

Modern, Myers bring holiday cheer to Care-n-Share

Modern exploring partnership with FeedMore WNY

BY TERRY DUFFY
Editor-in-Chief

Spreading the holiday cheer, Modern Disposal Services officials and Niagara County Legislator Irene Myers visited with Care-n-Share Pantry staffers last Friday in Ransomville for a presentation of checks and some potentially good news for the River Region agency.

Modern CEO Michael P. McInerney, along with Modern staffers Jerry Dickson and Dennis Moriarity, visited and presented a \$500 donation and multiple bags of nonperishable groceries for the pantry that serves Niagara's needy. Myers stopped by to deliver a \$1,000 check from the Niagara County Community Partnership Fund to benefit Inter-Community Services and the Care-n-Share Pantry.

Both of which were very much welcomed by Patti Macintosh of Care-n-Share.

"We service the whole area; we are not supposed to turn anyone away. Here you have to be qualified and registered" to receive assistance, she said.

Macintosh was especially appreciative of the assistance that day, as she revealed the United Way had just declined a request to assist Care-n-Share, citing the pantry's limits on service.

"They want to focus on youth



Modern CEO Michael P. McInerney is pictured with Niagara County Legislator Irene Myers, Care-n-Share's Patti Macintosh, and Modern staffers at the check presentations. "This is a little sunshine," Myers said of the Care-n-Share donation. (Photo by Terry Duffy)

programs; we don't do youth programs," she said.

Macintosh was quick to add the pantry does indeed service a wide-based – and needy – community.

"In the event of emergency situation, we will open and supply what's needed. We also have the Wear-n-Share Clothing Closet up at Low-Port," she said.

Noting that Care-n-Share re-

quires a user of its service to have a single household income of under \$32,205 in order to qualify, Macintosh added, "You just have to attest to it. People don't just get turned down. If they're close (on the income limit), we can do it."

"Some of the folks in our community who work are making less than \$30,000 per year," Myers said of the situation experienced by many in a time of rising costs.

Macintosh said Care-n-Share is able to provide this needed help thanks to its partnership with FeedMore WNY: "That is where we get the majority of our food. It used to be the Food Bank of WNY."

McInerney spoke of a new interest being explored by Modern to possibly help FeedMore in the future. He revealed the company is exploring the use of its vacant greenhouse facility on Pletcher Road as one way it could assist.

"I had a meeting with FeedMore last week," McInerney said. "What I'm proposing to FeedMore is a greenhouse attached

to our property, a 12½-acre greenhouse. It originally grew tomatoes; the owners came back with me (with a suggestion) for cannabis. Then they came back to me, and I thought, 'Why don't we do something for the community?'"

He mentioned pursuing a University at Buffalo grant or a similar approach to benefit sustainable foods in urban areas as one possibility.

"I was thinking, 'Why not partner with somebody like that?' It's labor intensive, it could provide opportunity to some people that need jobs, maybe we could partner with FeedMore," McInerney said. "I thought the best way to start this is with an agency like FeedMore. They have farmers on their staff, they work with growing communities. So, I had a really, really great meeting last week."

"We're going to get back after the first of the year and try to come up with something here. I always associated FeedMore with being Buffalo-based, but they told me, 'We're looking for help in Ni-

agara County.'

"So, this is what I'm working on, behind the scenes here, to try to get utilization of that greenhouse, so that they can produce fresh fruits, vegetables, whatever they have to do and feed the local community."

Of Modern's vacant greenhouse, McInerney said, "This thing is in great shape. It's just sitting here. And if you think about the story behind it, it's powered by methane gas from the landfill. We capture the methane gas and use the methane gas as fuel for generators and producing power. Most of that power goes out to 11,000 homes here locally. The other part of that power can be directed over to the greenhouse. The heat from the engine plants that produce that power is piped over across the street and we use it to heat the greenhouse."

"So, you have self-sustaining power, and heat from the landfill. Which is a great story to tell. You have 12½ acres of greenhouse that's been idle for almost seven years. We still maintain it, maintain everything, everything works."

"We tried to find different company owners to come in. I sat down with the (Modern) owners and they said, 'Listen, we're not going to go down the cannabis path. Why don't you see if you can get some benefit from the community (on this)?"

"We don't want to operate (it, but) we'll partner with the right groups, whether it's a school, Tops, Wegmans."

Myers mentioned a possibility of partnering with Niagara County Community College on the venture should this move forward.

"We're working with our lobbyists who work with them, as well," McInerney said. "We're working with FeedMore to try to pull this all together. More to come on this after the first of the year. It's just the beginning on it."

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Remzi Yates teams with Fight Sport Training Center, Edward Town Middle School on SPCA donation



As he does each year, "Jam Man" Remzi Yates III recently spearheaded a local donation. He teamed with his gym, Fight Sport Training Center, and the Edward Town Middle School seventh grade class to collect items for the Niagara SPCA.

Remzi, age 12, said, "I save up my money all year long to be able to do so, and this year I am lucky enough to my entire grade and my gym help. "I started doing this because, when I was 5, my family

took me to NYC and (I saw) all the homeless people. ... I would take breakfast food from my hotel and give it to them every morning and, when I came home, I wanted to help everyone I could and make a difference in my community."

Remzi is shown with Niagara SPCA Intake and Adoption Counselor Dawn Stone, and with his coach, Craig Reed, from the Fight Sport Training Center.