

Over 20 Years of Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Notes From The Pantry

From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Happy Spring! 2018 is off to an amazing start and as you read through this edition of *Notes from the Pantry*, you'll get a glimpse of what your support has made possible. In the last newsletter, I told you about the success of the IFP Free Farmers' Markets, and how we have been able to provide fresh produce to our clients. Thanks to our partnership with the **Community Food Bank**, we were given a 24' refrigerated container which will enable us to store even more fruits and vegetables year-round, as well as other items like juice, yogurt, other dairy and meats. So far, this year, we've distributed an additional 9,479 pounds of fresh, healthy food during 656 visits by our clients.



Volunteers from **BASF** help out at one of our monthly **Free Farmer's Markets**. Clients love the array of fresh produce options.

produce, frozen meats and prepared meals, which are extremely popular for those people with limited cooking ability, are such a welcome addition to our offerings. In the first three months of this year, we've rescued close to 30,000 pounds of food from local supermarkets.

They are so grateful to be able to have healthier options for themselves and their families!

Speaking of healthy and fresh, we've also added **Wegmans** to our list of Supermarkets from which we're rescuing food. The fresh

I'm also excited to tell you about some of our other programs aimed at improving the health and well-being of our clients and creating healthier communities. We have just launched our 3rd Annual Diabetes Workshop in partnership with the Community Health Team at **Morristown Medical Center**. This program helps our clients with diabetes or pre-diabetic conditions manage their health problems through proper diet and monitoring. 100% of last year's participants reported benefitting from this program! Also, this April, we partnered with **Cornerstone's Neighborhood House** in Morristown for their "Eat Right and Get Fit" free community program. Thanks to a grant from the **North Jersey Health Collaborative**, they are hosting two 12-week sessions of Zumba classes to get people moving, and the IFP is providing fresh food to encourage healthier eating from our *Healthy Choices Mobile Pantry*.

Our client Services team has been very busy in finding new ways to help our clients become more self-sufficient by identifying programs that can help them save more of their income. This May we will partner with the **Hellen Keller International Child Sight** program to provide free vision screening, prescription eyeglasses, and ophthalmic referrals for our low-income families. We also once again partnered with the United Way/Single Stop to offer free tax preparation services during tax season, to any moderate to low-income families in the community.

As you can see there is so much happening here besides simply providing food. Your support enables people in our community to live healthier despite their economic circumstances, and empowers them with more control over their lives at a time when many feel they have none. Thank you for making a difference!

Rosemary

Current Needs*

- ▶ Dry milk (1 qt. pkg.), Parmalat, & Evaporated milk
- ▶ Calcium fortified milk alternatives (soy, rice, almond milk)
- ▶ Oatmeal, cereal (low sugar, high fiber);
- ▶ Peanut butter (18 oz size preferred)
- ▶ Soups (regular, hearty and low sodium);
- ▶ Pasta & Pasta Sauce
- ▶ Canned fruit or 100% fruit juice (32 oz.) (no sugar added)
- ▶ Canned beans (pork & beans, pinto, red, white, black)
- ▶ Tuna fish, canned meats and meals, hash, stew
- ▶ Rice-a-Roni, Mac 'n Cheese, Hamburger & Tuna Helper
- ▶ Boost, Boost Glucose Control, Ensure or Glucerna
- ▶ Enfamil Infant Formula
- ▶ Baby food - Stage 1, 2 & 3 fruits, vegetables, meats & meals
- ▶ Baby wipes

* When shopping consider low-salt, low-sugar and gluten-free items.



2018 IFP Golf Outing

Our 13th Annual Golf Outing will take place at the Mount Tabor Country Club on **September 17**

Watch our website for registration and sponsor information.

Visit us at www.mcifp.org.





Education and Youth Engagement

“Compassion Through Action”

Celebrating the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, the students at **Madison Junior School** held a “**Compassion Through Action**” event. Students were led through a series of break-out sessions to learn about equality, non-violent activism and humanitarianism. IFP Volunteer Educator, **Celeste Stracco**, presented three separate interactive sessions with the students focusing on hunger, food insecurity and solutions including the role of the IFP. Thanks to teachers **John Ciferri** and **Catie Young**, who not only organized this event but also secured a \$125 donation to help us continue our work.



Students, teachers and IFP volunteer **Celeste Stracco** (checked top) gather for a photo after their event honoring **Dr. Martin Luther King**.

Drew Seniors Take on Hunger Project

On March 23, Drew University seniors **Jenna Abayad**, **Andrew Moriyo**n and **Sebastian Godinez** led a group of 11 fellow students from the University to an IFP visit for a discussion on poverty, economic inequality and other issues surrounding hunger and food insecurity. The group learned about our role in fighting hunger and performed some hands-on work. A group discussion and exploration of solutions was led by **Professor Patrick McGuinn**, who is also an IFP Board member. Following the tour and discussion the students created packets of dry soup mix made with natural, healthy ingredients for distribution to our clients. Thanks to all for making a difference!



Professor **Patrick McGuinn**, far left, with Drew University students assembling soup packets at the IFP. **Sebastian Godinez**, **Andrew Moriyo**n and **Jenna Abayad**, far right, organized the project.

Salem Drive Elementary Stuffs the Bus

Under the direction of advisors, **Matt Pomel** and **Dana Frey**, the student co-council at **Salem Drive Elementary School** in Hanover recently ran a “**Souper-Bowl!**” campaign in which they collected 738 pounds of food! They stuffed the bus and delivered the food, after which they visited with our own **Doug McMahon** to learn more about the issue of hunger and the IFP. Following their visit, they held a student presentation about what they learned, accompanied by a video montage



created by technology instructor **Eddie Cashen**. What a wonderful way to get young kids involved at an early age to take action and advocate on behalf of those less fortunate. Bravo! Far left is student co-council advisor **Matt Pomel**, along with student council members, **Dana Frey** and IFP Volunteer Coordinator **Doug McMahon** (far right) as they unpack a stuffed bus filled with food.



IFP's **Val Schuszler** stands with students from **Torey J. Sabatini Elementary School in Madison**. Students collected 4,443 pounds of food during a two week food drive for the IFP. Way to go!

And Special Thanks Also Go To...

- **Rockaway Valley School** located in Boonton for donating almost 2,200 pounds of food this quarter from monthly food drives, picked up by IFP volunteer **Lloyd Williams**.
- **Skyler Bouchededid** for donating 174 pounds of food to the IFP. In lieu of gifts for her 11th birthday she had guests bring bags of groceries, something she has done over the last three years. In total she has donated over 550 pounds! We are so grateful to you Skyler.

Food Drive Honor Roll

We are very grateful to all who conduct food drives for the IFP throughout the year. In addition to those mentioned elsewhere on this page, the following youth groups donated more than 150 pounds of food from January to March, to help keep the Pantry

Torey J. Sabatini Elementary School, Madison, 4,443
 Boy Scout Troop 25, Madison, 3,242
 Rockaway Valley School, Boonton, 2,176
 Boy Scout Troop 109, Mendham, 1,318
 Washington Avenue School, Chatham, 859
 Morris County School of Technology, Denville, 738
 Salem Drive School, Whippany, 738

Morris Knolls High School, Rockaway, 554
 Whippany Park High School, Whippany, 520
 Mountview Road School, Morris Plains, 369
 Randolph High School, Randolph, 513
 St. Elizabeth Montessori School, Parsippany, 298
 Mendham Elementary School, Brookside, 261
 Mendham Cub Pack 133, Den 9, 240

Mount Saint Mary Academy, Watchung, 208
 School of St. Elizabeth, Alumni, Bernardsville, 206
 Bee Meadow School, Whippany, 196
 Goddard School, Florham Park, 196
 Chatham High School, Chatham, 181

Empowering People

Giving Tree 2017—Unveiled



IFP's 2017 Giving Tree was unveiled at a reception on March 23. Above, **AJ Andrews** and **Krista VanEmberg** of **MetLife** point out their leaf. Many thanks to **Corsair Productions** for the tree design, and **Refined Sight** for the tree production.

Clients Learn to Cook!

Volunteers from the **Junior League of Morristown** concluded their Family Cooking Series in March. Client Families enjoyed learning about healthy eating while they prepared and tasted smoothies, blueberry muffins, fruit topped rice cakes, rainbow salsa and chips, and fajitas. The program is expected to resume again in the Fall.



Kids enjoy learning how to prepare food and cook with the **Junior League of Morristown** members.

Kudos To The Following Grant Funders!

We are grateful to the following foundations, companies and agencies for believing in the work we do and supporting our efforts. From January through March, we received grants from: **Affinity Federal Credit Union, Ferring Pharmaceutical, County of Morris-Department of Aging, Robert and Joan Dircks Foundation, The Willis Foundation, Thomas and Annette Dircks Family Foundation, Vanech Family Foundation and William E. Simon Foundation** (matching gift). If you know of any corporate or family foundations that we should contact, please let Joanne Rinaldi Brashier know at joannebrashier@mcifp.org or calling 973-538-8049, ext. 229.



The **CARE Team** at **Wegmans** is supporting the Interfaith Food Pantry each month by preparing individual meals for our home delivery clients. The meals are prepared at the Hanover, NJ store and delivered to the Pantry. Volunteers then deliver these meals to our homebound clients. Pictured above is **Katy Galton** (left), IFP's Nutrition Educator, and **Sandra Altizio** from Wegmans CARE Team. In other supermarket news, **ACME** in Morris Plains launched their "**Teaming Up to Kick Hunger**" campaign, and five Morris County **Kings Food Market** locations are selling bags of groceries at their checkout counters and donating the food to the IFP.

Thanks to YOU! The IFP would like to thank the companies, organizations, Houses of Worship and individuals who visited the Interfaith Food Pantry during the months of January to March including: **AJ Gallagher, Assumption Church, BASF, Bayer Pharmaceutical, Browns Backers, Delta Dental, Managed Healthcare Associates, Marsh Company, Ralph DiMarcantonio of UNICO, and Willis Towers Watson**. We are grateful for your assistance and support in helping those in need... we can't do what we do without you!

"We've Got Your Back"



Back by popular demand, we will once again be collecting new backpacks and school supplies for distribution to our client families. Sponsored primarily by our **Corporate Advisory Council**, the program aims to ease the financial burden of heading back to school. To ensure the kids have their supplies on time for the September start, we will begin distributing supplies in August. In addition to needing backpacks of all sizes, we will be posting a list of most wanted items on our website in June. Visit www.mcifp.org for further info.

Volunteer Opportunities! Do you love fresh produce? We are looking for volunteers to help get produce ready for distribution during the growing season. We also need help in our own IFP garden. If interested please contact Katy Galton at katygalton@mcifp.org or 973-538-8049, ext. 216.

Thank You To All Of Our Spring Gala Supporters!

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South Orange PAC
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Celeste and Gene Stracco
Wendy and Greg Supron
Sushi Lounge
Tabor Pizza
Tana's Creations
Thatcher McGhees
The Bernards Inn
The Dane Shoppe
The Godfather of Morristown
The Laboratory Hair Salon
The Madison Hotel
The Tuscan Table
Thirty-One
Tim Mosel's Custom Golf
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Walt Disney World Resort
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Whole Foods
Willis Towers Watson
Willow Street Boutique
Windswept Boutique
Eileen and Jack Witkowski
Wyndham Worldwide/RCI
Sharon and Paul Zuckerman
*And many other IFP friends who
wish to remain anonymous.*

Gala Moves IFP Clients “From Hunger to Hope”

The 19th Annual Spring Gala was a wonderful success, with approximately 200 guests enjoying dinner, dancing and Latin music performances. IFP’s largest fundraiser, this year’s Gala yielded a record \$200,000 through sponsorships, ticket sales, auction proceeds and monetary donations.

Funds raised from the Gala allow us to continue to meet the needs of those who go hungry on a regular basis. It also allows us to provide nutrition education, stock our shelves with healthy food choices, offer increased access to produce, dairy and meats, and to reach clients in more remote areas of the county. Additionally, it helps us to educate the community about the issue of hunger. How nice to be able to enjoy an evening out while simultaneously doing something meaningful for our community!



Carmen Twymen, GAF, Vice President, Human Resources with IFP Board President Greg Supron.

United Methodist Church in Madison for their longstanding, ongoing partnership with the IFP. The UMC has regularly volunteered and donated both funds and food through ongoing food drives and special collections. The Church Youth Group helps transport and setup food for the IFP’s Thanksgiving Holiday Basket program at St. Margaret’s Church in Morristown annually, which has become a meaningful part of the students’ Thanksgiving tradition. Also of note, in 2016, the Church helped purchase a refrigerated van for the IFP’s Healthy Choices Mobile Pantry, supporting our mission to provide healthy food to individuals in remote areas of the County, which is a win-win for all.

IFP’s **Neighbors Helping Neighbors Award** recognizes a group or individual that truly epitomizes what volunteerism and community action represent. **Mr. Paul Freeland**, our recipient of this year’s award, is one of the original volunteers of the IFP who was instrumental in helping to get the Pantry up and running. At the time, the Pantry was housed in the basement of the church

Being honored at this year’s event was **2018 Outstanding Service Award** recipient **GAF**. The company’s coda to protect people and treat others like family strategically aligns with IFP’s mission to alleviate hunger. Since 2014, the company has been involved with the IFP raising funds and food through its various departments, recently donating almost \$5,000 to help support our many programs. GAF has also been an event sponsor for our gala since 2016.

Also honored was our **2018 Pantry Partner Award** recipient, the



Rev. Robb Shoaf, Pastor at the United Methodist Church of Madison receiving the Church’s award.



Rosemary Gilmartin, IFP Executive Director and IFP Board President **Greg Supron** presenting **long time volunteer Paul Freeland**. With his Neighbors Helping Neighbors award.

Paul attended, the First Baptist in Morristown. Since then Paul has volunteered at all IFP locations, past and present. Today he can be found at the 190 Speedwell Avenue satellite pantry, stocking shelves, bagging produce, helping clients with food selections and bringing food collections from the First Baptist Church to the Pantry.

Among all the congratulations to the honorees, the glitz and the glamour of the evening, the realities of the struggles our client’s face

was present. This year’s speaker, **Christine**, thought it could never happen to her. Then her first two children were born with developmental disabilities and she was forced to resign from her job with the County. The care they required simply made it cost-prohibitive for her to work outside the home. Shortly thereafter her husband took an extended leave of absence from his good paying job as a mechanic due to an illness.

Christine recalled the first time she came to the Pantry, “I sat in the car in tears while my husband and children shopped. I kept asking myself, ‘How did I get here?, How did this happen?’” Eventually, she made her way into the building and was touched by how warm and inviting the staff and volunteers were. Today she feels right at home at the Pantry. She regularly brings her kids to our Nutrition Education classes. Her son has taken to making smoothies and her daughter is learning to love to cook.

As her husband heals and her children grow, Christine and her family are becoming more self-sufficient. As much as she loves visiting the Pantry as a client, she hopes to transition to Pantry volunteer soon. Funds raised from the Gala allow us to continue to provide programs such as our nutrition education classes which have become so meaningful to Christine and her family.

Special thanks go to our Salsa Dancers from the **Dreams Dance Studio of Randolph** who entertained our gala guests with lively dances and **DJ James Rearick** from **Ultimate Entertainment** who kept our guests on the dance floor dancing the night away!

We are especially grateful to all of our hardworking Gala Committee volunteers especially our **Gala Chairs Art and Ann Corwin**. We couldn’t do all that we do without dedicated volunteers and all those who attended and supported our gala in some way.



Daniel Herrera, owner of the **Dreams Dance Studio** & semi-finalist on America’s Got Talent, performs with his students.

Engaging Our Community

Plant for the Pantry



Attention home gardeners! Please keep the pantry in mind when planning your garden or community plot this year. In 2017, we distributed nearly 200,000 pounds of fresh produce through our regular distribution sessions, our Free Farmers Markets and our Healthy Choices Mobile Pantry. Very special thanks go to our home garden growers, farms and community gardens which alone donated almost 70,000 pounds of locally fresh produce last year. Thanks also for donations from our Food Rescue Program, the USDA and Community Food Bank, as well as produce we purchased with donated funds and grants. We also extend thanks to the **Community Food Bank**, we can now store even more fresh fruits and vegetables in our new 24' refrigerator container—so Bring It On!

Our “Gardens to Go” will be available to clients again this year thanks to a grant from the **Hanover Rotary**, donations from **Root Pouch**, and the horticulture program at the **County College of Morris**. These plants are made available during our Free Farmers Market and enable our clients to grow their own veggies and herbs. Over 1,200 were given out last year!



“Gardens to Go” are potted seedlings packed in air and water permeable containers made from recycled plastic.

Food to the Rescue!

In addition to impacting the health and well-being of our clients, we are also working toward creating a healthier environment by reducing the amount of food waste that ends up in our landfills. In 2017, we rescued over 150,000 pounds of meats, dairy, baked goods, produce and prepared foods from our grocery partners alone, and that doesn't even include the thousands of pounds of produce gleaned from local farms and bread we receive from **Pepperidge Farm**. These are all wonderful items that are perfectly good for consumption but can no longer be sold. In addition to **BJ's**, **ShopRite**, **Stop & Shop** and **Kings**, we recently added **Wegmans** to our list of “rescue” sites. Our clients are thrilled to receive these quality goods, which they could not afford for themselves. It's a win-win for all involved!



Diabetes Program Creates Awareness

Thirteen food pantry participants recently completed a 10 month diabetes education program co-sponsored by **Morris-town Medical Center** and the Interfaith Food Pantry's Healthy Choice Program. The program provided a comprehensive look at the prevention and management of pre-diabetes and diabetes type 2. It included free a1c, glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol screenings, lectures on a variety of topics related to diabetes, and the opportunity to ask questions in an informal setting. Clients also enjoyed a healthy, tasty lunch



prepared by Healthy Choice volunteers before they began their monthly shopping. As a bonus they also received an extra bag of groceries with diabetes friendly foods and tips on how to include them in their diet. The response to the program was extremely positive! In a post evaluation survey, 100% of the participants said that the Diabetes Friendly Food Bag they received each month was helpful in their diabetes management and 100% indicated that they used information from the program to select items at the pantry or when shopping at the grocery store. As one client summed up the program, “*It was extremely informative, well run, friendly, and brought an even keener awareness to my diabetes*”.

Hunger Doesn't Take A Summer Vacation



As many of us make our plans to enjoy the warm weather, the IFP begins to experience a donation drought. Summertime means that many of our regular food drive organizers such as scouts, schools, houses of worship and corporations - take a break from gathering food. Yet when school's out, many children who receive subsidized or free breakfast or lunch programs must be fed at home, creating an extra strain on their families. This combination of forces creates a perfect storm of need - and a food decline here at the Pantry.

Please remember that a large percentage of the food we distribute comes from donations - and **we need your help** to keep our pantry shelves stocked.

If you will be involved with a sports or swim team, summer camp, tennis center or other group that might be willing to help us keep the shelves stocked this summer, **consider running a food drive or fundraiser!**

Resources that make it easy can be found on our website at: <http://www.mcifp.org/fooddrive.htm>.

Client and Volunteer News



Meet Jessica, a veteran who served in the Navy and then in the Army National Guard. She was a First Responder to the Oklahoma City bombing and to 9/11. Following her discharge from the Navy, she worked as an animal control officer for 13 years, until she unexpectedly injured her knee. Following what she thought would be simple surgery, she was diagnosed with a rare form of arthritis that would prevent her from driving, or returning to work. She was only 39. She applied for Short Term Disability and began working with the Veterans Administration to help apply for Medicaid and SSD. But the process was taking a very long time. *"I was beginning to sink into depression because everything seemed to be going wrong. I realized working was my therapy. It's what helped me through my life, through the nightmares."* That's when a friend of hers at the VA told her about the Interfaith Food Pantry. She was given an appointment with an intake counselor and received food that same day. *"I couldn't believe all the food I got, I was set! But what was amazing is that everyone made me feel so comfortable. It was a great experience from start to finish"*.

The VA did finally come through for Jessica and she continued to visit the Pantry, however, it was to donate food. *"You guys made me feel human again. It's so unpleasant to have to ask for assistance, everywhere I went I felt judged. But everyone here was just great. I attended some of the cooking demonstrations, got produce and meat, and I don't have kids but I saw people coming in for school supplies. You guys really took care of everything."* Today Jessica was able to follow a dream, though she continues to have debilitating arthritis and walks with a cane, she recently moved to Nevada with her therapy dog, to be near her parents and to let her full healing take place. She looks forward to beginning a new chapter in her life where she will be able to give back to those who suffer and have so little support. She credits the IFP for helping her when she needed it the most and to wanting to find a way to give back! Way to go, Jessica!

Additionally, as a way of reaching out and helping others, Jessica referred a friend, who is working with the homeless including veterans in the Los Angeles area, to our website as an example of a program, *"that does everything right"*. Jessica also commented: *"I learned so much from being a client at the IFP that others should be able to benefit as well... Many veterans can be in very dark places at times, especially if they don't have a support network... But having a welcoming place to go like the IFP and a supportive family helped save my life. Literally."*

Kitchen to Table Helps the Homebound!

Our thanks as always to those who support our **"Kitchen to Table"** program, which ensures our home delivery clients have healthy, easy to prepare meals on a regular basis. Since our last newsletter, we have hosted friends, **DolCas Biotech** and **Viju**, for their inaugural outing, as well as seasoned veteran groups such as **Pfizer** and **ADP**. Volunteer **Catherine Mitchell**, even invited her friends to celebrate her birthday by participating in this meaningful and rewarding activity. What a great way to celebrate and make a difference!



Employees from **DolCas Biotech/Orcas Naturals** prepare healthy home-cooked meals for our home delivery clients during their **"Kitchen to Table"** visit.

Free Tax Preparation at the IFP



This was our second year partnering with the **United Way of Northern NJ, NORWESCAP and Single Stop** to offer free income tax preparation services. The sessions which were held on week days, evenings and weekends were handled by certified tax preparers who volunteered their time at our Morris Plains site. This free service was offered to our clients as well as others in the community who qualified. Preliminary numbers indicate that 95 people were assisted here realizing an estimated \$185,000 in refunds!

New Volunteers—Welcome

Nancy Abdelaziz	Amal Morcos
Devorah Cohen	Gordon Olver
Ruth Coopersmith	Mimi Pavlounis
Nathalie Fominaya	Kiley Powell
Gail & Dennis Gannon	Eric & Samantha Quartello
Larry Hausman	Donna Reagan
John Hellriegel	Chris Rempel
Lily & Spence Mehl	Mahmoud Sultan

Souper Bowl Kudos!

Special thanks are extended to all those who helped with our **Souper Bowl of Caring Annual Event**. This is a youth driven, national event which coincides with the actual Super Bowl. The IFP received donations of \$8,375 from the following Churches: **Christ the King, St. Mark's Lutheran, Resurrection, Assumption, Presbyterian Church of Madison, St. Virgil's, Presbyterian Church of Chatham, and United Methodist**. Additionally, 738 pounds of food was collected from the **Salem Drive School in Whippany**.

Board of Trustees

Meets 7:00pm on third Wednesday of the month

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Jessica Revoloria, client outreach coordinator

***Val Schuslzer**, warehouse assistant

Bill Zackoff, food and facilities manager

* part time

Our Mission

- ▶ To improve the health and well being of Morris County residents in need by providing access to food, nutrition education and related resources.
- ▶ To provide hands on opportunities for neighbors to help neighbors.
- ▶ To educate the public about the issues of hunger in our area.

Hours

Food Drop-off, Tours & Visitors - Warehouse

2 Executive Drive, Morris Plains

Monday - Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Special arrangements by request

Food Distribution - Main Pantry/Warehouse

2 Executive Drive, Morris Plains

The First Four Weeks of the Month Only

Monday through Thursday 1pm - 3pm

Wednesday 6pm - 8pm

Saturday 10am - 12noon

1st & 3rd Tuesday 6pm - 8pm

Food Distribution - Satellite Pantry

190 Speedwell Ave., Morristown

Tuesday 9:30am - 12 noon

Wednesday 9:30am - 12 noon

Thursday 9:30am - 12 noon

2nd & 4th Thursday 5pm - 7pm

Calendar

June/July

6/1-6/22 Kings Pantry Apple program

August

8/7 National Night Out (Mennen Arena)

September

9/17 IFP Golf Outing Mount Tabor Country Club

9/30 Fall Festival - Morristown

October

10/18 Volunteer Recognition Dinner

November

11/22 12th Annual Turkey Trot

Statistics

January 1 - March 31, 2018

Lbs. of food distributed	252,463
# Households served	2,242
# Visits to & from IFP sites	4,491
Avg. # households per month	1,244
Avg. # visits per month	1,664

Looking For Ways To Give?

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