

Neighbors Helping Neighbors ENews Brief

17 February 2024

This week, Hot Meals served 123 meals. The pantry served 348 people groceries.

IT'S NOT OVER YET

Our numbers at the pantry shot up again this weekend. Given the lower numbers at the pantry last week, I wondered if we might be moving back into the SNAP cycle, wherein fewer people come on the weeks they receive SNAP benefits. But the continued high rate of demand countermands that thought and reinforces the current knowledge that food insecurity continues to rise in Oregon and our community.

An unfortunate and related trend shared by OFB is that our food supplies are down and are not expected to increase any time soon. When Elana and I shop for food, we see much less variety, less food overall and the ongoing dearth of food we once took for granted, e.g., eggs, meat, beans, milk, etc. Each week, we order as much canned protein as possible knowing that we are dangerously close to not having enough fresh protein for our neighbors.

Stand Strong Everyone

The hard times are not behind us. But neither is our commitment to get as much food to our neighbors as possible. We will continue to order as much as possible from OFB and to search for new food sources. And we will continue to move, pack and serve that food to our neighbors, because every can, every apple and every smile brings a ray of light to their lives.

ANOTHER STORY OF JOY & COLLABORATION

This weekend, it was bitterly cold. When I saw our neighbor, she was shivering in her rider chair, wearing a light fall jacket. So, I ran down to the Clothing Closet and found a beautiful, wool ankle-length coat. She tried it on, and it fit perfectly! For all who have had the opportunity to be part of such a precious moment, you know the profound joy it gives us all. It was incredible!

There is a story behind this joyous moment, a story of community and collaboration. It started one day when someone thought to donate this coat to the Clothing Closet. For those of you who don't know, the Clothing Closet accepts donations specifically meant to share with our neighbors, free of cost.

They brought the coat to church where our Clothing Closet team set to action. Linda, Lindsay and Denise sort through, wash and organize the clothing. Then, they pack them in boxes for us to share on the weekend.

On Saturday, the other part of this cross-disciplinary, cross-organizational team distributes the clothes. Our nursing students collect the boxes, bring them out to the Cultivate Initiatives tent and distribute them to our neighbors. The pantry volunteers join the nursing staff, running down to the Clothing Closet to find specific clothes to meet particular needs. At the end of the day, the nursing students give Cultivate Initiatives some clothes and bring the rest back to the Clothing Closet.



Permission was given to share this picture. In general, please do not take pictures of our neighbors.

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This story is vitally important as it demonstrates the collaborative way in which we work. Each person contributes their gifts and then people work together to combine those gifts into a process that spans from donation to happy neighbors. It is a tapestry, interwoven with intentionality around collaboration. It is entirely amazing and precious and what I believe community is all about.

Remember this story as you go forth with these vital services. Ask who else is involved in the work you are doing. Find out how you can support them. Figure out how you can work together to make the process work better for everyone. And then, bask in the joy of together bringing light into someone's life.

CONCORDIA COLLEGE NURSES

Each quarter, Concordia College Nursing Program sends a cohort of students with their Preceptor to volunteer at All Saints. They have become a vital and integrated part of our services. Here's how... When a new cohort arrives, I give them an orientation to our services and how we collaborate to provide services for our neighbors. I shared above about their vital role in distributing clothing. They provide wound care and basic medical care to our neighbors. And, they are a formal part of our Emergency Response Team. What's that you wonder...

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) is comprised of the Outreach Coordinator, the Hygiene & Harm Reduction Team Lead, Concordia College and Cultivate Initiatives. It is supported by the team leads and Maître Ds on duty that day. The ERT implements the Outreach Program Emergency Response Plan. The ERT collaborates to support individuals through medical and mental health crises. Each plays a role specific to their skills and collaborates closely with the others. Together, we have successfully dealt with various crises, all while continuing our services, uninterrupted.

The Concordia College Preceptor is now talking with our Hygiene & Harm Reduction team lead (a Nurse Practitioner with expertise in mental health and addiction) to develop First Aid training for our volunteers which, by-the-way, we couldn't otherwise afford.

All this the nurses do in addition to the support they provide to Cultivate Initiatives. They are a vital and integrated part of our program. I can't thank them enough. Maybe you all can help me.

TRANSITIONS

I announced in the last Enews Brief that I am resigning, effective February 29, due to an irreconcilable wage issue. Andria and I have been working to facilitate the transition. The parish will soon let you know its plans moving forward. I am excited about all we have accomplished this last 20 months. The Year End Review and the Woodstock Pantry video share some of our work. Read and celebrate!

[Fighting Hunger & Loneliness Through Community: The Woodstock Pantry Story 2023 Year-End-Review & 2024 At-A-Glance Outreach Program](#)

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I am so proud of our work together, of the community we have built with each other and our neighbors, and of the inspiring commitment of all to the wellbeing of our community. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for the time we have shared together. It has been, for me, a mountaintop experience that I will treasure for the rest of my days. I will be there next weekend and look forward to sharing my last weekend with you all.

VOLUNTEER SIGN-UPS

Woodstock Pantry Volunteers sign up each week for the shifts they want to work.

NOTE: We are very short on volunteers next week! Please sign up to help out!!!

[WP SIGN UP SHEET FEBRUARY](#)

Hot Meals uses Saturday Teams. Contact [Kristen](#).

Clothing Closet and **Hygiene & Harm Reduction** Contact Kristen.

If you are interested in trying out a program, contact Kristen.

2024 GOALS

ORIENTATION

Please complete your annual orientation prior to your next shift. Thanks!

Woodstock Pantry Volunteers - [Woodstock Pantry Volunteer Orientation Log 2024](#)

Hot Meals Volunteers - Please check with your Team Lead [Hot Meals Volunteer Orientation Log 2024](#)

THE WOODSTOCK PANTRY FUNDRAISER & FRIENDRAISER

The building now has walls and doorways! Soon, it will have a roof.

Thanks so very much to everyone who has contributed!

We still have a way to go. Please help us close the gap! You can:

1. contribute on our gofundme.com page, or with this QR code
2. share this request with your colleagues, friends and family as well as community organizations and businesses (add to your social media, send emails, make calls).



THANK YOU ALL FOR EVERYTHING YOU DO!

And remember...

It Takes a Community, And We Are It!