

Community Supper, Inc.



Newsletter

P.O. Box 2098 Acton, MA 01720

Acton Food Pantry:

When:

Every Wednesday
10:00am-7:00pm

Where:

St. Matthew's United
Methodist Church
435 Central Street
West Acton 01720

Phone:

978-635-9295

The Supper and Clothing Closet:

When:

Every Wednesday
5:30 pm – 6:30 pm

Where:

Acton Congregational
Church
12 Concord Road

Board Members:

President - Gary Lawton
Treasurer - Brian Schutsky
Secretary - Lynn Horsky
Supper Director- Joan Appleton
Pantry Director- Kathy Casaletto

Members at Large-
Ann Decker
Nancy Dinkel
Richard Porter
Steve Rubner
Will Tuffin

New Home! The Acton Food Pantry of Community Supper, Inc. outgrew the space on Windsor Avenue in West Acton. Last July, the Pantry responded to a generous offer extended by **St. Matthew's United Methodist Church** (pictured right) and moved to a large space in their basement at 435 Central Street in West Acton.



New System! Upon the advice of the Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB), and enabled by the spacious accommodations at St. Matthew's, our clients have the opportunity to "shop" from the Pantry shelves and choose the food that is most advantageous to them. This Client Choice method of distribution brings dignity to the process for our clients as well as eliminating the waste from unwanted food in the pre-made bags of the previous system. Learn more about our new method on Page 3.

New Numbers! Our Pantry is serving more households than ever before and has been struggling to meet this demand while at the same time instituting our new Client Choice distribution method. More clients, more food, more deliveries, more food drives, more volunteers... Check out the statistics on the chart inside to see those numbers climb.

New Truck! Maintaining inventory to meet the needs of our clients had been a problem for several years. We are now the proud owners of a 16-foot box truck that allows us to make multiple runs each week to the Greater Boston Food Bank. This ensures that our clients have a continuous supply of nutritious food in quantities recommended by the GBFB. Submit your design for customizing our truck panels along with your contribution toward this capital expense. More details page 5.

Same Philosophy! Community Supper, Inc. was founded in order to address hunger in our community. These new changes have allowed us to better uphold this mission. The success in meeting the challenges we face is due to the organization's greatest asset: the dedication of our volunteers. We are a volunteer-based organization; it is the hands-on work and strong empathy shared each week by our crews that keeps our organization functioning. Hear how our clients feel...

"The Pantry personnel are like extended family. They make the experience feel like shopping in any store, not that you are in need of some form of assistance." - Quote from Client Questionnaire

... more on back page.

Visit our website at:

www.actoncommunitysupper.org

Supper *Joan Appleton*

Acton Community Supper

June 2009 Menus

June 3rd

Roast Pork Loin with Applesauce
Mashed Potatoes
Buttered Peas
Baby Spinach, Red Leaf Lettuce, Bean Sprouts, Tomatoes, Yellow Pepper
and Red Onions with
Blue Cheese or French Dressing
Snowflake Rolls
Angel Cake with Vanilla Ice Cream and Strawberry Sauce

June 10th

Italian Spaghetti and Meatballs
Tossed Salad with Caesar Dressing
Italian Bread
Orange Sherbet with Chocolate Sauce and Wafer Cookies

June 17th

Kielbasa
Hashed Brown Potato Patties
Greek Salad
Portuguese Bread
Blueberry Cobbler with Vanilla Ice Cream

June 24th

Chicken Pot Pie
Cranberry Sauce
Crispy Italian Rolls
Tossed Salad with Wine Vinaigrette
Coffee Ice Cream with Chocolate Cupcakes

Food Pantry *Kathy Casaletto*



Above - Pantry space at St. Mathew's

Below - Pantry at Windsor Ave.



Client Choice Distribution Method

How did we measure the success of our newly instituted Client Choice Method of distribution from the very first day? By the broad smiles, exclams of joy, and the warm hugs our clients shared with us. Though each expressed their thoughts in different ways, the common feeling was, "Thank you for the dignity and respect this method offers."

When planning the new layout, we wanted it to be participant friendly, allow more interaction between client and volunteer, allow us to offer more nutrient-rich food while eliminating waste, and, because of that, save us money. We have found this Client Choice Distribution Method does all of the above!!

With clients shopping as if in a grocery store, our aisles are divided into sections based on basic food groups. Clients are offered food items from all groups, with limits based on the number of members in their household. In this way, each household receives enough nutritious food for their specific circumstances. Within the food group, a client has the opportunity to choose rice instead of pasta, canned peaches rather than pineapple, chick peas rather than baked beans, etc.

Efficiently utilizing the food provided by the GBFB combined with a larger Pantry space has allowed us to distribute weekly meat, fruit juice, Parmalat and many other items previously offered only occasionally. The new method also allowed us to realize which food items our clients desired. The unexpected flow of inventory revealed that many items we so frequently included in clients' pre-made bags were not the ones they selected when given the chance. Other items, ones seldom offered in the past, were in constant demand. We have responded by filling those needs.

Several residents of the apartments on Windsor Avenue confirmed the fact that clients were pleased with the results of their Pantry visit. Many clients shared the story of tables in the Common Area at Windsor on Wednesday evening covered with the unwanted contents of the pre-made bags distributed at the old Pantry; they were left for other residents to take. According to our Windsor clients, the very first distribution day of the new method, not one item from our Pantry was up for grabs in that room. Each client was happy with their choice and, as a result, used every item as it was intended.

Synchronizing Food Drives Thank you for your Help

The Pantry depends on community donations to meet the needs of our clients. In order to accommodate the quantity and variety of food to do this each week, food drives and food deliveries must be timed and coordinated with precision. Though we have more space at St. Matthew's, rising need in our communities has maxed out our inventory space and we are seeking climate-controlled, off-site storage. Our goal is to have at least one month's inventory in reserve to eliminate the anxiety of circulating food from one Wednesday to the next.

In the meantime, in order to control the flow of food, we have been lucky to have cooperation from our community when planning food drives. Churches, schools, scout troops... all have been agreeable in distributing lists of the specific needs of the Pantry at that time which helps us contend with our limited storage space without compromising client choice.

Thank you to everyone in our community, both those who organize the food drives and the many more who support them by contributing. The Pantry could not continue to serve our clients if not for the generosity of our good neighbors.

Pantry Statistics

Weekly Client Average For Calendar Year:

2006	2007	2008	2009(YTD)
116	120	145	189

Total Number of Individual Households Registered Yearly (year runs March to March)

2006	2007	2008	2009(YTD)
262	309	455	339*

*first three months of 2009

Comparison of Pre-made Bag and New Client Choice Systems

Windsor Avenue

2 hours of distribution w/
8 Volunteers

5 Weekend Sorting Crews
29 Volunteers

Avg. 1 GBFB Delivery/month

Avg. 1100 lbs./ month

St. Matthew's Church

9 hours of distribution w/
28 Volunteers

11+ Weekend Sorting Crews
96 Current Volunteers

Avg. 4 GBFB Deliveries/month

Avg. 10,000 lbs./month

Your Contribution Does Make a Difference

Enclosed is my donation to the Acton Pantry of:

__\$100 __\$50 __\$25 __\$10 __Other

Name _____

Street _____

Town/St _____ Zip _____

Please make checks out to: **Acton Community Supper**

Mail to: **P.O. Box 2098**

Acton, MA 01720

Food Pantry Wish List

We gratefully accept all donations;

At this time

We are most in need of:

**Rice, sardines, canned salmon, beans, cereal,
Toothpaste, Toilet Paper,
Baby Food, Diapers**

**The pantry does not distribute outdated items;
Please check expiration dates.**

**Donation boxes are located at Roche Bros.,
Donelan's, Middlesex Bank in West Acton, and
the main Acton Post Office.**

THANK YOU

Pantry Truck

Bringing food to our community

We are the proud owners of a "new" used truck! It is a 16-foot box truck compatible with a loading dock which allows a forklift to drop our loads right onboard...no more loading by hand! Quite the necessary relief when our food bank orders are often 3000-4000 pounds!

For a while we were renting a box truck; as our client number continued to rise, more runs were necessary to pick up food from the food bank. Then, a kind and generous member of St. Matthew's donated the use of his working truck as well as his driver to make runs a couple of times a month. When it became apparent that these new numbers were not a short term spike but our new long-term norm, purchasing our own truck was the answer to many of our problems.

Besides making many runs to the food bank each month, the truck allowed us to eliminate the cost of our weekly trash pick-up and to make multiple trips to the transfer station in a timely fashion. Also, on the occasions that we need to supplement inventory with any specific items, we can make one run to the grocery store without arranging for pick-up trucks and volunteers.

Put Your Imagination to Work

The white panels of our truck beg for an attractive and clever design. Everyone seems to have an idea to share. We want to see the results of many brain-storming sessions to ensure we do not miss the perfect one. To that end, please send us your design and you may be surprised to see it pass you by on the sides of the Community Supper Inc./Acton Food Pantry truck!

Please mail your design to our P.O. Box 2098, Acton, MA 01720. We hope to have our truck finished and dressed for the 2009 Holiday Season.

Take This opportunity to See Your Donation at Work Each Time Our Truck Passes By!!

Add Your Name to Our
FRAME OF FUNDERS

In order to help offset this capital expense, and to allow the community to feel a part of this new asset, please consider joining our list of \$100.00 donors. This list will become part of the truck design, our Frame of Funders, whose names will be included in the border design on our truck panels. Please send in your contribution today!



FRAME OF FUNDERS DONATION

Enclosed is my \$100 check toward the capital funding of the new Pantry truck.

Donor Name: _____

Name for Panel: _____
(e.g. Smith Family, Jane and John Smith, or none)

**Please mail to Community Supper, Inc.
P.O. Box 2098, Acton, MA 01720**

**Acton Community
Supper**

www.actoncommunitysupper.org

P. O. Box 2098
Acton, MA 01720

PHONE:
(978) 635-9295

Food Pantry:
St. Matthew's Church
435 Central St.
Acton, MA 01720

Supper:
Acton Congregational
Church
12 Concord Road
Acton, MA 01720



More from Client Questionnaires:

"(The system)has been a great improvement. This is more personal and the shoppers' helpers are to be commended. The volunteers bless us and I pray that you all will be blessed."

"I go to other pantries and this is by far the best. Thank God for all the wonderful food and people here."

"Your services are a blessing. People should be more grateful. Thank you. If I ever hit the lottery, this is one pace I would donate to!"

"I am very impressed with the volunteers. They are always cheerful and helpful. I really appreciate that! Thank you to everybody!"

"My needs are better met here because I only choose what we use not anything we won't. I feel comfortable when I come, neither embarrassed or unwelcome."

"I am comfortable in the new pantry and always look forward to the kind volunteers."

**A Special Thank You: The ACS Newsletter printing was
donated by Minute-Man Printing Corp, West Concord, MA.**

**ACTON COMMUNITY
SUPPER**

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Acton, MA 01720

