

Hampshire Community Action Commission's First Call for Help

News You Can Use

Volunteer Newsletter

December 2000

*"To love what you do and feel that it matters—how could anything be more fun?"
—Katherine Graham*

Season's Greetings

Good Tidings to you and your families in this special season. Thank you for all that you do to bring others into the light of knowledge through information and services.

Hours of Service

Our hours of service have changed again, reflecting our healthier staffing pattern! The new hours, which have already begun, are:

Monday through Thursday
9:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Friday
9:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Milestones

Special congratulations to *Marjorie* who has now completed **1100** hours!

Marjorie is much needed in Information and Referral. She answers the phones Monday and Wednesday mornings and she is always on the lookout for new information we can use. She has a wonderful manner with callers. She also updates our Support Group Notebook, keeping the information current and well organized.

Thank you, Marjorie! Your dedication to First Call is extraordinary. We appreciate all you do.

Catherine has given **800** hours to First Call through her work in Information & Referral. She has done an exceptional job answering the phone and providing help and information to people in need. Her experience has made her skilled in her work and she is compassionate in her interactions with callers. Thank you, Catherine!

Susan has completed **200** hours at First Call for Help. She has been doing a huge amount of work on the Big Red Book, assisting with record keeping and marketing. She is also a great help with resources, especially because of her knowledge of area human service programs. Thank you, Susan!

Andrea has completed **100** hours during her internship this fall semester. Andrea has done a wonderful job overseeing the purchases of the big red book. She was extremely helpful with the marketing and record keeping as well. Thanks Andrea. It has been a great experience to work with you!

Peggy has done a great job building up to her first **100** hours. Her help has been invaluable with the Emergency Fuel Bank, with marketing the Big Red Book and with record keeping and other clerical tasks. We appreciate the care with which she works and her willingness to help. Thank you, Peggy!

Winter Holidays

We will be closed for the following upcoming holidays:

Monday, December 25th
Tuesday, December 26th

Monday, January 1st

In addition, the library (and therefore, First Call for Help) will be closing early on the following dates:

Friday, December 15th 4:00 p.m.
Friday, December 22nd 12:30 p.m.

Happy Birthday

Happy Birthday to Peggy! She'll be celebrating the big day on December 24th. We wish you all the best, Peggy, on your birthday and for the year ahead.

Potluck Party!

We are having a holiday party on Thursday, December 14th from 11:30 noon to 1:00 p.m., here at the offices of First Call. There is a sign up sheet located on the volunteer bulletin board in the Volunteer Office. Don't feel you have to make anything fancy. We would just love to have your company. Come and join us for some relaxation and holiday cheer! A huge thank you to Susan for coordinating this event!

Big Red Book Update

So far we have sold 249 copies of *All the Help You Can Get 2000!* Thank you to everyone who gave input to Sally. We are looking at that input as we begin to plan for the next issue. Bonnie Dowd, Director of Development at Central Administration, Bev, Fern, Lillian, Sarah, Sally and Karen attended a meeting on Tuesday, December 5th to examine our procedures and to plan for

the next publication. We are in the process of first gathering feedback from our customers to determine what kinds of changes need to be made.

Goodbye and Best Wishes

It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to Andrea, an intern from UMass, who has worked with us fall semester. Her last day will be December 15th. Andrea has been an essential part of our team for the Big Red Book. She has been handling all the requests for directories, has been involved in setting up and refining our systems. She has done telemarketing, as well. Currently, she is putting together a statistical report analyzing the results of our efforts. This will help us to determine the answers to such questions as: “Did the marketing make a difference?” or “What groups should be targeted next time?”

Andrea, we will miss you—all the help you gave us and your initiative, your willingness to get the job done and done well. We wish you all the best for the future. We hope you will be in touch next year, so that you can see how all the work you did, made for a smoother and more effective process for “All the Help-2002”!

Mass211 Update

The latest from Mass211 is that legislation is to be filed by December 6 in both the House and Senate that is critical. Without the \$1.5 million of state funding, 211 will not become operational in 2001.

The Council of Massachusetts United Ways has pledged an additional \$10,000 to support the Development Phase of the Mass211 initiative.

The Mass211 Board of Directors is in the process of designing the request for proposal (RFP) process that will be used to select the regional Mass211 I & R Centers. Seven regional centers will be awarded contracts of \$150,000 to \$300,000 depending on estimated call volume. The RFP will be issued in early Spring, with decisions to be made by 6/30/01. Decisions will be conditional upon inclusion of 211 in the State budget.

Resource Updating

We are excited to start a new project in Information & Referral. Sally has begun coordinating the updating of resources that were not included in the Big Red Book. This is a huge process and so many of the agencies and programs are very outdated. Thank you to Bobbe and Brandi for all their great work.

Baton Project

Things are progressing and we are really starting to get excited! We will soon begin the process of hiring a Case Manager. A consultant from the Donahue Institute has met with I & R staff and volunteers to get feedback and to establish a baseline for evaluating the project.

Software for a Resource Locator is being developed and will be coming to us sometime in December. This will be an

on line way to locate possible resources. It will be more interactive than IRis and will allow agencies or programs to update or change the information that is shown.

As Family Network moves, they will be taking computers with them. This includes some of the computers that we are using in our I & R program. We will be getting new computers to replace those. These will also be better able to handle the high tech demands of the BATON project.

Coffee Hour

As we head into the New Year, look for announcements of a monthly coffee hour. It will be a chance for us to connect with each other and to get updated on all the news, especially as we swing into the new BATON project. Susan will be coordinating these events. Thank you, Susan for all your help!

New Recruitment Drive

We are beginning a recruitment drive for new volunteers. If you know of anyone who is interested, please have them call Karen. For I & R, we have positions open to staff the phones for Thursdays and Fridays. We are also looking for help with resource work. Please spread the word.

I & R News

Contact Screen Changes

When entering calls into the IRis contact screen, please note that one of the checklist categories has changed. On the screen called "Custom A", under the "Project" heading, there are some new categories.

Now, instead of entering "Information & Referral" as before, you have the choice of entering "Green I & R" or "Yellow I & R". "Green I & R" refers to green light calls. In these calls, you were able to find the referral or information needed yourself. "Yellow I & R" refers to yellow light calls. In these calls, you needed to consult with your supervisor, but then you provided the referral or information yourself and completed the contact screen yourself.

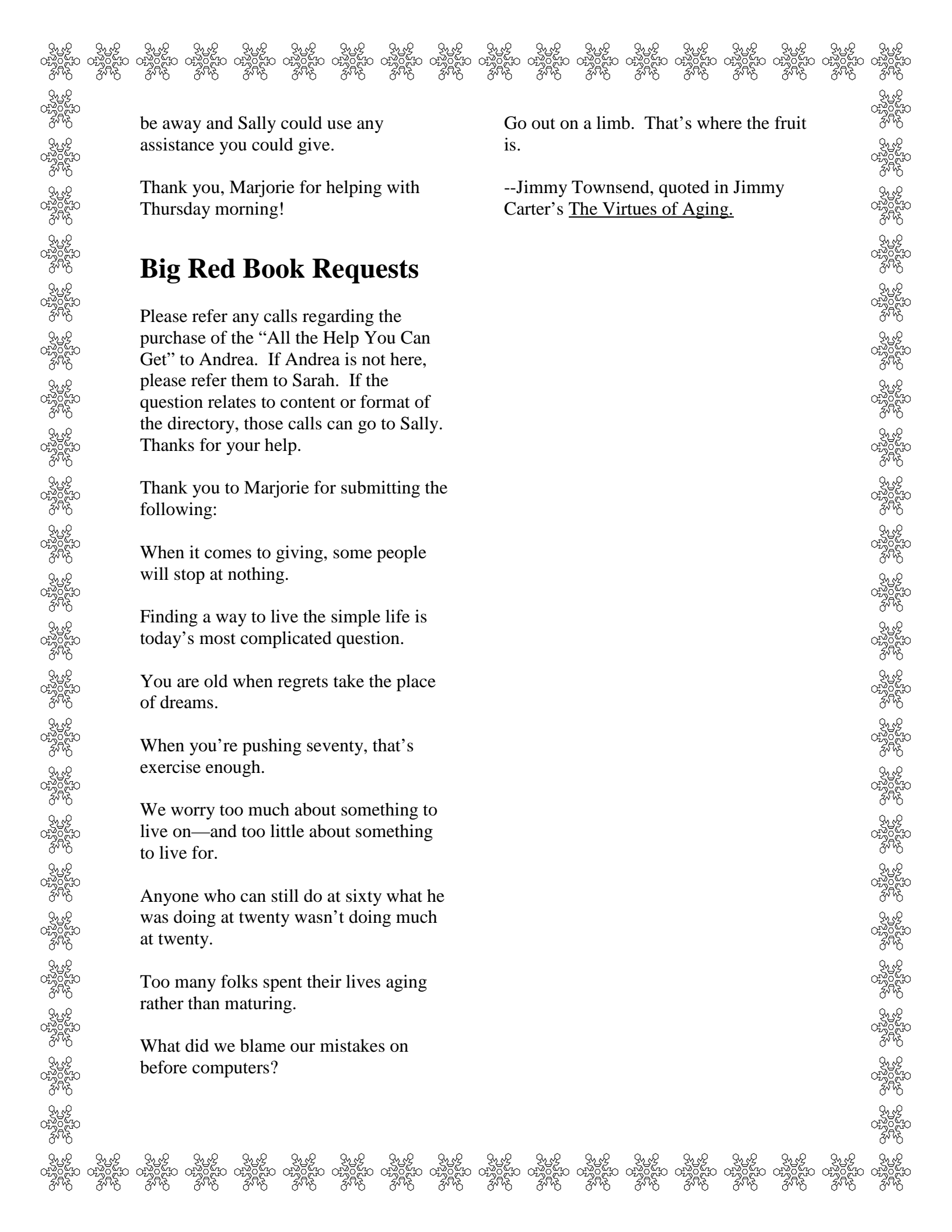
Help!

Please let me know if you can help out with I & R on the following times and dates:

Thursday, December 28th
1:00 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Friday, December 29th
9:15 a.m. to 12:00 noon
1:00 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Even if you cannot do the whole shift, any part would be helpful. Lillian will



be away and Sally could use any assistance you could give.

Thank you, Marjorie for helping with Thursday morning!

Big Red Book Requests

Please refer any calls regarding the purchase of the “All the Help You Can Get” to Andrea. If Andrea is not here, please refer them to Sarah. If the question relates to content or format of the directory, those calls can go to Sally. Thanks for your help.

Thank you to Marjorie for submitting the following:

When it comes to giving, some people will stop at nothing.

Finding a way to live the simple life is today’s most complicated question.

You are old when regrets take the place of dreams.

When you’re pushing seventy, that’s exercise enough.

We worry too much about something to live on—and too little about something to live for.

Anyone who can still do at sixty what he was doing at twenty wasn’t doing much at twenty.

Too many folks spent their lives aging rather than maturing.

What did we blame our mistakes on before computers?

Go out on a limb. That’s where the fruit is.

--Jimmy Townsend, quoted in Jimmy Carter’s The Virtues of Aging.