

BREADCRUMBS

February 2015

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

Holiday Program Aids 1,166

The Irving Park Community Food Pantry's December 17th Holiday Distribution provided the makings for a holiday meal to 1,166 of our neighbors in 356 households. In addition, about 270 children up to 12 years of age received a toy, a stocking stuffer and mittens, scarves and caps. We also gave a book to many of the children, although there weren't enough for everyone.



Volunteers Craig O'Connor and Rafal Glaz break down boxes as other volunteers prepare food bags during the Pantry's holiday distribution in December.

Thank you to all who hosted food and toy drives: Community Savings Bank, Faith United Church in Christ, John Garrido, Gray Elementary School, Irving Park Baptist Church, Irving Park Lutheran Church, Irving Park United Methodist Church, Josi's Frozen Yogurt Café, Kid Watch, Liberty Tax Service, Cade and Avery Linnemeyer, Pert Cleaners, Portage Park Helping Hands, St. John's Episcopal Church, St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church, the Brownie and Juniors Girl Scout troop at St. Viator, St. Viator Mistletoe Market, St. Viator Student Council, Spex Optical, Starbucks and Windy City Community Church.

Thanks also to Barb Cohn, Debbie Fries, Vicci Rodgers Keutzer and Sara Yoest for leading a successful toy collection and distribution. Thanks also to Jim Byrne, Nick Calderone, Rick Lietl, Pat



Volunteers ready the Toy Room so clients can select gifts for their children during the holiday distribution.

Eisenhart, Leslie Washington, Craig O'Connor and many others for their help in collecting and distributing the groceries and toys. We also appreciate Irving Park Lutheran Church for storing our toy collection until the distribution.

We want to thank the volunteers from the Community Animal Rescue Effort (CARE), who obtained donations for our clients' pets and ensured that each pet received a special holiday toy and treat in addition to pet food and supplies.



Volunteer Nick Calderone sets up a food station.

Finally, thank you, State Representative Jaime Andrade Jr. and Alderman John Arena, for coming to help make up food bags for larger families throughout the morning. We appreciate everyone's efforts to make our program a great success!

Disney II Makes Donations

Thank you to the second-grade students at Disney II Elementary Magnet School, who held a crafts fair in December, at which they sold hand-made scarves, pillows, key chains and other gift items. The students raised \$983.01 (including tips), which they presented to the Pantry in January.

Thanks also to Disney's Student Council, which ran a food drive for the Pantry in December and collected 1,479 food items to donate! We appreciate the students' efforts to help the Pantry.



Second-grade teachers Katie Fielden (left) and Elyse D'Andrea (right), along with their students at Disney II Elementary Magnet School, present Pantry Office Manager Sandra Schwarzbeck and Executive Director John Psiharis from the proceeds from their handicrafts.



Disney II Student Council members, along with Advisor Linda Wang (center) and first-grade teacher Katie Rollings, show off some of the donations they collected during their recent food drive.

IPUMC Needs Help with Wall

The Irving Park United Methodist Church, the Pantry's home, is planning to repair its spectacular stained-glass window installed during the mid-1960s. To donate to the repair fund, call 773/283-6262 or visit www.irvingparkumc.com and click on "Capital Campaign" to learn more about the wall's history, the work that will be done and progress toward meeting the goal.



Client Resources Coordinator Julie Kult shows off one of her gifts during her going-away party at the Pantry. We are looking for a qualified applicant to replace her.

Resource Coordinator Sought

The Pantry seeks qualified applicants for the part-time position of Client Resources Coordinator to help clients gain assistance for financial, medical, housing, employment or mental-health needs.

Duties include working with clients, developing informational handouts and overseeing on-site Pantry services such as WebSNAP and ACA.

The position requires a Bachelor's degree in a Social Service field and/or direct service experience in a social service environment preferred. Bilingual English/Spanish language skills are required.

Please send applications to the Pantry c/o Executive Director John Psiharis, 3801 N. Keeler Ave., Chicago 60641.

Pantry Aids 1,223 in December

In December, the Pantry served 1,223 people in 472 households during the two weeks we were open for regular food distributions. This included 87 people in 35 new households, as well as 219 people in 71 households who took advantage of our Tuesday night hours on December 9. Our volunteers also helped two families apply for SNAP benefits.

We supplied pet food to 350 households through our Pet Food Corner. Thank you to the Community Animal Rescue Effort (CARE) for their partnership in this program.

Thank you to everyone who made donations of their time, money, food and toys during the holiday season to support our regular and special programs. We very much appreciate your support, and we will try very hard to continue to earn it as we work to be Neighbors Helping Neighbors!