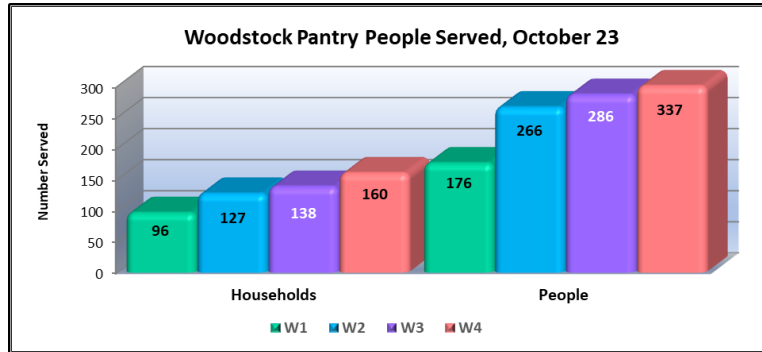


# Woodstock Pantry ENews Brief

29 October 2023

## DEMAND CONTINUES TO SURGE

Each week this month, more people came to the pantry. We broke last week's record, which broke the previous week's record... I don't know what is causing this particular surge, but I do know it's one of a succession of surges that we witnessed this last year. The steady increase in demand impacts our entire operation.



**A Bit of History** The pantry was born as a response to the pandemic. It, quite literally, was a 'pop-up' operation, complete with a temporary storage container and a community dedicated to fighting food insecurity in our area. Our community includes all of you, All Saints and businesses/organizations in our area. All Saints covers the pantry budget, which includes a small stipend for a part-time Outreach Coordinator and overhead costs for building use. We rely on the rest of our community for all else.

**Bags** In the last months, we increased the number of dry and produce bags we make from 125 to 140 and next week, to 150. Additionally, we serve 150 Options bags and 20 Ready-to-Eat bags. Not surprisingly, we experienced a bag shortage.



So, we put out a call to our community. [The response has been nothing less than phenomenal!](#) The picture to the right shows all the bags donated just this weekend. The picture to the left shows our current cache of bags. My goal is that people will make it a weekly practice to bring bags. Back to our story...

**Food** All of the food we serve is donated. As demand increases, we order more food from OFB and seek additional food sources. Each week, all our food must be moved, stored, packed and distributed. We move an average of 5,000 lbs. each week, three times actually...off the truck, into the bags and out to our neighbors.

**Volunteers** Volunteers on every shift are doing more work. And more volunteers are required to cover every shift. So recently, I increased the number/shift on the sign-up sheet.

[We must fill every shift](#) to get the work done, to avoid overburdening volunteers who are donating their precious time to feed our neighbors, and to ensure we all can benefit from being part of this wonderful community.



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[Now this is where I need your help.](#) When people sign up, but don't come, it puts enormous pressure on the volunteers doing the work. What could have been a joyous expression of community becomes a stress-filled and exhausting chore.

Life happens. There will be times when your best-laid plans are foiled, and you can't make a shift. [What our community in those times is for you to take your name off the list and let me know as soon as possible.](#) That allows us to get other people signed up for the shift. Thank you...for all that you do...for your precious time...for everything!

### HOLIDAY PLANNING

We will host our second **Community Share** on November 25 to provide food, clothing and hygiene items to our unhoused neighbors. Cultivate Initiatives and Reed College are joining us! We have enough volunteers for the 25<sup>th</sup>.

[We also need volunteers for Friday, 24, 9-11, to fill 50-75 Ready-to-Eat bags. Please sign up if you can help!](#)

### PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL STRIKE

[Oregon Public Broadcasting](#) Members of the Portland Association of Teachers last week voted overwhelmingly in favor of a strike should contract negotiations in Oregon's largest school district fail to yield an agreement soon. The [union gave notice](#) to Portland Public Schools on Thursday, Oct. 19 that they would begin striking on Nov. 1.

[OFB is notifying families that they can get food from Woodstock Pantry.](#)

We are being asked to step up to help families in our community. We are all about Neighbors Helping Neighbors, so let's respond to the best of our ability. Thank you in advance for helping, once again!!!

### SIGN UP FOR NOVEMBER SHIFTS

Remember to sign up for the weekend by Thursday so we can plan. Also, if you can't come, please take your name off the sign-up sheet and contact me right away! Otherwise, people think the shift is full and don't sign up. Thanks!

### [WP SIGN UP SHEET NOVEMBER](#)

[I've closed the October sign up sheet. Please use our new \[signup sheet!\]\(#\)](#)

**Celebrate...**

**It Takes a Community, And We Are It!**