

# Wakefield Food Pantry, Annual Report – October, 2019

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*Located at 1500 Wakefield Road, Wakefield, NH 03872*

*Our vision: hunger-free communities*

## **Overview**

We are distributing food to approximately 65-75 families per week from Wakefield, Brookfield, Milton, Newfield and Effingham.

When comparing numbers from 2019 to 2018 it should be noted that last year there was one extra day of distribution compared to this year.

Comparing our numbers for the year thru September 2019 to the same time frame last year shows a decrease in the number of individuals served by -6.8%. The largest decrease (375 individuals or -16.7%) came from the age group of under 18 years of age. It should be noted also for the same time frame in 2019 we had 208 new individuals come to the pantry. They represented 3.5% of our total distributions.

Our food costs (including toiletries) were down 7.8% compared to last year. Some of reduction may be due to late invoices.

## **Board Membership**

At the Annual Meeting in October, 2019 the following people were elected/reelected to the Board: Janet Miller, Janet Bye, Marilou MacLean, Deb Wilson and Aaron Dame.

## **Food Sources**

The vast majority of the food distributed from our pantry continues to come from the New Hampshire Food Bank located in Manchester. We are collaborating with the Hannaford Supermarket in Ossipee to receive food donations twice a week which include meat, bakery, dairy, and produce. In 2019 we received one to two tons of food monthly, January through September, from this very important source. In addition we receive deliveries from USDA 8 times so far this year; the most recent delivery was over 100 cases of food. These three sources are very important in helping us keep costs down and our food supplies adequate. As a three-day emergency food pantry, we provide nine meals to each individual once a week at a cost of 43 cents per meal. Food is purchased from Hannaford and Lovell Lake Food Center as necessary to keep up the stocks.

Other sources are also very important to us, notably the area churches, McKenzie's Farm, area farmers, the Boy Scouts, schools, post office and community members who drop off food either once a year in a major drive or all year long on a mostly weekly basis.

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In 2018, we served families 193 over the two holiday periods with boxes of food containing frozen turkeys, hams, fresh produce and frozen pies.

### **Organic Garden**

Lead by organic gardener, Frank Frazier, our garden had a banner year providing recipients with healthy greens, tomatoes, green beans, cabbage, cucumbers, squash, rhubarb and the raspberries. With the help of Liberty Mutual employees volunteers, we now have a expanded composting system.

### **Screening Recipients**

Starting In 2013 and each year since, we implemented a rigorous process of vetting our recipients to be sure of their ongoing eligibility for the pantry food using the USDA and the Food Bank criteria. The good news is that, with only a few exceptions, the reviewed recipients were qualified to receive services. This screening is done annually in March and April. The Registrars are now well versed in doing the necessary follow up. We have also, on occasion, checked our database with Wolfeboro's pantry to assure that no one had used the pantry in both locations on the same day.

Our pantry supports about 600 individuals in five towns at various levels during the past year.

### **Building/Equipment**

The building is a huge improvement over our former location. The volunteers are able to distribute food rapidly to 65-75 families per week in the same five hours that we have been operating over the last thirteen years.

We have a service agreement with Laconia Refrigeration to do repairs and preventative maintenance twice a year on all of our refrigeration units as well as our boiler.

The Generator Connection still provides our maintenance on our back-up generator.

### **Volunteers**

The pantry has more than 75 volunteers from the area communities. It is an active network of dedicated community members who volunteer for kitchen prep duties, food distribution, home deliveries, cleaning, registration, food pickup and delivery, trash removal, grounds keeping and gardening. Several volunteers are also pantry recipients.

The pantry delivers food to approximately eight home-bound recipients each week.

In 2018, volunteers gave a total of 4,910 hours and drove 26,460 miles to serve the community.

This will be the seventh year of receiving a week-long volunteer effort by Liberty Mutual Insurance employees. For one week in May we have five volunteers for four days to help us

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with annual spring work. These volunteers wash windows, paint the main room, deep clean the coolers, clean up the exterior landscaping and help get the garden ready for the season.

### Social Media

We have increased our presence on social media with a dedicated Facebook page. Also in 2018 thanks to MoxDog Media we have a new webpage that is current and informative to potential recipients and donors. The website is [wakefieldnhfoodpantry.org](http://wakefieldnhfoodpantry.org).

### Children's Programs

The Food Pantry is currently supporting the following:

- **Food in Time (FIT)** is a feeding program to benefit those children who have been nourished through the school breakfast and lunch programs during the school year. In January 2018 the Board decided to expand the FIT program to include the February, April and December holidays, in addition to the summer break.
- The pantry serves these children by providing emergency food to their family using Lovell Lake gift cards. This program costs the pantry approximately \$10,000 a year and is funded through a grant. Each break we have 35-45 children receiving the extra help. We have received extremely positive feedback from the families who participate in this program.
- **Effingham Elementary School** This is the fourth year of supporting the food needs of this school. The pantry provides bags of food for 6-10 children each week, delivered to the school for weekend supplementary food for the most needy of their children. (Some of whom live in the local motel with limited kitchen equipment). The cost of this program is estimated to be \$2000 annually and is funded through a grant.
- **The Books Program** We have established and maintained book shelves at the pantry from book donations from the community. We invite children to take books home and to establish their own personal home libraries. We use grant money from the Alden Young Trust to purchase approximately \$500 worth of new books for the annual Christmas Santa Program. We have a volunteer overseeing this effort and she has energetically improved and increased the selection and added a children's table and chair set.
- **PACS** (Profile Advancing Children's Success) This is a program developed by the Profile Bank in partnership with the pantry to purchase and equip back packs with all the school supplies that would be needed for a child specific the age and grade. It is the FIT children and the needy Effingham children who receive these backpacks and they are

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distributed by the food pantry on the last day of FIT card distribution before school begins.

- **WD-30** (Wipes and Diapers – 30 pack): For the second year, the pantry started a program to distribute wipes and diapers (one package per week) to families with eligible children. The annual cost of this program is approximately \$2000. The funding comes from a grant.

### Fundraising Done by the Pantry

Our major/regular fundraising endeavor helps to increase the awareness of the WFP and meet food costs.

- **ARFF Walk** (Animals Raising Funds for Food) Held on September 1 this event was planned and executed in partnership with St. John's Episcopal Church and the Lakes Region Humane Society. Pets and their owners (all dogs this year) walked from Turntable Park to the Poor People's Pub and back and raised over \$3000 in sponsorships. The proceeds were split between the Pantry and the Humane Society.
- In 2018 we had our first "Annual Appeal" drive sponsored by Bye Insurance; which raised over \$4,600.

### Fundraising Done by Others

- **Easter Dinner at Cindy's Restaurant** (this annual event will not benefit the WFP every year as Cindy plans to rotate her beneficiaries) this year, it netted \$2,500 to the pantry.
- **Amazon Smile** provides a quarterly portion of sales from all online shopping where the customer has directed their benefit to the pantry.
- **Turkey Trot** at the Province Lake Golf Course each November helps to fund the holiday meals.
- **Episcogolf** planned and executed by St. John's Episcopal Church has regularly provided annual grants to support our children's programs.
- **The Black Panther** football team has an annual collection of cash for the pantry.
- **The Masons and the Lions** regularly have a fundraiser for the pantry.
- **Lovell Lake Food Center** has a holiday drive to help fund bags of donated food.
- **Hannaford** has an annual holiday food drive to help fund "Helping Hands" boxes which come to the pantry for distribution.
- **Churches of the community** provide weekly and ongoing support in the form of food donations
- **Boy Scouts** food drive brings boxes of food for the pantry.
- **Lake Forest Resort** donations from various events netted over \$3,000 for the pantry.

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**Birthday Bag** The children at the Paul School established a “Birthday Bag” for people celebrating a birthday with handmade cards, cake mix, frosting and candles. Recipients really enjoyed this

- **Community Relations**

It is no exaggeration to say that the WFP could not exist if it were not for the widespread and deep commitment the community has to the pantry.

### **Federal Grant**

For the third year the pantry applied for additional FEMA funding and was awarded a grant of \$1,670 to be distributed in 2019 after the pantry submits the food receipts and copies of checks in 2019 amounting to the total of the grant.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Howie Knight, President*

*Janet Bye, Vice President*

*Elizabeth Conner, Treasurer*

*Marilou MacLean, Secretary*