

Dear W.C.,

I am an older woman living on my own. My only daughter lives out of state, and I rarely hear from her. My husband passed away last year after a very long illness. I gave up my job and stayed by his side for several years while caring for him. Toward the end, he entered hospice care, and between his medical expenses and other costs associated with his illness, our savings were completely depleted.

After my husband passed away, I was no longer able to afford our apartment. I moved into a small basement apartment because it was the only place I could afford on my limited income. Last week, heavy rain caused that basement to flood and I not only lost most of my furniture and personal belongings, but also my place to live.

I am currently staying in a motel, but even though I work full-time, I can no longer afford the daily expenses of living here. I have contacted several agencies for assistance only to be told there are long waiting lists or that funding is unavailable. Unfortunately, I do not have the luxury of waiting weeks or months for help. If I cannot find a solution soon, I will most likely be sleeping in my car by the end of the week.

I have worked hard my entire life. I never imagined that after caring for my husband through his illness and doing everything I could to keep us afloat, I would find myself homeless. I am frightened, exhausted, and running out of options. Any advice or assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Dear Readers,

Here is someone who spent a very long time caring for her husband through a long illness, giving up her job, financial security, and personal well-being to ensure he received the care and love he needed. Like many caregivers, she placed the needs of a loved one ahead of her own without ever considering what might happen after that chapter of life ended.

When I spoke with her, I found a kind and soft-spoken woman who had spent most of her life helping others. She never expected to be asking for help herself. She described the difficult years of caring for her husband, the emotional toll of watching his health decline, and the financial devastation that followed. By the time he passed away, their savings had been exhausted, and her future was uncertain.

Losing her apartment was only the beginning. The flooding of the basement apartment eliminated what little stability she had managed to rebuild. Most of her belongings were destroyed, and she suddenly found herself without a home. As she shared her story, I could hear the fear in her voice.

Unfortunately, her situation is not unique. We continue to hear from senior citizens, widows, disabled individuals, and working families who are struggling to find affordable housing. Rising rents, limited housing availability, and long waiting lists for assistance programs have created a crisis for many people living on fixed or modest incomes. One unexpected event—a medical emergency, job loss, vehicle repair, or natural disaster—can quickly push someone from stability into homelessness.

After researching her situation, we worked together to come up with a solution. I reviewed her employment situation and monthly income. Although she continues to work full-time, the motel expense consumed nearly all her income. She barely had enough left to afford gas and food. It was impossible to save enough for a security deposit and several months' rent that are often required. She also needed a new bed, bedding, household items, and several other items that make up a home.

What touched me most about this woman was her resilience. Despite losing her husband to a tragic illness, losing her savings, her apartment and most her belongings, she continues to get up and go to work each day determined to rebuild her life. She was not looking for a handout, only an opportunity to get back on her feet after enduring all these hardships.

Thankfully, you have made it possible for us to provide that helping hand up at just the right moment, time and time again. For this deserving woman we provided the motel room for several weeks until a safe affordable rental was found. We helped her secure that apartment by providing a security deposit and two months rent. We also provided a new bed and bedding, gift cards for food, gas, clothing, toiletries, and household necessities. Everything this woman needs to rebuild her life has been provided thanks to your support.

Thank you for caring, thank you for sharing our mission, and thank you for helping us bring hope to those who need it most.

Please join us Saturday, July 18, 2026, 1-3 PM at First Congregational United Church of Christ, 715 Wisconsin St. in Lake Geneva, WI for the Community Conversation “Grounded in Walworth County: 3 Stories of Connections”. The Time is Now to Help Founder Sal Dimiceli will be speaking, along with Lloyd Sineni and Laura Rosol, MD, about local financial hardship, health, and human service concerns at this free event presented by Common Ground Lake Geneva. We hope to see you there!

Health & Happiness, Love & God Bless Everyone, Sal

Please visit our website to read more of our past and current columns and/or to make a donation: www.timeisnowtohelp.org Please go to the home page, follow the yellow highlighted link that says WC Letters to see current and past columns.

A Very Special Thank You: Family Legacy Donors, Family Foundation, Kunes

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Memorials: Timothy and Brenda Wegge in memory of Russell Wegge.

Please visit: www.timeisnowtohelp.org