

Dear W.C.,

6/15/09

I am an elderly widow who recently lost her husband. I had been caring for him myself for years through a long battle with cancer and dementia. It started out with him doing the oddest things and progressed to the point he did not even know me anymore. My heart would break watching my husband, my best friend, fade away. My hero of a man went from a healthy 195 lbs. down to 117 lbs. I would leave his room holding back my tears until I got far enough away, so my dear love could not hear me crying.

We did not have any long term care insurance and Medicare did not cover many of his expenses. Now that my husband has passed away I am behind in many of my bills. I was having a hard time making ends meet before he passed away. Now they have stopped his pension payments. I am receiving a reduced social security benefit now that my husband is gone.

I thought I did my best for my husband by caring for him at home. I managed through his continuous downward spiral through the horrible diseases of cancer and dementia. He was a strong, hardworking man I loved with all my heart. I had to watch him be reduced to a frail shell of the person he once was. I lived through days of endless care giving to a man that in the end did not even know who I was. It was very painful to walk in the room everyday and be asked, "Who are you?" My heart would sink as I hugged his head, trying to comfort him through the pain, telling him, "I'm your other half, your wife." In the end I could not leave his side. All I could do was hold him and cry. My dear husband may not have known me anymore, but he would cry along with me. That is how we shared our last moments together.

Now the only thing left is our long neglected small house and old car. I do not even have enough income to catch up on my bills, pay the property taxes, utilities, and feed myself, much less pay these huge hospital bills. Please help.

Overwhelmed Widow

Dear Readers,

Poverty levels in the elderly are skyrocketing. Many just get by until an illness or injury strikes. The death of a spouse can be devastating not only on an emotional level but also on a financial level. If there was no long term or supplemental insurance most are left with a mountain of medical bills they can never pay. When they are harassed to the point of paying these bills they often go without food, utilities, lose their homes, and their life savings if they have any, to pay these medical bills. These are good American citizens that have lived their lives caring for families, working hard, paid their bills, and all they want is to be able to survive, nothing extravagant. When an unexpected illness strikes it erases all their dreams of

a comfortable retirement. The years of hard work are not rewarded. They find Medicare does not cover many of the expenses.

Many spouses become care takers. It is a hard around the clock job. When I spoke with the widow that wrote this letter she filled me in on the daily care of her deceased husband. She had to put special locks on all the doors because he would awake in the middle of the night and leave the house. This was a constant worry for her, especially in the winter, until he became bedridden. She had to constantly check the gas burners on the stove and check the thermostat because he would turn the heat on and off. When he became bedridden she worked hard turning him regularly to prevent pressure sores. He forgot everyone he knew so they stopped coming by to visit. Their only daughter lives out of state and is having her own financial problems.

This widow had many dreams for their retirement together. She said they did not have much but they planned on spending time together gardening and fishing. They had projects they wanted to do around the house to fix it up together. She ended up spending the last years watching her husband painfully fade away.

She had reduced all her costs to a minimum. She walked everywhere she could to not use her old car and gas. She did not turn on the window air-conditioner and this past winter left her thermostat set at 57. She is growing her own vegetables in her yard from seeds her neighbor shared. The Time Is Now to Help brought her utilities up to date and supplied her with some gift cards for daily necessities. We also repaired her car and gave her some gas vouchers so she could drive to the places she needed to go. After setting up her new budget and networking with some of her neighbors/new friends she was as she said in her own words, "Happy again and no longer fearful and alone."

She was extremely grateful to The Time Is Now to Help and it's caring and sharing supporters. She says she has lived in stress and sadness for years. This is the first time she has felt happiness and relief in a long time. It is all due to you, our faithful supporters, through our caring and sharing for our fellow creations.

Thank you for your caring and sharing.

*Health & Happiness, God Bless, W.C.*

**Please Help:** Make checks payable to: The Time Is Now to Help, P.O. Box 70, Pell Lake, WI 53157. The Time Is Now to Help is a federally recognized 501(c)3 charitable organization licensed in the states of Wisconsin and Illinois. You will receive a tax deductible, itemized thank you receipt showing exactly what every penny of your donation provided for the poverty stricken.

**A Very Special Thank You:** Lake Geneva Middle School Students, Peck and Weis,

Paper Dolls, Michael & Sue Borden, Dick & Jean Honeyager, Martin O'Brien, Tony Hanley, Kim Olsen, Tom & Joyce Roche, Lee & Barb Zuzanek, Plymouth Tube Co., Donald & Gladys Keith, William & Jean Isaacson, Nancy Russell, Drescher Family Charitable Foundation, W.C. Family Resource Center/Food Pantry volunteers, Bill & Lois McEssy, ALL of you who support The Time Is Now to Help donation boxes, and the businesses that allow our donation boxes. Anyone who would like a Time Is Now donation box in your business, please call (262)249-7000.

**Food Pantry info:** If you would like to volunteer at the W.C. Food Pantry/ Family Resource Center please call Frank Guske, Jr. at (312) 656-6178. Frank is coordinating all volunteer efforts. Please volunteer for a two hour shift Wednesdays or Saturdays, between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

**Desperately Needed Cars:** If anyone has a car they are thinking of trading in, or have an extra car you are not using, please think of sharing it with one of the many in desperate need of transportation.

**Goodsearch for The Time Is Now:** Search the web with [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) and help to raise funds for The Time Is Now to Help. Just make [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) your homepage, pick The Time Is Now as your charity and the rest is simple. You can even shop some of your favorite online retailers. It is a fun and easy way to help the poverty stricken.

**Endowments/Helping Others through Your Will:** For those of you who wish to leave an endowment for the poverty stricken, we would greatly accept any gifts. Please think of those in desperate need, good people, living in fear of poverty and consider helping them through your will.

**Donate Stocks/ Mutual Funds, Let the Government Contribute:** Consider donating shares of appreciated stocks and mutual funds to The Time Is Now to Help and receive twice the benefits from your gift. Please call 262-249-7000 if you would like more information.

Please visit: [www.timeisnowtohelp.org](http://www.timeisnowtohelp.org)