



Charitable Union

2018 Annual Report



CFC #16267

Help that brings hope!



Teresa Allen

Help that brings Hope!

By Teresa Allen, Executive Director

Charitable Union has a special meaning to many in our community; from those who donated as a child, or volunteered through a service club, to those who accessed services once upon a time. It is our fondest memories that remind us of what is truly important. Providing support for our neighbors is deeply rooted in our community and we, at Charitable Union, are so happy to be at the heart of providing service.

If you drive down Calhoun Street, you will see a steady flow of cars dropping off donations all day long. Each back-door donor is making a difference in the lives of their neighbors. You will also notice a team of volunteers who keep our operations running smoothly. And, you will notice a steady line of people waiting to shop in the Free Store.

Just a few weeks ago, we partnered with Battle Creek Public Schools on our Winter Coat Distribution: we used the WK Kellogg Gymnasium. Through a team of volunteers, we were able to give nearly 1,500 children winter coats in just 13 hours (that is about 116 kids per hour). I attended and heard wonderful stories from parents who waxed nostalgic 'remember when...' and funny gym stories about the 'sweet spot' on the gym floor during basketball games. It's incredible to hear the pride and gratitude folks have for this great community and for Charitable Union.

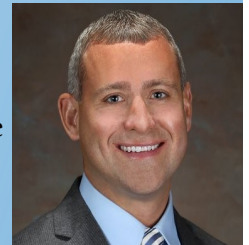
This year has seen Charitable Union flourish. We have maintained our regular programming and added new projects, thanks to new funding dollars. This Newsletter is filled with information about what we have accomplished and in what direction we are going. We hope that you enjoy reading it. We also hope that you will share our stories with others — perhaps you know someone who can benefit from our services or perhaps you know someone who should know more about the great work Charitable Union does for Calhoun County.

We are very blessed at Charitable Union by the community supports we receive. We can serve those in need because of people like you. We partner with other nonprofits to wrap our arms around families to lift them up. When lifted, these families thrive within our community. This is what we mean by *'Help that brings Hope!'*

Charitable Union: An Early Call to Philanthropy

By Jason Cain, Board President

In 1889, Andrew Carnegie's *Gospel of Wealth* called upon millionaires to distribute their fortune for the public good. Two years earlier, Charitable Union hosted its first fundraiser, January 26, 1887, in order to support clothing school children in Battle Creek. Why? Because, people argued, children must obtain an education to be successful in life.



Jason Cain

For 131 years, Charitable Union has practiced philanthropy instead of charity. Philanthropy, as opposed to charity, invests in calculated inputs to improve the public good. Children who cannot focus in the classroom because they are embarrassed by their appearance and stereotyped poor by powers that be, are unlikely to catapult themselves out of poverty. A calculated input — clothing, eliminates one barrier to a lifetime of success.

Over the years, Charitable Union has identified and targeted additional opportunities to impact poverty. Today, we provide the entire family with inputs meant to effect change. Of note, we offer:

Phil, (continued, previous page)

For Infants:

- **Layettes** — starting mothers off right by the nurturing example
- **Formula** — protecting growing baby brains with supplemental formula
- **Diapers** — maintaining proper hygiene for better health
- **Children's books** — stimulating baby brains through exposure to language and concepts
- **Clothing** — from onesies to toddler, shoes to coats

For School-age Children:

- **Back-to-School clothing** — our original mission, dress for success
- **Winter weather gear** — keeping kids warm on their way to and from school, while outside, and exercising
- **Storybooks** — helping children explore their interests and expand their vocabularies
- **Feminine hygiene** — no girl should have to skip school because she doesn't have product when she needs it
- **Prom dresses** — every girl should experience this right of passage

For Adults:

- **Work wear** — steel-toed shoes, hospitality uniforms, business suits, and scrubs
- **Personal hygiene kits** — making ends meet shouldn't mean you sacrifice your health
- **Housewares** — pots and pans, bed and kitchen linens, end tables, décor, lamps, etc.
- **Literature** — contemporary soft and hard cover books, eclectic reference manuals, etc.
- **Formal-event wear** — funeral, interview and wedding attire

For Seniors:

- **Incontinence materials** — our bodies break down, humiliation at it shouldn't be a thing

And for the Homeless:

- **Special, weather appropriate gear** — heavy-duty clothing, tents, sleeping bags, cooking vessels, etc.

Poverty can hit a family unexpectedly, from illness to job loss or even a house fire. In these moments when 'life happens', Charitable Union is there to help.

What Keeps Girls from Attending School?

Believe it or not, lack of feminine hygiene products when needed, keeps, or takes girls out of school. And people are finally paying attention.

In an attempt to move the dial on this subject within Calhoun County, Charitable Union has obtained a grant to support all low-to-moderate income school girls receiving free monthly product in our Free Store during the 18-19 school year.

This project started by distributing discreet carrying cases and a sampling of product to menstruating girls during this fall's Back-to-School clothing distribution events. Girls received a packet of product and information about how to obtain more at our Free Store during their monthly shop.



Period packs

How to Burn 100 Calories

Shiver for 15 minutes. Why does Charitable Union provide low-to-moderate income school children with winter weather gear? Because Michigan is cold. Thanks to financial supporters like you, more than 1,500 school children received winter gear at the WK Kellogg Gymnasium this October.

Recycling — Par Excellence!

What do you do with hundreds of donated prom dresses? You recycle and help make another girl's prom dress dreams come true.

For the past three years, Charitable Union has held Prom Dress events, distributing hundreds of dresses for free to high school girls throughout the county. Undoubtedly, the school district that has taken the most advantage of this cool new program is Homer High School. This year, the school district bussed 44 girls to Charitable Union to find the dresses of their dreams. Volunteer seamstresses at Charitable Union nipped and tucked as needed to make everything look perfect. In addition to Homer High School, girls from surrounding Battle Creek schools benefited from our free prom dress events too.



Homer High School Girls Visit Charitable Union

What we Do: Helping people on the journey out of poverty

Making one person's "old" into someone else's "new"



Damaged cloth becomes operations dollars



Books and other learning materials for children



Essentials for newborns, infants and toddlers



Clean, warm clothing for children and families



Disasters response services for local families



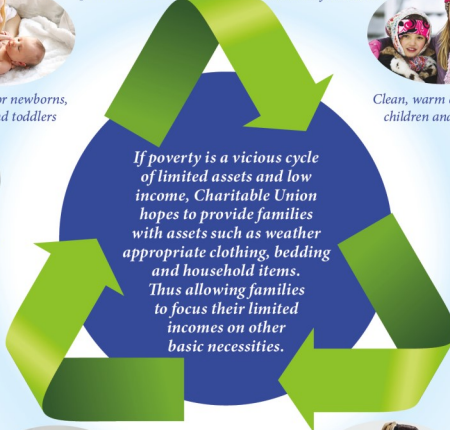
Pots, pans and dishes



Referral services to meet urgent needs



Sheets, blankets, bedding and small household items



Wedding and prom dresses for special occasions



Suits, pants, dresses for formal events & work



Scrubs, steel-toed shoes, and hospitality uniforms for various industries



Life-spanning personal hygiene kits

Charitable Union coordinates with Community Partners

www.CharitableUnion.org

Shop Smile.Amazon.com to benefit Charitable Union

A Barbie Doll in Every Hand

By Jeri Ellerthorpe, Volunteer Seamstress

I grew up in a female-headed household. There were no dolls purchased by single mothers in my day. And where I lived, we didn't have a Charitable Union that could give me one. I guess I've made it my mission to make sure every little girl has a doll to play with at Christmas.

Last year, I cleaned and mended 20 Barbie® dolls that had been donated to Charitable Union. I made outfits for each of them. We gave them to clients in our Free Store during December. Since then, it seems like all my friends are helping make this happen too — they shop garage sales and riffle through their family's toy boxes for unused Barbies. This year alone, I have 35 dolls ready to go. I aim for 50 by December but that's getting fairly close now. Each girl will receive a clothed Barbie doll (including shoes and earrings), another dress, a set of pajamas, and a pants suit for their new doll. All of the fabric I use to make the clothes is donated to the Charitable Union. If you want to help, I would love it. Contact me at the Charitable Union and I'll put you to work. I say, every little girl should have a doll for Christmas.



Parent's Know... They Really Do

By the time you're a mother with school-aged children, you know how vitally important first impressions are for transitioning children into public life and on to adulthood. Calhoun County parents are no exception. But what happens when a parent doesn't have the means to dress their child for success? The Calhoun County community steps in to help.

Gently used clothing is collected all year long, donors contribute funds to purchase new clothes, and volunteers hoist and heft bundles of clothing to make racks of pants, shirts, undies, and socks from which children and parents select new school clothes.



Charitable Union is the medium through which this exchange happens — for 131 years. Every year, we go on the road to meet parents where they live. This past August, Charitable Union conducted Back-to-School events in Albion, Marshall, Harper Creek and Battle Creek. Over 1,100 outfits were distributed. We thank the Calhoun County community for the support you show children and the faith you have in Charitable Union to continue to perform this mission.



Grace Is Ours To Give

By Amy Robertson,
Director of Fund Development

What does it mean to buy someone else an intimate apparel item when you don't even know their name? This was the question I pondered as I shopped for the victims of the Village Inn Apartments fire in July.

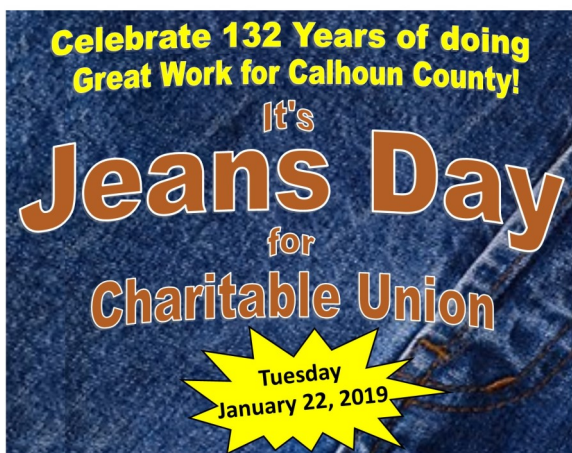
The morning after the fire, the Red Cross called Charitable Union to say that many of the victims were clothe-less, in a state of shock, with blankets as their only clothing.

Racing out that morning to buy bras, under-shirts, socks and underwear, I pondered how I was to buy unmentionables — should I assume a motherly role and buy practical? Should I buy what I would have been pleased to receive?

I ended up doing both — for the men I bought whitey-tighties. For the women, I bought them what I would be pleased to receive — some sports bras, some lacy bras, and some colorful underwear. Did it make a difference? I will never know but what it did do was give them a piece of me, a bit of my love, a bit of my concern for their mental as well as physical well-being — at least I sincerely hope that's what I accomplished.



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Charitable Union 2018 Board of Directors

Executive Committee

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Adam Dingwall, *Vice-President*, Battle Creek Family YMCA (retired)
Kim Staib, *Treasurer*, Kellogg Company (retired)
Peter Phelps, *Secretary*, Bronson Battle Creek Health (retired)

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Tracie Tomak, *Director*, Law Office of Tomak & Podolsky



Charitable Union

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It Costs *How Much?*

By Bridget Morel

My best friend was stricken with cancer. During the process of taking chemotherapy, I gave her an Amazon gift certificate as a gift to buy herself a chemo cap. Chemo caps, if you're lucky enough not to know, are worn by women who are losing or have lost their hair during treatments. To add insult to injury, chemo caps are ridiculously expensive. My gift certificate bought her just one cap online.



"I sew..." I thought to myself, "I could make these and Charitable Union could sell them for much less than they cost online..." Today, a selection of Chemo Caps are now available in The Gift Shop @ Charitable Union. Do you know someone going through chemotherapy? Here is an opportunity to give them something they will really need AND your purchase supports Charitable Union's efforts to contribute to human dignity for Calhoun County residents.