



The Helping Hand

Father Gene's Help Center Newsletter

Fall 2023

Erick Seiler Pays it Forward

As we mark Veteran's Day this month, we would like to highlight one of our client shoppers, Erick Seiler, a Navy veteran.

When Erick Seiler walked into FGHC for the first time several years ago, he found more than a clothing closet. He found what he calls an "oasis."

"The staff and volunteers always make me feel welcome," he said.

A retired Navy veteran, Erick lives in the Milwaukee Soldier's Home at the V.A. Hospital.

Erick worked as a cook in the Navy for 16 years. After he left the service, he worked in the fast-food industry for 24 years.

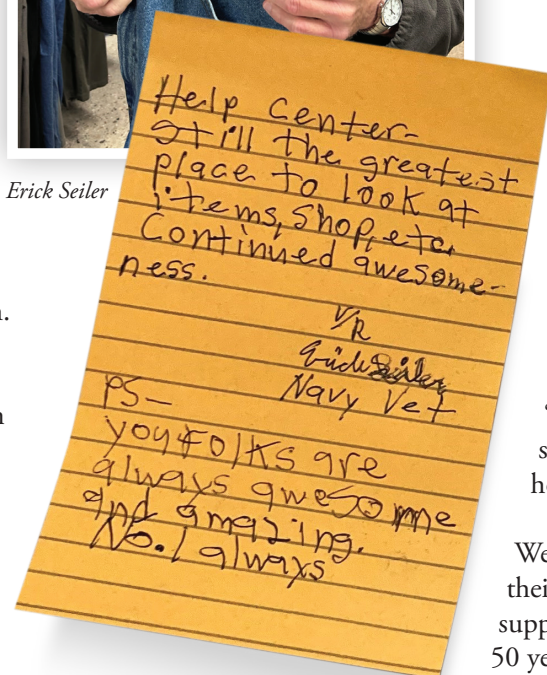
"After living in the fast lane, I like life in the slow lane now," Erick says with a laugh.

A longtime FGHC client, Erick likes all the changes the center has gone through in recent years, including the option to shop for his own clothing.

"It means a lot to people like me who can't afford to shop in stores to have a place like Fr. Gene's to come to for clothing," he said. "I love the place."



Erick Seiler



Likewise, FGHC staff and volunteers enjoy Erick's visits to the center.

"A visit from Erick never fails to put a smile on my face," said FGHC Client Shopping Associate Peggy Pushkash.

Peggy and other staff and volunteers are touched by the notes Erick leaves for them.

"The staff and volunteers always make me feel welcome." -Erick

"I leave the notes to let them know that they're super people," he said. "These folks go out of their way to make people feel that they're valued."

Erick believes in paying it forward; he frequently donates bottled water and hot cocoa to the center.

"The people here work hard," he said. "This is my way of showing how much I appreciate them."

We thank Erick and all veterans for their service. FGHC has been a proud supporter of veterans for more than 50 years.

Connect with us:

Website: FatherGenesHelp.org

Facebook: [@fathergeneshelpcenter](https://www.facebook.com/fathergeneshelpcenter)

Instagram: [@fathergeneshelp](https://www.instagram.com/fathergeneshelp)

Twitter: [@fathergenes](https://twitter.com/fathergenes)

Volunteer Spotlight: Dolores Capocci

In her eight years of volunteering at FGHC, Dolores Capocci has helped a lot of clients. But there's one client she's never forgotten. Dolores affectionately refers to her as "the lady with the spoons."

Several years ago, when FGHC distributed not only clothing but also household items, a Hispanic family came to the center. Dolores said they had lost everything in a fire. In addition, the mother broke her leg in the midst of the chaos.

Dolores gave the family dishes, pots and pans, utensils, towels, bedding, and more.

"They were in awe of how much I was able to give them," she said.

Before they left, the mother said something in Spanish. Her son (translating) said, "My mother wants to know if she can have a large spoon." Dolores showed her two serving spoons, one with slots and one without. She took the one without the slots. Dolores told her son she could have both.

"She kept trying to give me back the slotted spoon," Dolores said. "I told her 'it's okay, you can have both.' When her son told her, she started crying and hugged me."

Ever since then, whenever she's having a bad day, Dolores remembers the "lady with the spoons."

"I realize I don't have it so bad," she says.

Growing up in Milwaukee, Dolores attended St. Thomas Aquinas grade school. Fr. Gerald McAdams, the pastor at St. Thomas Aquinas, was good friends with FGHC founder, Fr. Gene Jakubek. Fr. Gene would visit the school often.



Dolores Capocci

"Me and my friend would run up to Fr. Gene whenever we'd see him with Fr. Gerald," Dolores said.

What she remembers most about Fr. Gene after all these years is his kindness.

"He had such a warm smile," she said.

Through the years Dolores supported FGHC by donating clothing but she didn't start volunteering until eight years ago, after seeing a notice in her church bulletin. She stopped by the center to donate clothing and asked one of the volunteers about volunteering. He took her to Deacon Don who asked her when she could start.

"I started volunteering the next day and I've been volunteering ever since," she said.

We are grateful for volunteers like Dolores who give so generously of their time and talent. If you're interested in volunteering with FGHC, contact Jessica Luebbering at (414) 258-4357, ext. 101, or director@fathergeneshelp.org.



We rely on your support to provide for those in need. The following are some of the ways that you can support our mission:

- Gifts of cash
- One-time or recurring (monthly) donations
- In-kind gifts, such as clothing, shoes, and accessories
- Employer matching programs
- Gifts of stock, mutual funds, or securities
- Deferred income gifts
- Bequests as part of a will

To learn more, contact Jessica Luebbering at director@fathergeneshelp.org or (414) 258-4357, ext. 101.

Critical Needs



- Winter coats
- Shoes and boots
- Children's clothing, size 3T-18
- New socks
- New underwear

How to Donate

Donations can be dropped off at: **Father Gene's Help Center** | 5919 W. National Ave., West Allis, WI 53214

New Hours

Monday-Thursday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. | First Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Please call the center at (414) 258-4357 with any questions regarding donations.