

BREADCRUMBS

December 2015

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

Pantry's Holiday Distribution on December 16th Need Donations

The Irving Park Community Food Pantry has begun building up stores and gathering donations for its holiday distributions on December 16th. We are asking for contributions of funds, food and fun (i.e., books and toys) to help make the season brighter for those in our community who can use a hand during the holiday season.

On December 16th, the Pantry will be closed to regular distributions so we can provide all qualified clients with a special holiday distribution at which they receive the makings for a full holiday dinner for their family. We also allow clients to select a gift for each of their children from a special toy room, along with a book and small stocking toys.



Volunteers set up the Pantry's toy room to clients can select a toy for their children (up to 12 years old) during the Pantry's 2014 distribution.

fruit and nuts, dry soup mixes, energy bars and juice (100% fruit juice). We always are in need of toiletries and white crew socks.

We typically give a toy and a book to our clients for each of their children, about 400 in all (ages infant to 12). For some, it will be the only gift they receive. Your donations ensure clients' children can talk about their special presents with their friends who receive so much more. We especially need gifts for older children (age 10 to 12), especially boys, as we receive far fewer for that age group.

Soccer and basketballs always are popular with this group. For books, the older boys often enjoy biographies, sports and other nonfiction books.

Unwrapped new toys and food donations can be brought to the Pantry at the Irving Park United Methodist Church (3801 N. Keeler Ave.) during office hours (please call 773/283-6262 to check on times, as they vary). Donations can be left at the base of the stairs inside the Grace Street entrance.

Volunteers are needed to collect toys, organize the toy room, and help with the toy distribution on December 16. For information or to volunteer, contact Sara Yoenst at sara.yoenst74@gmail.com. Thank you for your support!



Volunteer Nick Calderone sets up one of the family stations for the holiday distribution in 2014.

For this special distribution, we are especially in need of juice, stuffing, cranberry sauce, canned yams and vegetables, instant potatoes, cake mixes, Jell-O and pumpkin-pie filling.

For traditional food drives, we also are in need of dry goods, such as peanut butter, macaroni & cheese, hamburger helper-type meals (such as rice-a-roni and pasta-roni), whole-grain crackers, dried



The Pantry's wine-tasting benefit at Abbey Pub attracted a crowd of supporters.

Wine-Tasting Benefit a Success

Thank you to everyone who attended, supported or donated to the Pantry's 7th annual Wine & Beer Tasting & Silent Auction, which was held Sunday, October 25th at the Abbey Pub. We appreciate their gracious hosting of the event and all their support in planning and putting it on. Thank you to all the committee members who helped make it a success: Joyce Benninghouse, Nora Byrne, Mike Mette, Marsha Niazmand, Craig Shutt, Lee Stein and Belma Torres.

Thank you to Peter Litton for once again arranging the wine selections and to H2Vino for donating a number of wines from around the world. Thank you as well to all the craft breweries who donated their beverages: Finch's Beer Co., Lake Effect Brewing, Metropolitan Brewing and Revolution Brewing, each of which donated two beer brands.



Attendees at the wine-tasting sample some of the wine from around the world that were provided.

Thank you to Sandra Schwarzbeck and Elvia Esparza for coordinating the silent auction. Special thanks to all who donated silent auction prizes! They included: Missy Baumgarten, Nora Byrne, Bloom Yoga Studio, Bridgeport Family Dental Center, Community Tavern, Dovetail Studios, Grace Street Inn, Laura Finn, Leslie Frazier, Koval

Distillery, Lagunitas Brewing Co., Bridget Larsen, Little Helpers, Peter Litton, Moonlight Design, Nail Studio, Mimi Nguyen, Original Alps Restaurant, The Portage Restaurant, Reckless Records, Judi Rosenthal, Carol Schultz and Sara Yoest.

Thanks also to Volunteer Manager Lee Stein for her beautiful graphic designs on our invitation and other materials and to volunteer Rafal Glaz, owner of SaveMax Depot, for donating the printing of the invitations.



Attendees had the opportunity to sample two different beer brands from several local craft brewers.

Use Amazon Smile to Aid Pantry

Please remember and sign up for and use the Amazon Smile feature at Amazon when you shop for the holidays at that site. If you use that bookmark (which doesn't change how you access the site) and designate the Pantry as the recipient, we will receive 0.5% of the price of all purchases made all year long. We have already received several checks since signing up earlier this year, so it does pay off!

Pantry Serves 1,593 in October

In October, the Pantry served 1,593 people in 547 households, including 92 new people in 39 households. Our volunteers assisted 11 households with 16 people to apply online for SNAP benefits. We also provided pet food (for dogs, cats, birds and hamsters) to 261 households through our Pet Food Corner. Thank you to the Community Animal Rescue Effort (CARE) for their partnership and to the CARE and IPCFP volunteers who coordinate and take part in this valuable program. We are one of the only pantries to provide clients with pet food.

Thank you to everyone for your continued support of our regular distributions and our special programs. With your help, we will continue to live up to our slogan of being "Neighbors Helping Neighbors."