



# KAIR

Since 1998

Keys Area Interdenominational Resources  
Food Pantry and Emergency Services for those in Need in the Middle Keys



## Fall 2015

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### *Back to School!*

Back to School is always a joyful event unless you are a parent that can't afford the backpack, supplies, and new shoes to start the year. It's also not a joyful time for those kids who have to worry about not having what the other kids have or having to answer questions about why they don't have a backpack. Sometimes, they can't take gym because they don't have sneakers. That is why KAIR started their Back to School program. Getting to know our families through the food pantry identifies the kids that needed some help to get a good start in school. This year, more than 150 Marathon kids, from Pre-K to Grade 12, received new backpacks, school supplies and sneakers. From the Ninja turtles, princesses, and fancy graphics to sleek black backpacks, all could feel like they really fit in. We couldn't do this each year without the help of many community members. Thank you to all who contributed. The joy on these children's faces says it all.



### *Independence Cay*

Located down behind the Royal Furniture store, Independence Cay has been quietly doing what it set out to do, i.e. provide services to the homeless that helps them move forward and become more independent. There are really two missions at the Cay. One is to be a place for the homeless in Marathon to get a hot meal, take a shower, and clean their clothes. They are also given the opportunity to talk about what their challenges are and connected to KAIR to follow-up on other needs. Being clean and having access to nutritious food is a good start to figuring out the rest of their lives, which might include getting a job, improving health, or tackling substance abuse or emotional issues. The second mission is to provide housing for homeless men committed to staying sober, getting a job, saving their

money and moving on to more independent housing. Currently, there are twelve men living there and they work at various places including two at retail stores, two on fishing boats, two at restaurants, and three on construction. They work as a family to keep their "home" clean and on any given evening, you will find them watching Jeopardy or Bonanza. The next time you are served in a restaurant or store or see workers in a hundred different professions, take a moment to realize that they could be residents of Independence Cay and have come a long way.



### *Food Pantry*

Our job at the food pantry is to provide food to hungry people in the most efficient way. We do this in many ways. We have always had a relationship with Feeding South Florida which is the large regional food bank located in Miami. Once a week, a large truck full of a variety of deeply discounted food is delivered to KAIR. Now, since October 1st, we have added to our resources by having a contract with Farm Share which is located in Homestead. Farm Share will provide KAIR with USDA donated food as well as food from South Florida farmers. Both the food bank and Farm Share require extensive training and reporting in order to satisfy requirements that food is getting to the people that really need it and getting it to them safely. We couldn't talk about food donations without mentioning our local Publix and Winn Dixie. Both stores provide food to KAIR several times a week and we couldn't meet the needs of local residents without their help. We need our refrigerated van to transport all of this food to keep it safe. The food drives, the food barrels, the donations brought to us from all of you help provide a well-rounded and nutritious selection of food — **16,000 pounds every month!** It's a great patchwork of food resources that sewn together mean that people in the Middle Keys don't have to be hungry.

## **SHARING THE HOLIDAY WITH OTHERS**

### **THANKSGIVING BASKETS**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please find our check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ enclosed. Please mail or deliver to  
**KAIR** 3010 Overseas Hwy/Marathon, FL 33050.

***Kaironline.net*** for online payment.

The holiday baskets include a 12-14 lb. turkey with all the fixings, many fresh fruits and vegetables, and even a dessert! Last year these baskets were also delivered to the Heron House, Domestic Abuse Shelter, Independence Cay, and the Guidance Clinic. Our goal this year is to provide 300 holiday dinners for folks just like you—people sitting down to a special meal with grateful hearts. Any and all contributions are gratefully accepted.