

BREADCRUMBS

August 2012

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

Wine-Tasting On September 9th!

Join our neighbors and supporters at a Wine Tasting to benefit the Pantry! The event will be held from 3 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, September 9th at Mirabell Restaurant (3454 West Addison).

Tickets are \$40 per person, which includes wines to sample along with appetizers and music. A silent auction also will be held.

Check our website's blog and Facebook page for more information on how to obtain tickets. If you'd like to order tickets or help with this event, call us at 773-283-6296.



The last wine-tasting benefit, held in May 2011 at Las Tablas restaurant, was a popular event.



A portion of this year's Hunger Walk team prepares to step off on June 23rd.

Hunger Walk Breaks Record!

This year's Hunger Walk was a big success for the Pantry. Our efforts on its behalf, combined with those of all of our community walkers and donors, raised close to \$23,000!

The total was the highest we've ever raised, easily breaking last year's record total, which in turn had broken the record we set the year before.

"This is a great result for the Pantry," says John Psiharis. "I'm thrilled that we could raise so much and continue our trend of beating last year's total. Our volunteers deserve so much thanks for donating their time, effort and money."

Special thanks go to those who came out on June 23rd to walk the 5K (3 miles) along Chicago's lakefront and who raised money from their own friends through pledge sheets.

Your efforts will ensure we continue to fund all of our programs and boost our food purchases. These funds will help us to reach our goal of never having to turn away a client because we've run out of food.



Deb Mell
State Representative 40th District



Mell's July Drive Aids Pantry

40th District State Representative Deb Mell held a food drive in July for the Pantry that collected a barrel of food and boxes of personal-care items.

"While food drives are popular during the holiday season, food is needed throughout the year," she pointed out in her letter to constituents. We appreciate the support from her and all of the people who donated!

Pet Food Corner Still Growing

Nearly half of our clients receive pet food from the Pet Food Corner. Thanks to volunteers Marsha Niazmand and Stacy Powell Bennett for their work in organizing and running the service each week.



Thanks also to everyone who donates, especially to Matthew Maks and the staff at PetsSupplyPlus (7031 N. Lincoln Ave.) for their generous donations each week. More clients are requesting pet food all the time, so donations are always welcome.

Personal-Care Items Needed

The Pantry is in great need of personal-care items. Most in demand are shampoo (not conditioner), shower gel, shaving razors and cream/gel, body lotion, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, toilet paper and baby diapers (especially size #4).

GCFD, Walmart Aid SNAP

Our SNAP Outreach program received a new laptop and designated printer from the Greater Chicago Food Depository in August.

The money was provided through a Walmart Foundation grant designed to increase participation in the SNAP program.

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!"

New Website Address

Check out the new website at our old address: www.irvingparkfoodpantry.org. We had 1,526 visits in July! Thanks to Volunteer Manager Lee Stein for keeping it current!