



Alliance Community Pantry

215 E. Market St., Alliance, Ohio 44601

330 680-8130 • www.alliancecommunitypantry.org

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Barb Armitage, Editor

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FOCUS ON NUTRITION AND HEALTHY EATING ~ COLLABORATIONS

As promised, this month we'll examine a project spearheaded by Board member Carol Henry and conducted in collaboration with the YWCA. This spring, the pantry offered food and nutrition classes for eight weeks to our clients. The program, called *Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program*, was offered and funded by the Ohio State Extension service. Its goal is to give those dealing with poverty additional tools to help them feed their families nutritiously for less. The key emphasis is on a healthy lifestyle and good eating.

The sessions covered information on menu planning, shopping, label reading, fast foods, fats/protein/carbs, and grains. Attendees were given materials, information and great tools to aid them (tool examples: pedometers, meat thermometers, measuring cups and spoons, stretch bands, refrigerator magnets with nutrition information, recipes a cook book and more). Samples were served at each session.



Those students who attended at least six of the sessions received an electric skillet during the final class.



As you can tell in both of these stories, current research is discovering a significant relationship between poverty and lack of knowledge about food and nutrition. Personal comment: this could well be related to the fact that schools stopped teaching home economics over 40 years ago.

COLLABORATIONS HELP REACH CLIENTS TO TEACH NUTRITION

Both Mount Union and Kent State students have done field experiences with nutrition goals for our clients, visiting the pantry, volunteering and sometimes sharing information.



Last fall KSU nursing students held a Nutrition Fair at the pantry, distributing samples of healthy snacks, sharing information and recipes with clients. In March the KSU nursing students held a similar fair at Thornes, sharing samples, distributing information, and taking blood pressure for shoppers.



FOOD AND DONATIONS

In addition to grants and our sustaining donors, we are frequently assisted at the pantry by “surprise” donations of food and money. Birthday party “food in lieu of gifts”, local club collections, and church collections add flavor and variety to our shelves. The “red” food



pictured to the left, was collected by Union Avenue United Methodist Church on Pentecost Sunday and donated to the pantry.

In May the ladies of the Elks Auxiliary brought food and paper products to their meeting and donated it. They also heard Pat Gates

involved in volunteering at the pantry, and some members have since volunteered.

Beyond food donations, sometimes random unsolicited money donations occur. On May 17th the 4th Annual Taste of Alliance was sponsored by the Washington Ruritan Club and the benefits were divided between the pantry and the Silver Park Fireworks.

We are grateful the churches and clubs in our community recognize the value of the pantry and offer unsolicited support in many ways – including food, volunteers and money.

Japanese Visitors Return

The Pantry took on an international flair in March when 10 visiting students from Hiroshima Jogakuin High School in Japan volunteered all morning. The students, who visited the University of Mount Union, for the second straight year volunteered at the pantry before attending and giving the program at the Alliance Kiwanis Club.

The morning was a cultural exchange for students, volunteers and clients alike as they worked together as shoppers while others helped out bagging groceries and working in the warehouse. Jerry O'Sullivan, their English teacher from Japan, accompanied the high school sophomores and juniors, and said he thought it was important the students experienced "the volunteer spirit of America." Also in the morning, Jerry and students were interviewed by Chelsea Shar from The Review, and before they left warehouse manager Terra Faulkner treated the girls to cake and ice cream.



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