

Nonperishable News

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Quarter 4 2014

A Backward Glance and Two Steps Forward The Director's Update from Rev. Marilyn K. Doering

The clocks have fallen back, and days get dark early. Jack Frost has already left his mark on windows and gardens. Christmas carols have been in steady rotation for almost a month, although it's not yet Thanksgiving. The food pantry is in full pre-holiday mode ready for extra distributions on Saturday, November 22nd and Saturday, December 13th.

It's a busy time, but still a time set aside to enjoy the warmth of family and friends. And a little stress of "to and fro" from place to place trying to squeeze everything in. We all need to remember to breathe. The world will not end if one ornament is crooked.

At this time of year, food pantry volunteers are very conscious of the different meanings the word "family" can mean to our clients who are facing tough times. For some, "family" is a bright spot of hope that loved ones can create. For others, "family" represents a loss or a source of guilt, conflict, or tension. We do all we can to help put a holiday meal on the table and to give each child a gift.

This year, "family" means something extra special to the 80+ volunteers who have kept the food

pantry in operation for 10 years. Like any family, we disagree and make up while working toward our common goal of treating every client who comes through our door with dignity and respect. We gain new members and some members become fond memories.

As we close 2014, the food pantry will say "goodbye" to Rev. Kathy Karch who has been our only Board of Directors Chairperson and to Noreen Brennan who has been an active Board member for several years. We appreciate each of them for their years of dedication and service. They will be missed.

Thank you to every person and every organization, church, business, school, etc. who supported NHCFCP in 2014 in each and every way. We couldn't do what we do without you. I wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a Happy 2015!

*Blessings,
Rev. Marilyn K. Doering*

New Hope Community Food Pantry is open to clients each Tuesday from 9:30-11:30 am. Clients must bring a current ID or cancelled bill on their first visit to verify residential address. Our food pantry is located at 7115 W. Hood Ave., Chicago, IL 60631.

OUR MISSION: We seek to feed the hungry and share resources to improve the quality of life for those in need.

CLIENTS WE SERVE: Residents of the 60630, 60631, 60646, and 60656 ZIP codes in Chicago in need of an emergency 3-5 day emergency food supply. Clients may visit New Hope once per calendar month.

New Hope Calendar of Events

- 11/22 November Holiday Distribution
- 12/13 December Holiday Distribution
- 12/16 Final Distribution for 2014
- 12/20 GCFD Work Day
Contact Rev. Robert Burkhart
rgburkhart@att.net/ (708) 309-4988
- 12/23 Food Pantry Closed
- 12/30 Food Pantry Closed
- 1/5/2015 Food Pantry Reopens
- **No GCFD Work Day in January****
- 2/14/2015 GCFD Work Day
- TBD 2015 Hunger Bowl

Sign up on our website to receive our newsletter and other updates via email and link to our Twitter and Facebook pages:
<http://newhopefoodpantry.weebly.com/>

Holidays Can Mean Hunger for More Children **When School's Out, So are Free Lunches**

We all remember the "Chiberian" weather that hit our area over the 2013-2014 holidays. School was closed for several days due to concerns about extreme cold.

While it is always unfortunate (not to mention inconvenient) when school is closed due to weather, these closures could not have come at a worse time for families facing food insecurity. Children whose families relied upon free school breakfast and lunch to help stretch their food budgets had already been home for 2 weeks. A few extra days at home may have meant having little or nothing to eat when the food planned for vacation ran out. Parents had already made tough decisions to provide a family holiday and pay the bills at the 1st of the month.

Food pantries are generally closed over the holidays, and the inclement weather meant that getting shelves stocked for the return to normal after New Year's Day was also delayed by weather.

We are hoping, for the sake of these families, that the holiday break is not extended this year. We also ask that everyone reading this remembers to keep an eye on families that may be struggling to secure food. If you suspect a family may need help over the coming holidays, refer them to New Hope Community Food Pantry. Our last client distribution of 2014 will be on **Tuesday**,

December 16th from 9:30 am until 11:30 am.

Last Chance for 2014 Tax-Deductible Donations

The end of the year is swiftly approaching. Tax season is just around the corner. Why not help maximize your charitable donations for 2014 by making an additional monetary donation to New Hope Community Food Pantry before December 31st? Our updated website supports secure electronic donations via PayPal.

Feed 4 More at Whole Foods-Park Ridge

NHCFP congratulates Whole Foods-Park Ridge on its first year at 225 W. Touhy Avenue. We thank them for selecting NHCFP as the recipient of funds raised during November and December's Feed 4 More event. Shoppers may choose to add an additional amount to their bill at checkout. To paraphrase a favorite Chicago-ism: "Shop early; shop often; add a little more to help feed a neighbor."

Tips for Coping With Stressful Families

Every family is different, and what works for one person may not work for everyone. However, some ideas for coping with a difficult family during the holiday include the following:

- **Stay Close to Those Who Support You:** If particular family members are highly critical of you, or are known to cause you lots of

stress, try to limit your time with them. Stay close to family members that make you comfortable. Asking someone you trust to take a walk or help you out of a situation may be a good idea.

- **Limit Use of Alcohol:** Alcohol impairs our judgment and may blur or intensify our emotional reactions. Rarely is excessive use of alcohol helpful to anyone in managing a tense family situation.

- **Drive Your Own Car and Set a Time Limit:** For many people, it is more helpful to leave a stressful family situation early than to stay until things become unbearable. It may be comforting to you to have your own vehicle and to know that you can leave whenever you need to.

- **If You Can't Change Others, Change Yourself:** As much as we sometimes wish, we are for the most part, powerless to change the behavior of other people. Yet, often we go to a holiday gathering expecting others to change. Ask yourself what you can do differently to avoid tension producing interactions. You may be surprised at how much better you feel when you focus on your behavior rather than the behavior of others.

- **Don't Expect a Miracle:** Rather than expecting miracles, it is probably safest to keep your expectations very realistic. Stressful families rarely turn themselves around during a single holiday gathering.--Article courtesy of Eastern Maine Medical Center online archives (<http://www.emmc.org/healthy-living-archive.aspx?id=43406>)