

# COMMUNITY LINK

Empowering people through a helping hand, not a hand-out

## This Newsletter

Welcome to Community Link, a publication of Hope Full Life Center, Inc., a charity located in Faith Plaza, Ravenna. You may know us better as Helping Harvest, Gracefully Chic Boutique, Peace of Home or Cross Culture Market - all programs we run to serve people here and abroad.

Read on to learn about our efforts to empower people and revitalize our community.

Register to receive occasional Center news by email. Visit our website for details.

[HopeFullLifeCenter.org](http://HopeFullLifeCenter.org)

## Our Mission

Hope Full Life Center empowers people. Activated by compassion, we offer a helping hand, not a hand-out, to improve life for our neighbors.



## Trash to Treasure Fashion Show to benefit local charities

Show off your inner fashionista, encourage recycling and raise money for local charities at this fun community event. HFLC's Gracefully Chic Boutique is hosting a fashion show on **Saturday, April 18 at 11 a.m.** at Abounding Love Christian Fellowship, the church located in Faith Plaza (Home of Shop N' Save and CVS).

### Contestants Wanted

Win the title of "Best Dressed" at the fashion show by

assembling a complete head-to-toe look from Gracefully Chic Boutique's gently used clothing racks. Registered contestants can assemble their attire at the thrift store from Saturday, April 11 through Friday, April 17. Men, women and kids are encouraged to participate.

Interested contestants can register by visiting Gracefully Chic Boutique during business hours (10-5 Tues - Sat) or online at

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## Fashion Show *(continued from page 1)*

[HopeFullLifeCenter.org](http://HopeFullLifeCenter.org).

Guests at the fashion show will vote with a dollar (or more) for their favorite contestants. All money raised during the voting process goes to each contestant's favorite charity. Our panel of "celebrity" judges will also weigh in awarding prizes for most original, most complex construction, best walk and best charity presentation. Complete details can be found at [HopeFullLifeCenter.org](http://HopeFullLifeCenter.org).

"The community supports Gracefully Chic Boutique with bag after bag of great donated clothing. From vintage pieces to formal wear we get it all. While the proceeds from store sales help us support our food assistance and international aid programs, we thought it would be fun to use the clothing to benefit other charities too," said Rebecca Marion Flach,

executive director of Hope Full Life Center, Inc., the parent charity of Gracefully Chic Boutique; Peace of Home, a gently-used home furnishings store; Helping Harvest, the food assistance program; and Cross Culture Market, the international aid program.

"We're excited to show off all the great fashions we get at Gracefully Chic Boutique and how recycled clothing is a smart way to save money and our planet too," said Gracefully Chic Boutique Store Manager Doreen Seltzer.

A community resource, Gracefully Chic Boutique aids fire victims and other destitute families in the area. Open to the general public, the thrift store sold more than 30,000 pieces of clothing last year priced between \$1 and \$5.

Learn more about Gracefully Chic Boutique and all of Hope Full Life

### Trash to Treasure Fashion Show to benefit charity

Sat., April 18 @ 11 a.m.

Abounding Love  
Christian Fellowship

Faith Plaza (next to CVS)  
Ravena

Admission: A bottle of  
liquid dish soap to benefit  
Helping Harvest.

Center's programs at  
[HopeFullLifeCenter.org](http://HopeFullLifeCenter.org).

## Helping Harvest receives donation from Stewart's Holiday Match

Hope Full Life Center is the proud recipient of \$500 from the Stewart's Holiday Match. During the holiday season, Stewart's customers generously donated more than \$770,000 to the Holiday Match program, which doubled to more than \$1.5 million with support from the beloved convenience store chain. The funds were divided among 1,600 local charities.

We'll use the money to purchase food for Helping Harvest, Hope Full Life Center's

food assistance program for the needy.

The program feeds nearly 450 people in our community, including many children.

THANK YOU STEWART'S  
SHOPS AND PATRONS  
FOR YOUR KIND  
SUPPORT OF OUR WORK  
TO FIGHT HUNGER.



*Helping Harvest's processing room after a delivery of food.*

## Highlights from 2014

Hope Full Life Center began its second fiscal year with vigor. New Executive Director Rebecca Marion Flach's goal for 2014 was to build awareness and relationships for the little-known charity and the programs it offers in Ravenna. Among its initiatives Hope Full Life Center:

- Hosted a "Cleaning on a Budget" class that taught people how to make laundry detergent and other low-cost cleaning supplies.
- Launched the Linda Civill Community Garden to teach gardening skills and supply Helping Harvest with produce.
- Sold produce for an area farmer at the Ravenna Farmer's Market in July, August and September. Unsold produce went to Helping Harvest members. Gracefully Chic Boutique, Peace of Home and Cross Culture Market also participated.
- Launched our Facebook presence and a website, [HopeFullLifeCenter.org](http://HopeFullLifeCenter.org).

- Hosted another successful Harvest Fest in October, which drew several hundred people.
- Applied for more grants than the previous year and received funding from several.
- Received media attention for several of the aforementioned activities.

Program-specific statistics include:

- Helping Harvest sent home approximately \$140,000 worth of groceries with low-income families in the area.
- Gracefully Chic Boutique sold more than 30,000 articles of clothing in 2014 for low prices.
- Peace of Home donated furniture and housewares to 20+ families who lost their homes to fire or experienced other hardship.
- Cross Culture Market's sales were soft in 2014, following a trend in the Fair Trade/gift store market. To prepare for the future and make us more competitive we directed resources to our website to drive online sales.



*Volunteers participate in the RCS Wellness Walk*



*HFLC Board accepts \$1,000 grant from First Niagara Bank*



*Cleaning on a Budget Class*



*Dean Davis, the "Reptile Guy," engages an audience at Harvest Fest*

### *Finances*

Projected Revenue for 2014:	\$164,135.00
Actual Revenue for 2014:	\$152,605.39
Projected Expenditures for 2014:	\$161,580.00
Actual Expenditures for 2014:	\$150,889.25

A private 501(c)3 not-for-profit, we are dependent on grants, contributions and donations to meet our goals. Additional information about HFLC finances is available upon request.

## Linda Civill Community Garden seeks green thumbs (or those interested in developing one)

Currently under mounds of snow in Faith Plaza is the Linda Civill Community Garden. The 2015 growing season will soon be upon us and Hope Full Life Center has big plans to expand the garden this year. We're seeking people with an interest in gardening who would like to maintain a garden plot or help us weed, water and collect produce.

The community garden was launched last May to give people an opportunity to experiment with gardening and help the needy too. Half of all fruits and vegetables grown in the garden benefit Helping Harvest, Hope Full Life Center's food assistance program



*The garden opened on May 31, 2014 and gardeners got to work! The garden is located along the stockade fence across from the stores in Faith Plaza.*

for low-income individuals and families. No experience is needed to participate; skilled gardeners will be on hand to answer questions throughout the growing season.

The garden, a joint project of Hope Full Life Center and STARS Intergen, is named in memory of long-time area resident Linda Civill who was an avid gardener and volunteer at many of Ravena's charities, including Helping Harvest.

Interested in tending a garden plot or assisting in some other way? Call or email Hope Full Life Center at (518) 756-9091 / [HopeFullLifeCenter@gmail.com](mailto:HopeFullLifeCenter@gmail.com).

### Community Link

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 Follow us on Facebook

### Our Programs

Helping Harvest  
*Fighting hunger*  
 Gracefully Chic Boutique and  
 Peace of Home  
*Providing value and dignity*  
 Cross Culture Market  
*Creating jobs*

## We need you! Volunteer at our programs

Hope Full Life Center's programs are labor intensive and we need your help! Volunteers assist us with these tasks:

At **Helping Harvest**, our food assistance program, we could put you to work sorting food, stocking shelves or cleaning.

Many hands are needed at **Gracefully Chic Boutique** and **Peace of Home**, our donation-based, low-cost clothing and home decor programs. Here you could sort and process donations, launder and steam clothing, stock shelves, price items, help customers and much more.

**Cross Culture Market** needs a devoted group of volunteers to keep it running.

Help us straighten and clean the store, assist with photography for our website, or tackle inventory.

Please consider joining us for **Service Saturday!** The first Saturday of every month we call on volunteers for three hours of service from 9 a.m. to noon. Join us for coffee, fellowship and few hours of work that gets our programs off to a strong start for the month.

**We welcome clubs and community groups** seeking a service project.

Whether it's once a month, once a week or every day, we can use your mind, muscles and enthusiasm! Please contact us by phone or email if you're interested in lending a hand.