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Vernon (R) works to help Miss Abigail (L) carry groceries.

Gateway Thanksgiving

Photos by Diane Emeott
On an overcast, misting, 57-degree morning last Wednesday, Gateway Community Outreach, Inc. staff and volunteers set about brightening the day for its clients—handing out food for a Thanksgiving feast. “We’re feeding over 550 people at this location,” said President & CEO Carol A.

Ray on Nov. 19. She started the Deerfield-based community outreach 19 years ago with two cans of corn. Each family received a whole turkey; their choice of breads; carrots, apples, celery and squash; fresh eggs and real butter; stuffing mix and cranberries; and all the makings for a pumpkin pie—the whole 9 yards!” said Ray.

Rob Denton, of Parkland, a first-time volunteer, said he took the day off work to help lifting loads, sorting and passing out food. “The name of my company is Corporate Rescue, so this is kind of a natural fit [helping others],” he said. *For more information, go to www.gcoflorida.org.*



- 1) Carol Ray (C) and about 10 volunteers serve up the makings for Thanksgiving last Wednesday a.m.
- 2) Cole, 7, passes out fresh veggies like celery.
- 3) Volunteer Dave hands out turkeys.
- 4) Maggie Barrett of Southern Coast Enterprises and DB Kiwanis Club President Gordon Vatch sign in client Leona Robinson.



The Hamilton Family: Tracy and husband Greg (Caitlyn (L) 18, and son Evin, 21. Upcoming Tracy will raise awareness of Adenoid Cystic Carcinoma

Giving Thanks for

By Diane Emeott
Pompano Beach resident Tracy Hamilton is a wonder. Even as the 54-year-old is now in hospice for Adenoid Cystic Carcinoma (ACC)—a rare form of cancer that started on the roof of her mouth and spread to her brain and lungs—she is giving back to the community. As of Nov. 7, she already had two speaking engagements lined up, even though she now requires a translator to clarify her speech. She will both speak at and walk (with a walker) in the upcoming **Trek With Tracy**, next Saturday, Dec. 6 at 9 a.m. in Pompano Community Park, North Pavilion, 2001 NE 10 St., Pompano Beach, FL. 33060.

Hamilton has been described as both courageous and unstoppable in her 9-year fight. “There needs to be greater awareness,” said Hamilton in October. “There is very little research in comparison to other types of cancer [such as breast cancer]. I don’t want others to go through what I have, and I want people to have more options for treatment.”

ACC usually begins in the salivary gland and spreads through the body. Only 4 percent of the population has Adenoid Cystic Carcinoma, but it is increasing in occurrence. Although cancers of the mouth are often linked to smoking or tobacco use, Hamilton is not a smoker.

Normal protocol is: if you notice a bump that lasts more than

2 weeks, it should be checked by a medical professional. In Hamilton’s case, it was a small bump on the roof of her mouth. She was initially told to be rechecked in 6 weeks, but she believed she had caught it sooner. She said she believed she had a better chance of survival if she had caught it sooner. This is a very aggressive form of cancer, although it is treatable. Organizers of the trek hope to benefit the Adenoid Cystic Carcinoma Research Fund. Nancy Jones, secretary of the fund, said Hamilton for 20 years. “Tracy has a great understanding of her condition. I have never seen anyone else who has asked her if she would mind telling me ‘that would be scary.’ She said, ‘I’ll do it any time and she does not mind the opportunity.’” “I have learned the greatest life’s lesson from Tracy, who describes herself as very intentional. She wants to protect her children, and she has committed beyond anything I have seen with patience, strength. She has been one of the most people to participate in. Tracy’s eyes continue to shine. Purchase T-shirts for the cause at FancyNancy.com, E. Sample Rd., Pompano Beach, Sample Road at the intersection of Sample Road and Highway 1, one block west of Highway 1. \$15 includes T-shirt and hat. *For more information, contact Nancy Jones at fancynancys@gmail.com or 305-254-8864.*