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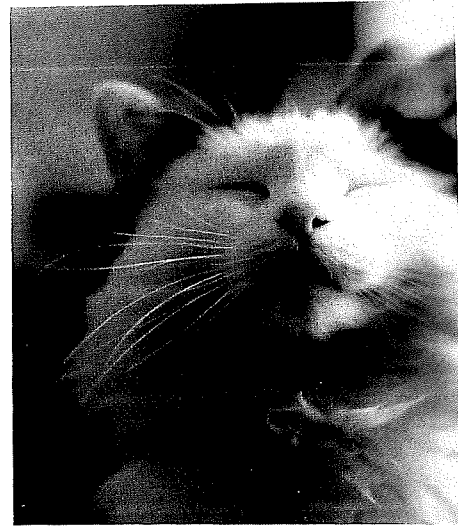
Pictured - Lew & Harriet McCauley with their dog Sunny

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Share the love

Volunteer opportunities in WNY

BY KATHY SCHLAICH

The pandemic has sharply curtailed in-person volunteering, but the need is still there and, once the vaccine is administered to the majority of people, organizations that serve the underserved are going to need your help. Sharing one's time and talents through volunteering is proven to benefit both the giver and receiver. According to the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal government agency, volunteer job seekers have a twenty-seven percent better chance of finding a job than non-volunteers and are also almost twice as likely to label themselves "very happy."

In Western New York, opportunities abound. Here are a few ways to get involved in the community and spread the happiness:

Little Portion Friary at 1305 Main Street has served Buffalo for thirty-eight years providing food, shelter, encouragement, and support to thousands of the homeless waiting to secure permanent housing and jobs.

Help is needed with supervision during the day, evening, or night shifts, nursing, counseling, information technology, and accounting as well as food



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prep for evening meals, sorting and managing donations, laundry, home maintenance, communications and marketing, and picking up donations.

Volunteers work a weekly, bi-monthly or monthly schedule of their choice in four- to six-hour shifts.

To volunteer call 716-882-5705 or visit littleportionfriary.com.

The Ken-Ton Closet improves the lives of needy children from birth to eighteen years old in the Village of Kenmore/Town of Tonawanda by providing free clothing, school supplies, toiletries, and other items.

Founded in 2013 by Jill O'Malley as an offshoot of the Ken-Ton Parent Alliance, the organization is located at the former Jefferson School, 250 Athens Boulevard in Tonawanda.

More than 500 children are served throughout all programs each year. Those in need can visit every other month to pick up supplies.

Volunteers are needed to sort and store donations, hang clothes, decorate, help in the free library, clean, log receipts, conduct inventory, and return cans and bottles.

Students and groups are also welcome. Some court-ordered community service may be available pending approval.

Contact can be made through Facebook messenger, by calling 716-218-9589, or emailing ken.toncloset@gmail.com.

RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) through HANCI (Health Association of Niagara County Inc.) matches volunteers ages fifty-five-plus with volunteer opportunities throughout Niagara County helping approximately fifty non-profit public agencies and organizations, performing over 80,000 hours annually.

Volunteers are eligible to receive mileage reimbursement from their homes to and from volunteer sites or use it as a tax deduction. They are also covered by a supplemental insurance policy. A free recognition luncheon for volunteers with forty-eight hours or more of annual service is another perk.

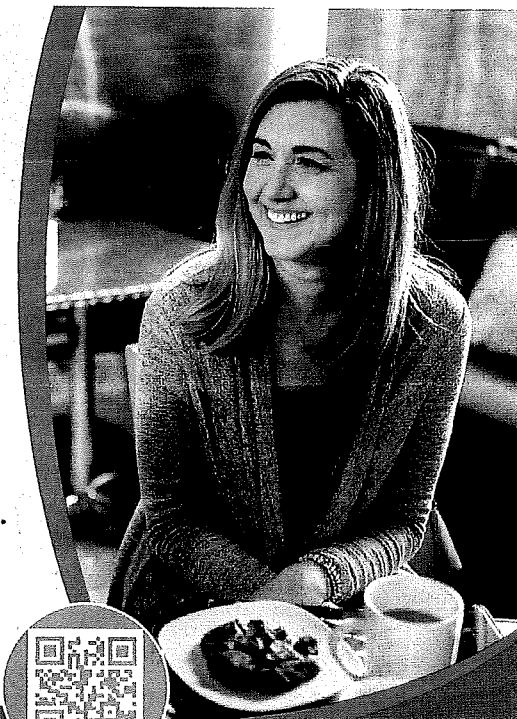
A few of the many opportunities include: Lockport Meals on Wheels, Sister Loretta Soup Kitchen, Lockport Elementary Schools, Habitat for Humanity, Heart Love and Soul Pantry/Dining Room, Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, Riviera Theater, Herschell Carousel Museum, and North Tonawanda Inter-Church Food Pantry.

For more information, contact Mary Beth Kupiec at 716-285-8224 or email Kupiec@hanci.com.

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