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ScarsdalePatch 20°

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Patch Picks: Five Great Local Non-Profits that Make a Difference

This week's Patch Picks gives local residents information on ways they can give back to the community through non-profit organizations.

By **Kirstin Fawcett** February 17, 2011

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It's easy to think about giving back during the holiday season... but what about the rest of the year? The midwinter months are cold, dull and long for everyone. Add a patch of brightness to an otherwise cloudy day by volunteering or donating funds to the following five local non-profit organizations that are making a difference across Westchester County. Even if the groundhog wasn't right about spring arriving early this year, you can still feel warm inside while there's a lingering chill in the air.

1. **Family-to-Family**

Sponsor a family through Family-to-Family, an organization that provides suburban Westchester residents the chance to assemble care packages of household and personal necessities for impoverished families across the country.

2. **Operation Prom**

Spring's arriving soon, which means sandals, sun hats and dresses... prom dresses, that is. Many girls can't afford a \$300 designer gown, and tux rentals are pretty pricey, too. Donate used dresses or tuxes to Operation Prom, who will turn distribute them to students around the nation who might have not otherwise had the chance to participate in this high school rite of passage.

3. **Grace Church Community Center**

Grace Church Community Center does it all. From soup kitchens to men's and women's shelters to mentoring programs, anyone can find their niche and use their own specific skill sets to help others in need. Serve food to the hungry, volunteer your time to the homeless through the Open Arms and Samaritan House shelters or become a sponsor and role model for at-risk youth.

4. **Food Bank for Westchester**

The Food Bank for Westchester's website provides a scary fact – more than 200,000 Westchester County residents are hungry or at risk of hunger. Pre-register to donate your food, money or time by contacting Volunteer Coordinator Nancy Lyons.

5. **The Children's Village**

Jeremy C. Kohomban, PhD, president and CEO of The Children's Village, believes that the following four elements must be instilled in childrens and families to ensure future success:: education, work, lifelong relationships and social responsibility. Various programs sponsored by The Children's Village include supported housing and foster boarding homes, therapy programs and a residential school that engages at-risk 6 to 20 year-old boys in academically enriching activities.



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