



Needs Council 2021 Board Members

- Laurie Jenschke - President
- Kelli Olfers - Vice President
- Bea Aldrich - Treasurer
- Elizabeth Rodriguez - Secretary
- Jade Browning
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- Sarah Fontenot
- Shirley McCarty
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- Mark Peterson
- Ray Tiemann
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78624

Director's Corner

"It is the sweet simple things in life which are the real ones after all."
- Laura Ingalls Wilder



A volunteer bakes beautiful, individualized birthday cakes for our counseling clients. We enjoy the surprised looks and words of gratitude as they hear it was made especially for them. Regardless of age, each recipient is touched that a volunteer they've never met cared enough to make their birthday special. "Bart" is one such recipient.

Bart has been in counseling with Ray, one of our professional counselors who specializes in substance abuse and anger management. Ray tells clients he can't fix their problems; however, if they want to do the work, he will provide the tools they need to thrive.

Bart is one of Ray's many successful stories. When he was given his cake, he just stared at it. Finally, he choked out, "No one has ever made a birthday cake for me, I don't know what to say."

Ray's daily task of convincing the inconvincible they are worthy of love is tough and often takes months or longer.

Bart never knew where his next "home" was going to be; dysfunctional parents and the foster care system left his soul wounded. Ray became his grounding wire and taught him how to accept the good with the bad and yes, how to thrive! Bart now encourages others to come to our center for help.

The infinite number of sweet simple things our volunteers and donors do for folks they've never met, are indeed the real ones. Thank YOU for being part of our mission, giving your love and support to all in our community who need it!

Cindy Heifner
Executive Director

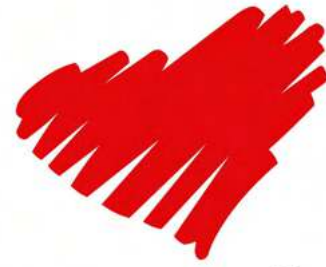
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PO Box 73
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HILL COUNTRY COMMUNITY



Needs Council



Summer 2021

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The first day of school is exciting, especially in person and without restrictions! Kids are eager to show off their new backpacks and reconnect with friends after the long summer. It is thrilling for us too because, with your help, we can provide school supplies for children whose families have little room in their budgets for extras such as this.



supply our students

Most Needed Item



Full School Supply Wishlist can be found at
tgt.gifts/needsCouncil or
facebook.com/needsCouncil

Supplies can be ordered online or dropped off at the Needs Council office during normal business hours.

Thank you!

Volunteer Camille Williamson packs bags for 2020 School Supply Distribution. She also spent 140+ hours covering our front desk until we hired new staff! We appreciate all of your efforts Camille!



"Thank you from the bottom of my heart for helping families like mine. I pray someday I can help other families as well. Thank you for all you do!"
- a grateful mother

Taxes: The Next Generation

Retired CPA leads tax program, saves community \$81,450 and shares knowledge with the future generation

A few things are certain when it comes to describing Bea Aldrich – family, dedication, and taxes. Bea serves as Treasurer of our Board of Directors and has led the IRS's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) as Gillespie County's Site Coordinator for 13 years, the last four of which were held at the Needs Council.

Soon after Bea became a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) 30 years ago, she realized her skills could help others and joined VITA as a tax preparer. "The name IRS scares people, they're so afraid they'll do something wrong," she said. "It's easy for me, I enjoy helping people and it's my way of giving back. God has been good to me and my family." VITA sites are rarely fortunate enough to have a Retired CPA as the site coordinator; Bea reviews and e-files every tax return, as well as recruiting and training volunteers, and handles all reporting with the IRS.

"All our tax volunteers are selfless and volunteer hundreds of hours to insure the entire program runs smoothly," she said. Her team of 14 volunteer tax preparers and client facilitators donated a combined 1,150 hours during the 11-week span of the tax program. "[The clients] trust us, I feel good about that," Bea said. "I know in my heart this site is run like a professional service. All of our volunteers are top notch!"

Those long hours could lead a volunteer to jump ship but not Bea; she is as dedicated as ever and always with a warm confident smile. When asked why she continues despite the challenges she responded with, "Most people are beaming when we hand them their taxes back which makes it all worthwhile."

The highly qualified group of volunteers who make this possible each year have a combined 70+ years of experience with the VITA program. This year, Riley Rizzo volunteered to assist as a client facilitator and learn from the group's wealth of experience, "Most of our group are retired volunteers," Bea said. "It is so exciting to have a new person interested and an eager to learn, young professional."

Riley is the first high school student the VITA San Antonio Region has had, which speaks to Riley's abilities and maturity. She doesn't take this unique opportunity for granted. "Not many people would be willing to let a high school student in on such an important process," she said. "I am interested in becoming a CPA so this opened my eyes to what it could really be like." She hopes to attend Mays Business School at Texas A&M University in the Fall of 2022. "Bea is really nice and easy to talk to," Riley said. "I am looking forward to learning more from her next year and taking on more responsibility."

Teaching comes naturally to Bea. Sam, her husband of 48 years, is a retired teacher and coach. Of her six children and spouses, five are involved in the school system.

It's hard to imagine Riley having time to volunteer as she is incoming President of Future Business Leaders of America,



Bea Aldrich & Riley Rizzo

a member of National Honor Society, plays Volleyball, shows poultry with 4-H, manages Pole Vaulting, and works part time. When asked why she continues to volunteer despite her busy calendar her response was, "It's cool to see the impact it makes on so many people," she said. "Volunteering takes away the fairy-tale aspect of Fredericksburg – not everybody is wealthy."

Conversely, many in our community are barely making ends meet. Bea states, "It breaks my heart to see them pay to get their taxes done, when that couple hundred dollars could pay for food or an electric bill." VITA calculates \$225 per return in savings; 362 returns were processed resulting in \$81,450 saved in our community!

"The Needs Council has been super as a partner for the VITA program," Bea said. "I can't say enough about Cindy and her staff having such a calm and professional facility to operate in. They provide us with computers, supplies and even furnish homemade cookies each day!"

With all the time Bea dedicates to the tax program, she somehow still finds time to do taxes for her friends and family. Her greatest joy; however, is spending time with her six grandkids often at their many sporting events.

"It is difficult to quantify the value Bea brings to our organization. Perhaps looking past the incredible talent, wisdom and expertise she possesses, we can begin to appreciate the humility, compassion and love she infuses in every interaction. I simply can't imagine an easier person to work with – she is a constant blessing," says Cindy Heifner.

"[The clients] trust us, I feel good about that," Bea said. "I know in my heart this site is run like a professional service. All of our volunteers are top notch!"



We were unable to host our Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner this year but we want to recognize the incredible work of our loyal volunteers nonetheless! These smiling faces are just a small sampling of the 200 volunteers who share their time to better the lives of our neighbors in Gillespie County in the following ways:

- School Supplies
- Feeding John
- Christmas Programs
- Office Work
- Mailings
- Tax Program
- Food 4 Kids
- Medical
- Transportation
- ...And more!

Thank You!



Lyn Gordon-Winkler

Maureen Seals

Carly Jenkins

Terry Collier

Bernie Kopp

Madeleine Oestreich

Sandra & Michael Birdleough

our wishlist

* Food 4 Kids

Extended to include summer

* School Supplies

Items can be found & even purchased online!

tgt.gifts/needscouncil

Welcome Annie Blakely to our team!

"I feel like all the varied experiences of my life have perfectly prepared me for this role," Annie said. "I take pride in helping folks feel at ease and at home, especially when they're going through a hard time. I am so grateful to be a part of this amazing organization and to work alongside such talented women."

When you call our office, you will likely hear Annie's sweet voice on the other end. We are so excited to have her many talents available to *Help our Neighbors in Need.*



Winter Storm Uri pushed Gillespie County residents to the brink and left many stranded with no electricity, water or food. Fortunately, our volunteers stepped up offering air mattresses, rides to shower, family meals and everything else in between. Fit Meals RX was one group that we were introduced to during what their seven-year-old called the "Ice Attack".

"The Needs Council helped us reach the most people with our undeliverable meals that week, and we've been bringing extra food by ever since," Ellen Fowler said. "I am beyond grateful that we did. It brings my husband, Dwayne, and I great joy to be able to do this one small thing to help families in need."

Also, thanks to support from our financial contributors, we were able to provide shelter for displaced residents, cover increased utility costs and much more to help them recover from the storm's fury.



Courtesy of Fit Meals RX