



# Advance

## Samaritas residents lend a hand to kids in need of school supplies

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By [Advance Newspapers](#)



Jack Vanderhoek, a resident at Samaritas Senior Living, takes part in an annual backpack-stuffing event on Aug. 8. The backpacks will go to foster children in Samaritas' care. (Provided by Emma Begeman | Samaritas)

Children receiving foster care services through Samaritas, a faith-based nonprofit that provides a range of social services, will go back to school this fall carrying backpacks that were packed full of school supplies by Samaritas Senior Living residents.

The organization held its annual backpack-stuffing event on Aug. 8.

"We've got notebooks, pencils, markers, erasers, scissors, pretty much everything you need to start back to school," said Abby Waldo, director of activities for the Lodge at Samaritas Senior Living. "When you add those items up it can be really expensive and then you think of families with multiple kids. That can be a lot of families. It can be a stressful time."

The backpacks and supplies were collected by residents, staff and community members as well as New Holland Brewery patrons. They will be made available to every child in Samaritas' care.

"Kids need a lot to feel successful," said Trina Kent, Resource Family Development Team Lead, Samaritas Foster Care. "Getting these backpacks is really important for them. It builds their confidence and makes them feel important. When their whole life is in chaos, getting a backpack filled with things is so important to them."

"I know for the families that support them it's really helpful," Kent said. "It's one less thing they have to worry about. If we can supply that backpack filled so it'll eliminate one stressful thing we love to do that."

Samaritas serves people of all ages and backgrounds including providing resettlement services for new Americans, adoption and foster care, at-home services, and residential communities for seniors and persons with disabilities through assisted living, skilled nursing and memory care.