

# BREADCRUMBS

December 2013

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

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## Holiday Donations Accepted Through December 15<sup>th</sup>

The Irving Park Community Food Pantry can accept donations of toys and food for its Holiday Celebration for clients through December 8<sup>th</sup>. The event, on December 18<sup>th</sup>, provides our clients with the makings of a holiday dinner. We also provide them with an opportunity to select a gift for each of their children (12 years and younger).

To provide these special provisions, we are especially in need of juice, stuffing, cranberry sauce, canned yams and vegetables, instant potatoes, cake mixes, Jell-O and pumpkin-pie filling and gravy.

We typically need toys for about 400 children of all ages. For some, it will be the only gift they receive. We also want to collect enough books to allow each teen-aged child to also have a book to read.



*Volunteers prepare for the 2012 Holiday distribution, when all clients receive a special holiday dinner for their families.*

Unwrapped new toy, book and food donations can be brought to the Pantry at the Irving Park United Methodist Church (3801 N. Keeler Ave.) from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Tuesday through Thursday, Sunday morning, and other times the church is



*Volunteers Missy Baumgarten and Magda Agudo helped prepare the Toy Room in 2012.*

running programs. Donations can be left at the base of the stairs inside the Grace Street entrance. To check if the church is open for leaving a donation, call 773/283-6262.

For information or to volunteer to help with the toy distribution, contact Vicci Rodgers at [viccirodgers@gmail.com](mailto:viccirodgers@gmail.com) or 773-316-9754.

## Tuesday Nite Clients Growing

The Pantry's numbers on the second Tuesday night of every month are growing quickly. In November, we were visited by clients in 41 households with 122 people. That's a significant increase from our numbers in the past two months as our program got started.

Please help spread the word that the Pantry is open to new and existing clients to receive their monthly distribution of food on these Tuesday nights: December 10<sup>th</sup>, January 14<sup>th</sup>, February 11<sup>th</sup>, March 11<sup>th</sup>, April 8<sup>th</sup>, May 13<sup>th</sup> and June 10<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you for helping us better serve our clients!

## Food Rescue Program Adds Perishables to Weekly Distribution

After working out details with the Greater Chicago Food Depository to ensure deliveries could be made smoothly on Wednesday mornings, the Pantry has enrolled in GCFD's new Food Rescue program, in which they deliver perishable food to us in a small window just before we open to our clients.

The deliveries consist of frozen meat, produce, pastries and other foods that have to go out immediately that week.

The program has worked well since it began in November, allowing us to greatly enhance our weekly offerings.



*Operations Manager Jim Byrne looks over the boxes of perishable food delivered to the Pantry by the Greater Chicago Food Depository as part of its Food Rescue program that began in November.*

We also have had enough available to pass along some to the pantry at St. John's Lutheran Church (4939 W. Montrose Ave.), the dinner program at St. Viator (4140 W. Addison St.) and Hands to Help at St. John's Episcopal Church (3857 N. Kostner). Thanks to Operations Manager Jim Byrne and our volunteers who unload and distribute the food.

## Banner Promotes Pantry

A banner has been installed on the grass in front of our home at the Irving Park United Methodist Church, funded by a portion of a Kraft Feeding Possibilities grant. It includes pantry details and has room for a short message.

We are using it now to promote our night hours on the second Tuesday of the month. Our next Tuesday night is December 10<sup>th</sup>.



*Sarah Marton (left), who organized a coat drive at Disney II Elementary Magnet School, helped Disney parent Renee Linnemeyer distribute the coats to the Pantry's clients in October.*

## Coat Drive Aids 260 Clients

The Pantry's October coat distribution helped a large number of clients receive warm coats for the coming winter.

A big swell of donations in the last week helped expand our inventory, allowing us to stay open one more week in November to give more clients a chance to receive a warm coat. In all, we gave out 260 coats, and they were very well received.

Special thanks to the parents and students at Disney II Elementary Magnet School for organizing a coat drive and participating in the distribution. Thanks to Sarah Marton for coordinating the Disney program and to her, husband Mike and Renee Linnemeyer for helping clients during operating hours.

## Pantry Activities Spread the Word

The Pantry took part in the Jazz at Jewel program November 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Jewel at Six Corners. We appreciate being invited to participate to help explain our programs to neighbors.

During November, representatives from Thresholds visited the Pantry to talk with clients and answer questions about the Affordable Care Act.

## 1,900 Clients Served in October

In October, the Pantry served 1,922 people in 552 households, including 67 new households with 175 people.

Our volunteers also helped 12 households with 20 people apply for benefits through our Web SNAP program and gave pet food to 336 households.