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Christmas Basket Fund meets goal

By Haley Jones hjones

@thelancasternews.com

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The Ward Faulkenberry Christmas Basket Fund met its intended goal of \$10,000 on Thursday, Dec. 22, after donor Jerry Hartley asked how much remained to meet the goal and gave the final amount needed.

The fund will continue to run through the end of next week, and donations can still be given to help those in need of a holiday meal.

Helping Other People Effectively (HOPE) in Lancaster has been busy this week packing bags to pass out to applicants just before the holiday.

HOPE Executive Director Grace Lewis said volunteers have been helping pack bags each day, and with the money raised, the organization has been able to pack and hand out the 300 bags it wanted to.

“We have clients coming in and receiving those bags,” Lewis said. “It’s been a good thing. It’s been like Christmas week at HOPE. A lot of food donations come in. A lot of local organizations like MUSC and Carolina Christian Academy have done several food drives for us so our pantries are stocking up. And then with the money we are raising from the Ward

Faulkenberry campaign, we're able to fill those 300 bags.”

Lewis said Khaleek Chapman, HOPE in Lancaster's director of development, went to an event earlier this week at the Arras Foundation for E&J Gallo winery in Fort Lawn, after some of the volunteers from Gallo helped stock one of HOPE's trailers. A Gallo volunteer told him they loved seeing that the food was coming in, and while they were there, they watched the food go back out again.

Hartley, with Jerry Hartley Funeral Home, said he wanted to give the remaining amount the campaign was aiming to raise, as he was friends with Ward Faulkenberry, who started the fund. Growing up, they played American Legion baseball together in high school.

“He was just a very, very close friend,” Hartley said. “He was the veterans advocate for years and, of course, his son and I go way back, too. But we live not too far apart. The relationship was always very, very close.”

Hartley said Faulkenberry's legacy should last forever, because “forever is a long time.”

Lewis said meeting the goal before Christmas Day “feels fantastic, because I am very goal-oriented and I love to meet goals. It just means that there's people out there caring, and they're caring about us and they're caring about the people we serve.”

This week's gifts to the Christmas Basket include: Douglas Presbyterian Church/Men's Fellowship, \$150; Dennis and Debra Helms, \$150; Ronald and Barbara Gibson, \$50; Gerald O. and Joan H. Flack, \$50; William G. Taylor in honor of Deb Carnes and Elaine Adkins, \$100; Richard J. and Kimberlyn M. Hyclak, \$250; Maxie and Edie Robinson, \$200; George and Ann Lee Garner, 100; Dr. and Mrs. Marvin E. Lymberis in memory of Frances Campbell, \$500; Stan D. and Virginia L. Vandersnick, \$200; Mary C. Thompson, \$100; Richard M. and Hilda W Spittle, \$150; Joyce Oswald, \$50; Duncan's

Auto Service, \$200; Women of the Church, First ARP, \$100; Reformation Lutheran Church, \$500; Marilyn H. Roddey, \$75; Mack and Totina S. Blackmon, \$50; Jerry Lynn Avant Jr., \$250; Billy Michael and Nancy Trexler Taylor, \$250; and Jerry Hartley in memory of Ward Faulkenberry, \$300.

Volunteers are still welcome to help pack bags with meals or donate to the meal fund. Those looking to help with the program can find more information on HOPE's website, www.hopeinlancaster.org, or by calling 803-286-4673.

Haley