

December 2018



Dear friends,

***Comfort and joy.** That's what it's all about, isn't it? That's what we try to bring to our struggling neighbors at the holidays and every day. **Comfort and joy.** We try to bring some comfort into the lives of our neighbors in need by helping them put **food on their tables.** We try to bring some joy into the lives of children by providing **gifts at the holidays.** Sometimes, I get a little overwhelmed by all that is expected of People to People at the holidays (and every day, really). Still, when I think back to when the holidays were all about wishes and dreams and hopes, I remember...*

*When I was a little girl **growing up in Nyack, the holidays started with the perusing of the Sears Wish Book catalog with my sisters.** Oh, the Sears Wish Book! My sisters and I would sit on the living room couch and go through the gigantic catalog page by page. Well, we'd skip over the pages of stuff for adults - tools, towels, housewares and hardware. We'd each write down all the things we wished for on a piece of notepaper. Oh, how long those lists were! I would tell my sisters that we had to be realistic and shouldn't expect Santa to bring us everything on our wish lists. Still, we wished. Oh, **how we wished!***

***As we head into the holidays, People to People is focusing its efforts on making the wishes of children from low-income families come true.** Project Joy is the PtoP program that brings joy to nearly 2,000 children at the holidays by offering donors the opportunity to fulfill their wish lists. I've read many of the wish lists written by these kids and they often are as long as the ones written by my sisters and me. **Oh, how these children wish!** Though these children wish for many of the same things as did my sisters and I - toys, dolls, bicycles, pianos, puppies - there are heartbreaking differences between their lists and ours.*

***Sometimes, their wishes break my heart.** I never asked Santa for a blanket or new sheets; for shampoo, soap or lotion; for a warm coat for my mother or for a Christmas dinner that included dessert.*

It pains me greatly to admit that it is not in my power to make all of their wishes come true. All I can do - all PtoP can do - is make their holidays a little brighter. And put food on their tables.

Once the holidays are behind us, we move into the New Year. The New Year will bring new challenges, new concerns, new needs. Well, not new needs. The needs are the same - thousands of Rocklanders will need the help of People to People to put food on their tables. And if People to People is going to continue to feed Rockland's hungry - 4,000 people every month with more than half of them children - I'm going to need your help.

***Right now, PtoP is hoping to raise \$100,000 in the next month.** PtoP is being called upon to do more for more people n more ways.. To do that, we are going to need to raise more funds. Right now, there are **30,000 Rocklanders that are considered to be food insecure.** That means that nearly 10% of Rockland's population often doesn't know where their next meal is coming from. Sadly, many of them are children, seniors and veterans.*

- over, please -



In the past year, PtoP has taken big steps to enhance our efforts to reduce food insecurity in Rockland.

- ***We have become Rockland's Food Hub** and now provide dozens of Rockland's small faith-based and community food pantries with the opportunity to come to PtoP once a month to pick up produce, dairy products and nonperishable items delivered to PtoP at no cost by the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York.*
- ***We implemented Client Choice in our Food Pantry** that provides more than 1,300 low-income Rockland households with options regarding the food choices that make up their monthly food packages. Through our Food Pantry, PtoP helps put food on the tables of 4,000 people every month.*
- ***We provide nearly 300 children with weekend food packages** every week throughout the school year that are distributed by our partner organizations including Nyack Center, Haverstraw Center and Martin Luther King Multipurpose Center. The children that participate in afterschool programs at these sites receive breakfast and lunch at school but often worry if there will be anything for them to eat over the weekend. We also distribute food packages to Jawonio and Rockland Community College to provide to students who can't afford books and food.*
- *To do this, **we have made significant and very necessary renovations to our facility.** We've added a warehouse mezzanine, more cold storage and elevator and much more.*
- *We have done all of this effectively and efficiently. PtoP is one of only three Rockland nonprofits to receive a **Four Star rating from Charity Navigator**, its highest rating. **PtoP spends about 9% of all donations on administrative costs.** Still, we need more funds to assure our ability to do what we are called upon and are committed to do - feed Rockland's hungry.*

It would bring me great comfort and joy to ring in 2019 with the financial resources PtoP needs to fulfill its commitment to feed Rockland's hungry. Please bring comfort and joy to thousands of our neighbors in need by making a special year-end contribution to PtoP to help us end hunger and to make so many wishes come true.

With all my heart,



*Diane Serratore
Executive Director*



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