

Helping Hands Ministry Feeds Needy Kids of Estill County

by CATHY DAWES
The Estill County Tribune
 Volunteers for Helping Hands Ministry were busy as bees on Monday as they worked to fill bags with non perishable food items for the needy children of Estill County.

Close to 50 people gathered in the fellowship hall of the Christian Worship Center on Broadway and worked diligently to make sure that children throughout the county would have food to eat for the next two weeks while other volunteers delivered the food and new school clothes to those in need.

Debbie Rison said that three years ago Helping Hands Ministry had six children on their summer feeding program and now that number has grown to almost two hundred children throughout the county who depend on Helping Hands to keep them fed during the summer months when school isn't in session.

Rison said that it is a community effort and that fifteen different churches in

Estill County are involved on a regular basis with the program.

She added that donations from individuals in the community and from local churches is what keeps the ministry running and what makes it such a success.

The goal of Helping Hands is to see that every child has food, a new outfit and shoes when school starts in August, and that they receive the word of God. The children are given Bibles in their bags and those that have already received Bibles get other things such as coloring sheets.

Kevin Turpin, youth pastor of Green Pastures Worship Center, said that he isn't involved with the program to glorify himself but to glorify God. He said that while he is out delivering the bags of food to Cob Hill or Barnes Mountain that most likely the children are waiting on him to receive their bags and that there is a definite need in this county.

Rison adds that whether people realize it or not that there are people right here

in Estill County who are homeless and living in their cars. She said that there are people who are living in homes without electricity and water and that their mission is to help those people with whatever needs they have.

Not only does Helping Hands provide food but they also offer a tutoring program and they have a clothing ministry that provides gently used clothes to individuals who cannot afford to buy new clothing.

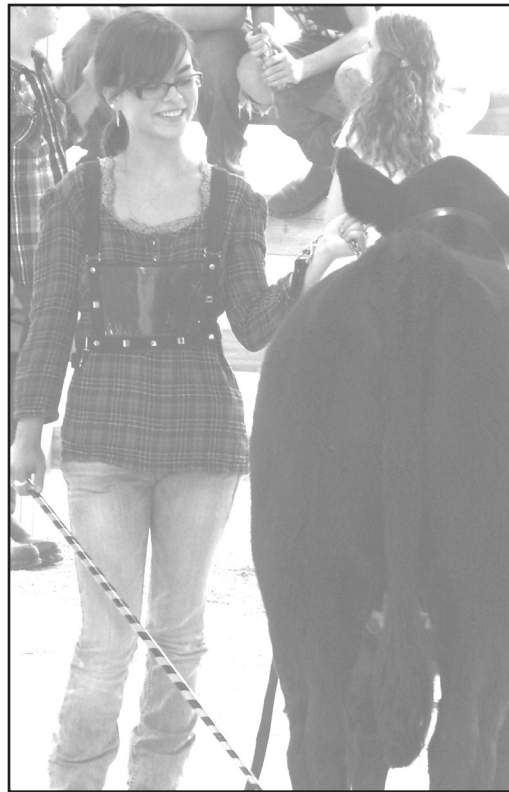
Last week Rison put on Facebook that she would like to have volunteers to purchase an outfit and a pair of shoes for a child for the start of school in August. She said the response was overwhelming from people who wanted to help and that in no time at all she had people committed to purchase clothes and shoes for every single child on the list.

"This is a non-profit organization and we rely strictly on donations and help from the community to be able to successfully run this program," added Rison.



An estimated 50 people gathered together on Monday night to pack bags of food and deliver them to children throughout the county. Helping Hands Ministry is currently feeding 183 children this summer. Photo by Cathy Dawes

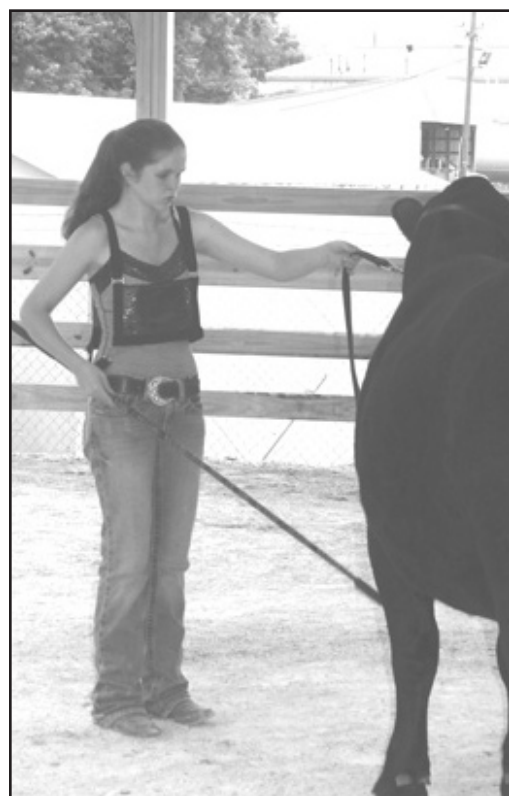
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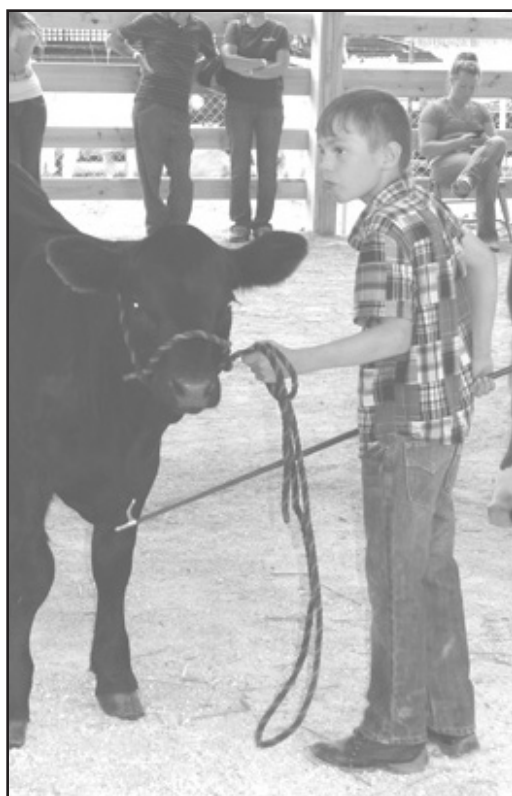
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