

BREADCRUMBS

April 2013

The Newsletter of the Irving Park Community Food Pantry
Celebrating Twenty-Nine Years of Service to the Community

Pantry Receives Monthly Grant for 2013 from Food Depository

The Pantry has been selected by the Greater Chicago Food Depository to receive part of a grant from the City of Chicago's Department of Family & Support Services. The grant, for \$900 per month, will allow the Pantry to procure additional food for our clients from the GCFD's supplies.

This pilot program is designed to enhance our ability to purchase nutritional foods from GCFD to provide to our clients. It will help us buy staples such as eggs, peanut butter, jelly and cooking oils. The grant is issued in monthly installments as a credit to our account, to be used during that month.

The program, which began in February, will continue through the rest of 2013. The Pantry's only requirement is to collect some additional demographic information about the clients who receive food from the grant, much of which already is collected for our regular USDA allocation.

The Pantry was selected due to our quality of service, good management, our geographic location and the volume of people we are able to serve in our few operating hours. This speaks volumes about our volunteers and the great work they do to help our neighborhood!

We appreciate the efforts of Jenny Schuler at DFSS and Virginia Yniguez, government programs manager at GCFD, for creating this program and including the Pantry as a part of it.

The grant is especially helpful now, as food costs have risen significantly in the past year. Costs rose by 15% in 2012, including the price for food purchased from GCFD (from 7¢ to 8¢ per pound). Those small increases add up for the volume of food that we buy to feed our clients.



Catherine Moyers and Joyce Benninghouse, with helper Ryan B., prepare to give out Easter baskets during one of our March distributions.

Easter Bunny Visits 256 Kids

Thank you to everyone who helped to make our Easter basket distribution to clients a success during March. The Pantry gave out baskets to 256 children of our clients.

Special thanks to the Mom's Group of Park Community Church's Forest Glen Campus, as well as Irving Park United Methodist Church and Irving Park Lutheran Church, for their support. Thanks also to Dollar Tree for providing a pallet of toys for the baskets. Special thanks to Vicci Rodgers and Lee Stein for coordinating the basket distribution.

New Board Members Sign Up

The Pantry welcomes five new members to its board: Joyce Benninghouse, Marsha Niazmand, Rev. Katherine Paisley (of the Irving Park United Methodist Church), Sandra Schwarzbeck and Sara Yoest. If you have an interest in serving on the Pantry's board, please contact Executive Director John Psiharis at info@irvingparkfoodpantry.org.



Belma, John and Lisa accept OIPA's April donation

Donations Stock Pantry Shelves

Thanks to the Old Irving Parking Association (OIPA) for making a \$500 donation to the Pantry to give us a boost during April, when we were participating in the Alan Shawn Feinstein Foundation Challenge. Money raised during March and April counted toward our total, which helped us gain more of the \$1 million the Foundation is giving away nationwide to food pantries based on their contributions during these two months.

Thanks to Curves on Irving Park (3701 W. Irving Park Rd.) and Liberty Tax Service (4900 W. Irving Park Rd.) for conducting food drives to benefit the Pantry during March.

Roundy's Donates Food, Money

Thank you to the Roundy's Foundation, the charitable arm of Roundy's Supermarkets, owners of the Mariano's Fresh Markets chain, for including the Pantry in its annual donations to food pantries. The group donated \$500 and a pallet of 2,595 pounds of food. This is the second year the Pantry has been included as the program expands



Rick Leidl loads the Roundy's pallet into the Pantry truck at Mariano's at 5353 N. Elston Ave.

Farewell to Pantry's Jay Skilton

The Pantry lost one of its long-time volunteers this month when Jay Skilton moved back to his hometown in Pennsylvania. Jay joined the Pantry's volunteer force in the summer of 2008 and joined the Board of Directors in fall 2009. He handles the distribution to clients each week, serving as the person they interact with as they pick up their food.

Jay was born and raised near Philadelphia, the youngest of four children. He came to the Midwest to attend Lake Forest College and "fell in love with Chicago," he says.

After college, he returned to Pennsylvania and worked for many years for *TV Guide*. When it scaled back in the 1980s, he cut his ties and moved back to Chicago. Now, he is returning to his roots.



Jay started two successive textbook companies and retired in 2007 after the sale of the second to RR Donnelley. His interests include reading, movies, gardening, fitness, cooking, nutrition, tennis, travel, photography and art. A long-time resident of Old Irving Park, Jay became aware of the Pantry through its Christmas distribution. "I believe there is a very real need for help right here in our own

community. There is something so visceral about hunger. It is so basic, so tangible, so easy to feel, yet it is so wrong in a society as affluent as ours. I get a very rewarding sensation seeing someone very young or very old smile because of the simple act of giving to them food they so desperately need."

We will miss his contributions each week and to the board and wish him the best!

Read All The FAQs!

Please read the two-page Q&A form available at the welcome desk and keep one handy. It answers all the basic questions we get asked, in three languages in consistent formats among them.

It'll help you explain rules and let client see them spelled out. So take a look!