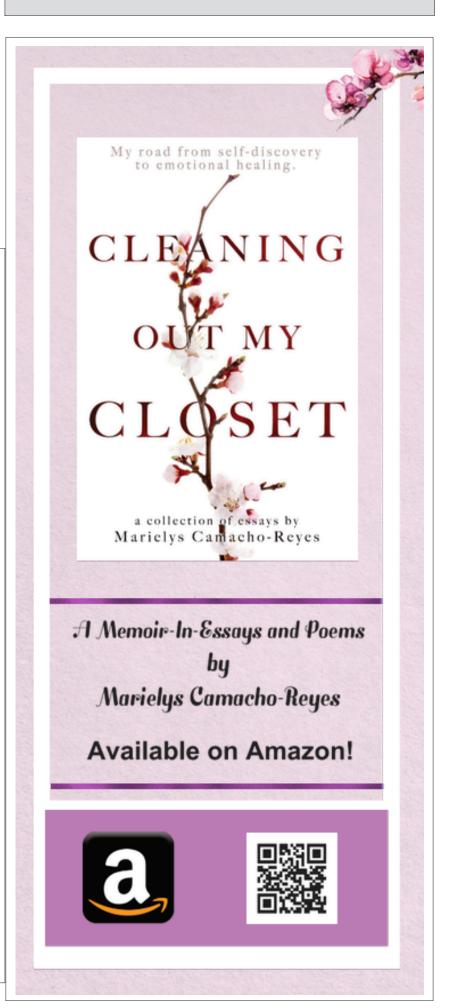
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As part of our commitment to our community, the Compassionate Hearts UNITED Foundation, Inc., in partnership with EEC Solutions has launched the "Door to Success" Project.

This project is dedicated to providing financial support to students around the Polk County area to help them cover some of the costs associated with college attendance.

We currently sponsor these two events under the "Door to Success" project.

* The Edwin Steve Memorial Scholarship

* Young Writers Award

For more information about the
"Door to Success" Project,
or to become one of our
generous donors / sponsors, visit us at
https://www.chufinc.org/

As part of our commitment to our community, the Compassionate Hearts UNITED, Foundation, Inc. has launched the "Compassionate Hearts" Project.

This project is dedicated to providing monetary donations to other non-profit organizations around the Polk County area to help them cover some of the costs associated with the operations of their organizations and /or to help them achieve their missions. We also provide donations to organizations based on their individual needs.

For more information about the "Compassionate Hearts" Project, or to become one of our generous donors / sponsors, visit us at https://www.chufinc.org/