

BREADCRUMBS

August 2008

Welcome to the August edition of the newsletter designed for the volunteers and friends of the Irving Park Community Food Pantry. The Board of Directors of the Pantry recognizes that the strongest asset of the Pantry is our volunteer staff. Thanks to you all and have a great summer.

WELCOME!

The Board of Directors is pleased to introduce you to our new director – John Psiharis. He started the first of July and is gradually getting to know all of the volunteers, the clients and the process of feeding the neighbors who need our help.

John was born in Chicago. He attended Socrates Elementary School and Taft High School. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Human Services from National Louis University and also completed 21 hours of credit towards a Masters degree in Public Administration from Roosevelt University. He has over twenty years of experience in community service organizations, having worked with the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club, Greek-American Community Services, the Community Aging Network of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, and the Bosnian & Herzegovinian American Community Center. He presently works as a consultant to several non-profit organizations and businesses.



John lives in the Old Irving Park neighborhood and enjoys biking, walking, movies and watching old TV shows. He collects autographs of politicians and "vintage" performers.

After a month and a half on the job, he is impressed with the Pantry's level of good will and community support. He hopes to be able to continue that community support and enhance and take it to the next step. He is looking forward to getting to know all the volunteers.

Welcome John and good luck!

Pantry news

One of the things Barb Cohn and Vicci Rogers have been working on is our new website. We are pleased to announce that it is up and running. Go to www.irvingparkfoodpantry.com to check it out! You can get the latest pantry news, information on the pantry a lot of other information. If you know anyone interested in getting involved in our pantry, either through volunteering or donations, please direct them to this site. Thank you to everyone involved in this long, arduous project.

STATISTICS

JUNE 2008

- 1106 people served
- 416 families served
- 12,538 pounds of food distributed

JULY 2008

- 1,410 people served
- 481 families
- Added 50 new families
- 17,503 pounds of food distributed

UPCOMING EVENTS

The annual **Spaghetti Dinner and Basket Raffle** is scheduled for Sunday, October 5, 2008 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. It will be held at the Irving Park United Methodist church, 3801 N. Keeler.

The cost for adults is \$10 and seniors and children are \$8.00. Tickets are available at the Pantry or from Board members.

Please call the Pantry at 773/283-6296 for further information.

LINK CARDS

Staff from the Greater Chicago Food Depository will be at the Pantry on Wednesday September 17th between the hours of 9:00 am and 12:30 pm to assist clients with applying for Food Stamps/Link Card benefits, or to help you with any questions you may have.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES DISTRIBUTION

Thanks to the generosity of our benefactors, we are once again distributing school supplies to the children of our pantry clients during the month of August. This is a great way to help our clients' children get off to a good start at school this year. The children are very excited when they get their bag of notebooks, crayons, pencils, etc.

Through the third week of August, we have distributed 198 bags of school supplies. A big thank you to everyone who contributed supplies, money and their time to this project.

Spotlight on our Volunteers

Rick Leidl has been volunteering at the Pantry for the last six years. You see him every week helping stock the tables with food, unloading the truck, and whatever else is needed. Here's some stuff you didn't know:

Rick was born in Chicago and attended Schneider Elementary School and Shurz High School. He worked in construction as a roofer until an injury caused by a fall off a ladder cut short his career. He met his wife Sandra at work. She worked at True Value. They eloped and got married in Las Vegas.



Rick has two step children, Patty and Michael, and two grandchildren. He and Sandra like to travel.

He helps unload the truck every Monday and on Wednesday sets up the Pantry for the distribution and takes down the tables and chairs afterwards in addition to whatever needs to be done during the day.

Thanks Rick for all your hard work. And we're glad your recent back problems are better. We missed your friendly face while you were gone.

contact us

If you are interested in contributing to this newsletter or need more information, you can contact Carol Schultz at schultzfamily02@aol.com or the Pantry at irvpkfoodpantry@aol.com.

Community Connections

As summer begins to ease into fall, the Pantry will be represented at the following community events. Please feel free to drop by and say hello, or if time permits, volunteer an hour or two of your time to help us share with the community the vital work of our Pantry.

Irving Park Lutheran Church Rally Day

The Irving Park Lutheran Church Annual Rally Day with a Twist will be held on Sunday September 7th from 10:30 am to 11:30 am in the Carlson Ministry Lot. The Pantry will have a table at this event.

Old Irving Park House Walk

The annual Old Irving Park House Walk will occur on Saturday September 20th between the hours of 10:00 am and 4:00 pm. A good number of participants are expected to drop by for refreshments. We will have a display table and pass out information on the Pantry.