



From Your Reporter – What a Year! By Andy Berfond

As we fast approach the end of 2020, I've been reflecting on the course of events we have experienced and look ahead to the new year with cautious optimism. Flexibility is a word that comes to my mind as it relates to navigating the reality of changing times, by staying healthy and well while at the same time maintaining the activities which give us fulfillment and joy.

When we were all "locked down" earlier this year, many of us assimilated as best we could into a new way of living but it was not without its challenges. We learned new ways to socialize through technology and social media and came to the realization products we've always taken for granted in the past had suddenly become hard to come by.

We have a continued gratitude for our families, friends and the support systems in place like the Downtowners and our Church Communities to be assured we have what we need and people we can count on.

As Downtowners, we have proven to still be very much a part of the fabric of the community as we have come forward and become involved in important ways. We stood up for the Black Lives Matter Movement, we've donated cookies to a local church preparing special meals in their neighborhood and we have linked with students online to assist with educational needs.

At the same time, we have kept in touch with one another by meeting on Zoom, talking about the books we've read and the vacations we've taken. Then when the opportunity presented itself, we shared ice cream in the park, visited our fellow Downtowners on their porches, and participated in important remote local conferences like the Age Friendly City Initiative.

I am moved to share a story about something that happened to me recently. It was a feel good moment. A small gesture by a stranger that had a huge impact on my day about a week ago.

I went to Market and stopped for my usual cup of coffee at the Lancaster County Coffee Roasters stand. After the young lady handed me my coffee, she told me it had already been paid for. She explained that earlier in the morning, someone came through and paid for a number of cups of coffee for customers who followed. I was a lucky recipient.

It was a humbling moment and as I walked away thought of the need to pay that small gesture forward. About a week later, I met up with a fellow Downtowner for coffee at the Copper Cup. While we were chatting, a police officer went in and ordered a cup of coffee. I excused myself from the table, walked over to the counter and explained I was going to pay for his order.

He looked at me and said, "That's very nice, but you don't have to do that."

"Yes I do," I said, and went on to explain the reason for the pay it forward moment and my experience at Market.

I wish all of my fellow Downtowners a Happy Holiday Season and a Happy New Year. Stay Safe & Well.

Program Highlights

Holiday Party: Campfire, Food, and Tales of Holidays Past Tuesday, December 15th



Check the [Event Calendar](#) in January for Walking Group, Book Clubs, Afternoon Teas, and Koffee Klatch gatherings.

[You can now view videos of previous presentations on the website.](#)

Our generous sponsors demonstrate their commitment to maintaining Lancaster City as a safe and welcoming environment for people of all ages and assure that the support provided by Lancaster Downtowners remains affordable for members.

We partner with businesses and organizations that provide high quality services that align with our mission.

From Just One Call: 717-584-1248

JOC volunteers are available to pick up orders at local stores, such as food, groceries, pet supplies, etc if you want to avoid exposure to adverse weather or Covid.

We also have volunteers who can assist with tech support with your computers and phones remotely. Often they do not need to be in your home thus avoiding potential Covid exposure.

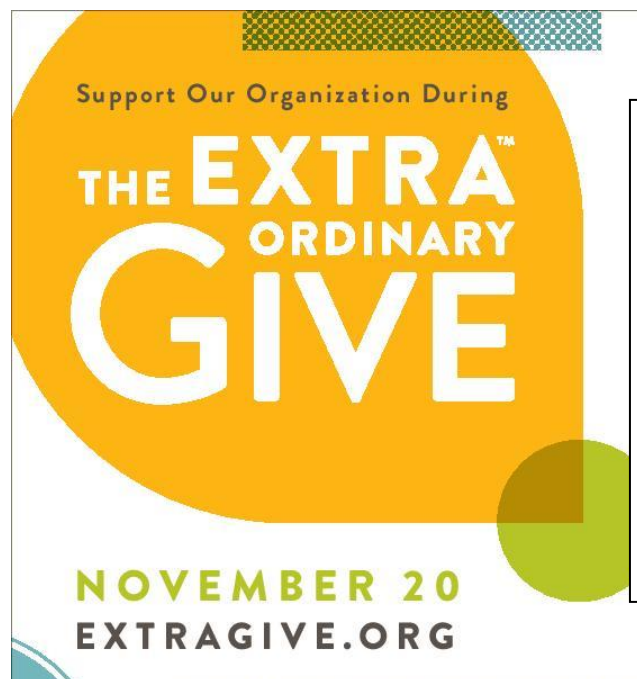
A trained volunteer is also available to assist as a “Health Buddy” if you would like “another set of ears” for medical appointments, in person or via telemedicine.

If you think you could benefit from a regular call to break the isolation or loneliness from ongoing “sheltering in place”, Just One Call has many members who have volunteered to provide that for you.

Just One Call can also help with snow removal!

And a reminder to please leave a message if your call is not answered immediately. The increase in junk calls has necessitated screening of calls, so unrecognized numbers are not being answered. But if you leave a message, someone will respond to your request.

John Kanagy, Volunteer Coordinator for JOC



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On the Lighter Side – I am not a hoarder

It's confession time and I admit it will be therapeutic for me. I am an organized pack rat, as evidenced by the collection of labeled plastic bins in my storage closet. Luckily that closet has very high ceilings, allowing for stacking the plastic storage bins which gives me the opportunity to store even more stuff in a most organized manner.

Contrary to what some people might think, I am firmly taking a stand and stating for the record "I am NOT a hoarder." My storage room holds a collection of very important objects of varying degrees of interest and significance. (If anything sounds like a statement of denial, this might be it!)

Take for example, a blank paper tax return dating from 1949, or how about a bright yellow thermos type container ready to be filled with lemonade for a picnic or holiday gathering. Oh, then there is the stack of record albums. Remember them? Vinyl has made a big comeback, and I want to believe in my stack of record albums there must be at least one or two that have some significant collectible and monetary value.

There is the ceramic windmill cookie jar, the framed and embroidered "there's no place like home" tapestry, the stuffed Eeyore toy, that talks (if you're happy & you know it, flap your ears.) when you press the precise point on one of his ears, and if that's not enough, the empty green glass bottle in the shape of a rifle that once contained some kind of alcoholic beverage in it's first life.

These are all very important objects, certainly not worthy of simply being tossed in the trash. What's that old expression? One man's trash is another's treasure? Ok, I know what some of you might be thinking. Sell the stuff, make a few extra dollars and be done with it. Yes, I tried that and was actually moderately successful for a short time. When that opportunity passed, I did make multiple trips to the thrift shop and left with a fistful of tax exemption donation certificates, but how much can you realistically claim for Grandma's old bric-a-brac that the minimalistic younger generations want absolutely nothing to do with?

There is also a pandemic twist to this story I share. Like many other concerned bordering on paranoid people, I found the need to make some room in the storage area for...you guessed it...the storage of extra toilet paper, paper towels and the rest of the necessities which threaten to be once again, hard to find due to pandemic panic buying.

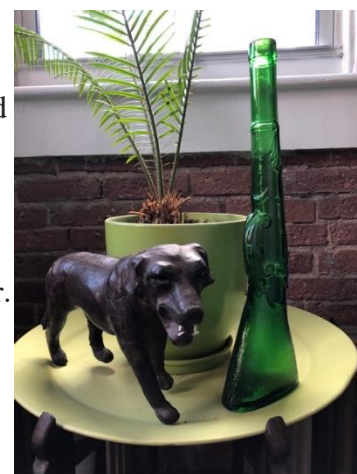
The need to accomplish this important task came with a price however. I had to make some more trips to the thrift shop, only to learn that while they willingly accepted the bags of clothes and miscellaneous older suitcases and other stuff, the man at the drive thru drop off was firm and very clear. "We are not accepting bric-a-brac of any kind at this time."

I returned home with a leather tiger and dog and the continued dilemma of what to do with them. How could I possibly toss them in the trash? Someone must need or want a leather dog showing it's fangs in a threatening sort of way. I'm thinking it has to be some kind of collectible.

So call me nostalgic for older things with memories, or call me a collector. I'm good with that. OK...yes...I'm a bit of a pack rat. But please...I am NOT a hoarder.

Or am I? Are there any other "collectors" out there?
Tell the truth. You know who you are.

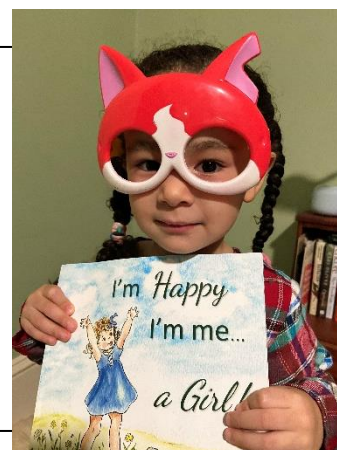
-Andy Berfond



Downtowner Donna Styer has just published a new children's book entitled "I'm Happy I'm me...a Girl!"

A little book with a a big message! It's appropriate for little girls 6 months up to 6 or 7 years. Little boys are enjoying the book, as well!

If interested please email Donna at coaching@drstyer.org or call 717-393-7276.



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