

BREADCRUMBS

April 2014

The Newsletter of the Irving Park Community Food Pantry
Celebrating Thirty Years of Service to the Community



Volunteers at the Irving Park United Methodist Church put together Easter baskets for the Pantry's clients.

Help the Pantry's Easter Program

The Pantry's distribution of Easter baskets to its clients' children continues through April 16th (Easter is April 20th). We are collecting goodies (candy, snacks, small toys, and especially stuffed animals) for children from infant to 8 years old.

Please drop off any donations at the Irving Park United Methodist Church (corner of Grace and Keeler at the Grace Street entrance during church business hours). Financial donations are used to purchase fill-in supplies to complement donations later in the month. This can be done by mail or through PayPal at the Pantry's website (www.irvingparkfoodpantry.org). Questions can be sent to Vicci Rodgers at viccirodgers@gmail.com.



Hunger Walk Set for June 21st

Save the date! The Hunger Walk, sponsored by the Greater Chicago Food Depository, will be held June 21st at Soldier Field.

The Walk is our biggest fund-raiser of the year, and many of our volunteers and supporters participate. It's a fun event that's not strenuous and helps fund the Pantry all year round.

Our Walk website will be opening by mid-April, once the Depository's site is set up. You'll be hearing more about the Walk from us as the event nears, we promise.



Walkers in the Hunger Walk come from all over Chicago to show their support for area food pantries.

Windy City Second Hand Offers Aid

Windy City Second Hand (3421 N. Central Ave.) has begun sponsoring the Pantry, providing us with monthly vouchers to help our clients buy clothing and other necessities.

Their help is especially gratifying with the recent closing of the resale shop at St. Viator, which previously helped our clients with these needs.

The Pantry is unable to accept donations of clothing, as we have no storage space.

Thanks to Our Supporters

Thank you to the following people for their support of the Pantry in different ways:

- Linda and Jodi Whitlock of Corporate Events Interactive for coordinating a food-box packaging event. Their corporate client, an advertising and marketing company, invited newly hired recruits to prepare and donate 100 shelf-stable lunch boxes, which we distributed to clients.

- Liberty Tax Service at Six Corners, which once again held a food and donation collection program for the Pantry in March. Clients were asked to make a donation to the Pantry in exchange for discounted tax-preparation services. The program brought in \$1,345!

- Volunteers from the Puerto Rican Cultural Center, who came to the Pantry during our distributions to talk with clients about their participation in the Affordable Care Act and to answer questions.

Feinstein Challenge Boosts Pantry Donations This Month

Donations to the Pantry this month will be counted toward the annual Feinstein Foundation Challenge, in which the group, led by Alan Shawn Feinstein, awards \$1 million to hunger-fighting agencies based on their donation levels.

Both food and monetary donations count toward the total. The Pantry often receives several hundred dollars from the Challenge based on its donations, and we appreciate your help in adding these extra funds to our totals.

Pantry Serves 1,400 in February

In February, the Pantry served 1,400 in 497 households, including 82 new clients in 35 households and 94 people in 34 households on Tuesday night.

We also provided pet food to 239 clients. We appreciate all of our volunteers who walked, drove and took the bus to open and work at the Pantry in brutal temperatures and deep snow throughout the month!



Volunteer Spotlight: Lee Stein

Everyone at the Pantry benefits from Lee's hard work as Volunteer Manager to keep us organized and ensure every spot is filled on Wednesday.

She was "volunteered" for the position when former manager Kate Roche announced she'd gotten a new job. "I told her that was unacceptable, she couldn't leave," Lee says. "She said she wanted me to replace her, and I said okay." Clearly she didn't know what she was getting into.

Lee was born in Old Greenwich, Conn., and grew up in Glen Ellyn. She attended the School of the Art Institute, where she got her BFA in photography in 1991. She also received her certification in massage at the Chicago School of Massage Therapy in 2000.

She first volunteered in October 2009, learning about the Pantry through the Irving Park Lutheran Church. "I was working for them part-time and I wanted to help the community in a more hands-on, tangible way so I could make more of a difference." She started as one of our first Web SNAP volunteers and also worked the closet.

"I love working with so many different people," she says. "There's a lot to organize, but working here helps me keep my perspective on life. Everyone is really dedicated, really committed to the mission. I've never seen anything like it. I feel like it's my second family here!"

Pantry's Annual Report Online

Read the Pantry's Annual Report, summarizing our activities during 2013 (complete with pictures!) at irvingparkfoodpantry.com/?p=1294.