
Executive Director's Message

"Write your vision upon tablets and wait for the appointed time. Though it will linger, wait for it and it will certainly come and will not delay." Habakkuk 2:2-3

We often hear this message at the beginning of a New Year. January is full of conversations about new goals, vision boards, and resolutions.

Dr. John C. Maxwell says, "we overestimate the event and underestimate the process."

2024 marks the 10th year of dreaming, planning and working on the building of The Filling Station mission. It will be the organization's 7th anniversary, however, the task force began praying, planning and working back in 2014 before we opened our doors in 2017.

We forget that overnight success usually happens over a 20 year period.

"If you want a harvest in 20 years, plant trees,

If you want a harvest in a year, plant wheat,

If you want a harvest for a lifetime, plant people."

Our mission is to assist in filling unmet needs in the areas of Nutrition, Education and Connection serving the residents of Jones County.

Assisting others as they become better versions of themselves as we empower, equip, educate with a faith-based approach.

What happened in November and December?

- Served 1304 households from the Food Pantry
- 550 Volunteer hours (food pantry, admin and facilities)
 - Leadership Jones - 11 Graduates
 - Ham Radio Course - 11 new licensed technicians
 - Sponsored 35 Angels with the Salvation Army
- Nutrition Education Classes held with N.C Cooperative Extension

Message from the Executive Director (Continued)

- Welcomed HeartCorp Member from American Heart Association
- Participated in Giving Tuesday Event with New Bern Chamber of Commerce
 - Partnered with Pollocksville Rotary Club to host Christmas on Main
- Partnered with Christopher Meadows, Eagle Scout, on a project for our garden
 - Awarded a grant from International Paper \$3200
 - Awarded a grant from LifePlus Foundation \$3000
 - Awarded a grant from Weyerhaeuser \$5000
- Awarded the Golden Leaf Foundation Grant \$227,720 to build a new warehouse

The Board of Directors and I are deeply grateful for the privilege to carry out this great work. Thank you for the continued love, prayer and support in this county wide mission.



Time, Talent and Treasure assist in filling unmet needs -
You make a difference!

Mary Ann LeRay

Coming UP next year - Neuse River Bridge Run
May 3 & 4, 2024 (sponsor a youth)

The Filling Station is one of 6 organizations to benefit from this annual event.
(Bridgerun.org)



Giving Tuesday—November 28, 2023 at Union Point Park in New Bern

The Filling Station participated with 40 other nonprofit organizations for Giving Tuesday on November 28th at Union Point Park.

This event was organized by the New Bern Chamber of Commerce Non Profit Council. The Filling Station has now participated in this event for 3 years. Last year, the team received 1st place in the spirit competition and this year received 2nd place for the creative idea of bringing a "Heartland Christmas" to the event. Thank you to all the volunteers and donors who helped to make this

day one of awareness of the mission.

Top left: Marcy Hoffman, Admin Coordinator, Wendy Monroe, Heartcorps Member, Mary Ann LeRay, ED

Top Right: 5th picture: Bobby Darden, Board Chair, Mary Ann LeRay, ED, Marcy Hoffman, Admin Coordinator

Bottom left: Mary Ann & Judy Hills, newsletter editor.



Giving Tuesday—November 28, 2023 (Continued)



International Paper Awards Grant

The International Paper Foundation has awarded a \$3,200 grant to The Filling Station to stock the pantry with needed non-perishable and hygiene items. This grant is just one example of International Paper's commitment to the company's signature causes, which include education, hunger, health and wellness, disaster relief and initiatives that improve our planet. The company is committed to addressing critical community needs

where our employees live and work.

This funding will help The Filling Station Food Pantry to restock the shelves after the Christmas and New Year distribution.

"We are grateful to International Paper for their generosity as we continue to expand the capacity in serving the clients in Jones County who need it most," says Mary Ann LeRay, Executive Director

2023 PolloPalooza

The Town of Pollocksville hosted a thank you dinner to the sponsors of the PolloPalooza event. Mary Ann LeRay, Executive Director, attended the event to represent The Filling Station.



Christmas on Main 2023

Pollocksville Rotary Club sponsors Christmas on Main for the 8th year with The Filling Station being a partner for 5 years. The Filling Station hosted photos and visits with Santa, coffee and cocoa and the cake walk in the front parking lot.

Great to capture moments with visits from Sheri Smith, Board member, and her grandchildren(4th pic), Mayor Wayne Sayland of Maysville, Schumata Brown, Town Manager of Maysville(3rd picture), Toni Floyd, Town Clerk for Town of Pollocksville, and her family (5th pic)

6th picture - Pollocksville Rotary Club setting up the tree at The Filling Station.



Holiday Parade Fun



Pollocksville Elementary posted on their FaceBook - "Plaid Day" Joan Knight, The Filling Station tutoring team, brings fun to plaid day.

THANK YOU

Dear Joan,
 Thank you for sharing your time and talents to benefit the students of Pollocksville Elementary. You make a difference in their lives.
 Thanks again!
 Stella

Food Drive at Frogley Chiropractic Clinic



Welcome Johnny Jernigan, Sr. Community Relations Liaison for BCBS of NC

Welcome to Johnny Jernigan, Sr. Community Relations Liason for BCBS of NC, Jones County Pictured here: Johnny Jernigan, Logan Smith, Liason for Duplin County, making introduction to Mary Ann LeRay, Exec Director for The Filling Station "We are grateful to BCBS of NC for following through on their commitment to provide support and resources to Jones County as we assist in filling unmet needs in the areas of Nutrition, Education and Connection."

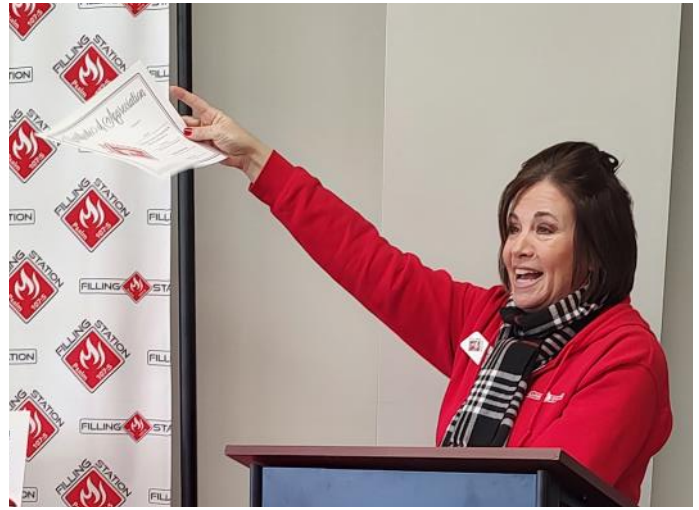


Golden Leaf Foundation Awards Grant for \$227,720

We received the news from Golden Leaf that The Filling Station received at grant for \$227,720 to build a new warehouse. This was part of \$9 million in funding announced by the GLF in December. We are indeed blessed!



Volunteer Appreciation Brunch December 14, 2023



Volunteer Appreciation Brunch December 14, 2023—Pictures



November and December Potpourri



Above left: Marcy Hoffman, Admin Coordinator and Joanna Davis, Solid Rock Global Methodist Church connecting with Salvation Army to load the gifts in the van for the angels.

Above right: Congratulations to Christopher Meadows, grandson of Jimmy and Hilda Bender, who completed his Eagle Scout project. Christopher chose to build two tables to be placed in the garden. "These tables will be a great addition to the garden venue as we connect with the community in sharing the mission", says Mary Ann LeRay, Executive Director

Left: Thank you to Catholic Daughters for their generous donation to the Food Pantry during Christmas.

Welcome Wendy Monroe, HeartCorps Member

We welcome Wendy Monroe, HeartCorps Member from the American Heart Association, to our team.

Wendy Monroe received a BA in Social Work from University of NC at Wilmington and has great experience working in Onslow County with several organizations to empower and promote self-sufficiency for clients.

HeartCorps is a Public Health AmeriCorps service opportunity led by the American Heart Association, Inc. focusing on driving health equity and growing the public health workforce in rural America. The Filling Station is a host site for this program which aims to improve blood pressure control and quality of life for people living in rural communities. "We are excited to have the opportunity to host this program to expand bandwidth to allow for expansion of activities, outreach and care for those who connect with The Filling Station", says Mary Ann LeRay, ED



Leadership Jones Cohort 2 Graduation

Leadership Jones Cohort 2 Graduation took place on Friday, Nov 3rd at the Maysville Community Building. The group presented a possible future project to benefit the residents of Jones County. Willie Smith was the class spokesman and shared this comment, "we had the opportunity to visit several county offices and businesses in Jones County learning of all the economic development."

Mayor Jay Bender of Pollocksville, Mayor Wayne Sayland of Pollocksville, John Bender, Director of Economic Development, John Taylor, Filling Station Board Member, Dr. Norma Sermon-Boyd, Filling Station Board Member were in attendance.



"No man will make a great leader who wants to do it all himself, or to get all the credit for doing it". Andrew Carnegie

PROGRAM

Mistress of Ceremony
Theresa Lee, MA, CHC, CF
Content Creator & Facilitator

Prayer- Colby Jordan, Cohort 1 Graduate

National Anthem

Welcome
MaryAnn LeRay, Executive Director,
The Filling Station

Guest Speaker: Cheryl Reed,
Greater Five Points, Choice
Neighborhood Initiative Grassroots
Leadership Academy, Inaugural Class
Leadership Jones Academy Class

Cohort 2 Class Overview
Willie G. Smith

Cohort 2 Presentation- Class Skills
Presentation
"Creating a community development
corporation-
Leadership Jones Academy Presentation

Presentation of Certificates
Mayor Wayne Garland & The Filling
Station Board

Thank You & Remarks
Mary Ann LeRay, Executive Director
Theresa Lee, Facilitator

CONGRATULATIONS

EMILY STROUD ANDREWS
MILLIE BELFORT
MARY ANN COWARD
KELLEY MICHELLE COREY
MONIQUE JONES
MIMI TAYLOR ROBERSON
CHRISTIAN SCHOONOVER
WILLIE G. SMITH
DESTINY WARD
MICHAEL WILDER
APRIL W. YOUNG

LEADERSHIP JONES
A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY

Sponsoring organization
www.thefillingstation1073.com

Solid Rock Global Methodist Church

Solid Rock Global Methodist Church, church partner, accepted the JOY of shopping for 24 ANGELS in Jones County. "It has been a pleasure working with Laura Hagerman and Sandy Middlebrooks, Salvation Army, to make connections and assisting filling unmet needs for these 24 angels this Christmas", says Mary Ann LeRay, ED



Food Bank Visits Teaching Kitchen

Thank you to The Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC for bringing "Staying Healthy During the Holidays" to the Teaching Kitchen. The group learned how to make homemade applesauce, a perfect compliment to holiday dishes. Each participant received a produce gift bag to take home. Thank you Food Bank!



Perfect 10 Hosts Recap Dinner

Karen Plaster and Bobby Darden, Perfect 10 Event Co-Chairs hosted a Thank you and Recap Pizza Dinner with the event hosts on Tuesday, Nov 7th in the front gathering space. The group discussed the event details and what adjustments to make in order to bring the 2024 Perfect 10 Annual Fundraiser. Thank you to our amazing hosts who opened their properties and farms to make it possible to bring this event to Jones County



Harold H. Bate Foundation—25 Years of Giving & Granting

Thank you to the Harold H. Bate Foundation for inviting us to celebrate 25 years. Over \$33 Million has been granted to organizations in Craven, Pamlico, Jones Counties as well as East Carolina University.

"We are grateful to the Bate Foundation for investing in the mission and making

it possible to bring a beautiful facility to Jones County to serve the residents of Jones County", says Mary Ann LeRay

Willie Smith, Treasurer, Dr. Norma Sermon-Boyd, Finance Chair and Mary Ann LeRay, Exec Director attended the event representing The Filling Station.



New Bern Amateur Radio Club

We appreciate our partnership with New Bern Amateur Radio Club and co-sponsorship with Jones County Emergency Management



Mary Ann LeRay
Executive Director
Filling Station
221 Main Street
Pollockville, NC

Dear Mary,

On behalf of myself and the New Bern Amateur Radio Club I would like to thank you and your organization for the most generous use of your facility. In these times it is hard to find an organization which will sponsor "Ham Radio" classes. Most of time they are not interested or do not have the facility to accommodate such a venture. Your facility provided an excellent environment for both teaching and of course learning. The students were comfortable in the environment which in turn lead directly to their attentiveness.

As with most "Ham Radio" class we started with more than we finished with. In this instance we started with eleven students and finished with ten. This by far much better than an average attendance at the end of the class. Of the 10 students that completed the course all but one earned their General Class Amateur Radio license, of which was far above average when it comes to passing the test.

You may or may not know that Amateur Radio operators play a significant role in emergency communication during disaster, both natural and manmade. Amateur Radio operators set up and operate organized communication networks locally for governmental and emergency officials, as well as non-commercial communication for private citizens affected a disaster. Amateur Radio operators are most likely to be active after disasters that damage regular lines of communications due to power outages and/or destruction of telephone, cellular and other critical infrastructure systems.

By allowing me to teach Amateur Radio your organization has made a significant positive impact in our community. I thank you very much and hope to work with you soon on a more Amateur Radio Classes.

Sincerely

Peter M. Wene, WA5T
President KARS
VP WCARA
Vice President NBARC



Hard at Work at the Food Pantry

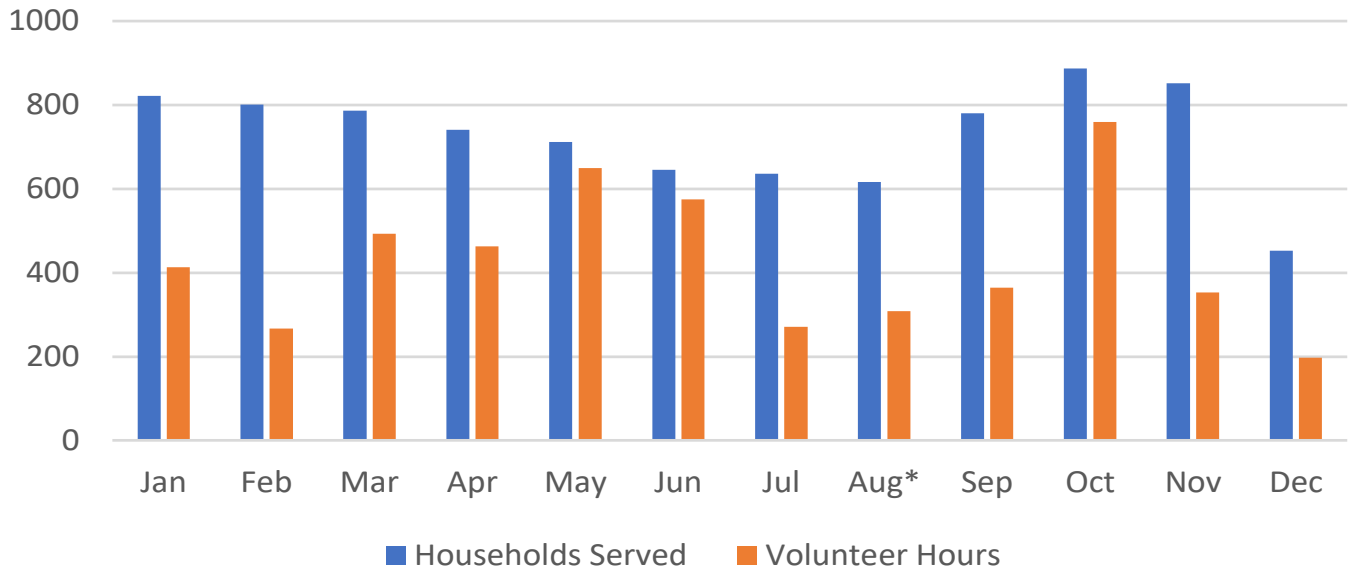


Thank you Willie Smith, Board Treasurer and Food Pantry Volunteer, for doing whatever it takes.

Senior Commodity Box Day

WE DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Filling Station Statistics Jan-Dec 2023



American Heart Association Cooking Class

Sweet Potato Kale Hash...perfect for Christmas morning breakfast Thank you [N.C. Cooperative Extension - Jones County Center](#) Sarah for leading the cooking class, [American Heart Association - North Carolina](#) for placing Heartcorp member, Wendy Monroe to enrich the connection with participants and [Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina](#) for the



HAPPY NEW YEAR!



Nutrition · Education · Connection

Our mission is to assist with filling the unmet needs in the areas of nutrition, education and connection serving the residents of Jones County.

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Board Members

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Vice-Chair: Clyde Murphy

Treas: Willie Smith

Secretary: Beverly Collins

Emily Andrews

Ellis Banks

John Bender

Norma Sermon Boyd

Charlie Dunn

Charley Jones

Ella McDaniel

Michael Pretty

Maria Robles

Sheri Smith

Estelle Surles

John Taylor

Carol Mattocks, Board Advisor

Tharesa Lee, Consultant

Mary Ann LeRay, Ex. Dir.

Judy Hills, Editor

**He asked this girl:
Are you Hindu, christian or
muslim ?
She answered: I am hungry.**



GOOD MORNING 🌻🌻

Make Humanity your Religion

The Filling Station, a dream born out of a long vacant, propane company building, opened its doors on August 28, 2017. Why the Filling Station name? During a walk-through of the building, someone noticed a red hazardous material warning sign with a flame and the number 1075, the DOT classification for propane. The group discovered that Psalm 107:5 read: "They were hungry and thirsty; their lives were slipping away." A new mission was launched and it was called "The Filling Station" to refer to the building's prior use as well as to its new purpose. Our mission is to assist with filling unmet needs in the areas of Nutrition, Education, and Connection serving the residents of Jones County.