

# NORTH COUNTY TIMES

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## What an area kid can do

Christine Vaughan has a flier pinned to the bulletin board in her office at Interfaith Community Services. It was attached to a bag of groceries donated to the food pantry.



**BRIGID  
BRETT**

“Hi. My name is Avery and I’m six years old. I am the granddaughter of Jean and John Ferber who live at the end of the

cul-de-sac. I would like to have you help me feed some of the people who are so hungry at this time. So many people need our help and the shelves are not very full so I’m thinking we can help fill them. If you could please put some non-perishable food in this grocery bag and leave it by your front door my Nana and I will come around to pick up the bags on the last Wednesday of each month and deliver all of your food to Interfaith. I will give you a new bag each time and pick one up from you. We will be helping so many people if we all work together. Think of what a difference this little cul-de-sac can make.”

Avery Leininger of Santa Luz and Jean Ferber of Rancho Bernardo have a long-standing tradition. Each Wednesday, Jean

picks Avery up from school and they spend the afternoon together at the Ferbers’ house.

“Avery is the kind of child who loves helping other people, so I had a feeling that this might be a project she’d enjoy,” Jean told me.

So they went around to about 15 neighbors and introduced Avery to the ones who didn’t know her already and handed out their fliers. Everyone said they wanted to participate. Last Wednesday, Avery and Jean went by their doors, and each neighbor had left at least one grocery bag filled with food.

Avery was delighted and Jean was surprised — her neighbors are mostly seniors and many live on limited budgets. They piled the bags into the car and delivered them to Interfaith Community Services in Escondido. Everyone says they’re on board for this month’s food drive.

Avery’s 4-year-old brother Jack will be joining the team, too, Jean said.

“My yard has so many fruit trees — grapefruit, oranges, apples and peaches — and Jack will be picking the fruit that we’ll take to Interfaith.”

There are a lot of hungry people in our communities. Many have never before experienced extreme financial stress and never dreamed they’d have to turn to a food pantry or social service agency for help.

“We’ve seen a 74 percent increase in requests for help from two-parent families,” said Vaughan of Interfaith. “They’re not used to dealing with social services and need help navigating the system, seeing what kind of housing they’re eligible for, understanding and getting connected to the services that are available to them.”

More than ever before, Interfaith needs the community to donate and volunteer so they can continue to assist those who, not too long ago, were in a position to donate and volunteer.

Jean e-mailed me a photo of Avery. The sun catches her hair at just the right angle, and she’s striking a tada! pose beside Jean’s open car trunk filled with grocery bags full of food. If there were a caption, it would read: Just look what a little cul-de-sac can do.

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