

## Notes From The Network

### From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

It's hard to believe that it is August already! As always, I hope this finds you and yours well and that you have found some sense of "normalcy" following the last 18 months. Perhaps you are once again enjoying a summer vacation or even just being in the company of friends and family.

If you recall back in May we were embarking on another capacity building project and I want to give you an update. Though we experienced some delays, by the time this newsletter arrives the construction of our 960 sq. ft. refrigeration/freezer unit will be well underway. The addition of this unit, the realignment of our existing "Seabox" and reconfiguration of our loading dock will greatly enhance our ability to acquire and distribute more fresh and frozen foods including produce, dairy and proteins to our clients and those of our network partners.

Our Mobile Partners have been busy as well and in addition to distributing more fresh items during their normal hours, we have resumed Free Farmers Markets with our friends at **St. Ann's Church, St. Peter the Apostle Church** and the **Parsippany Health Department**, the **New Hope Food Pantry** in Oak Ridge, and the **United Methodist Church, Church of the Nazarene** and **St. Anthony of Padua Church** in Butler. We also continue to supplement pantries in Mt. Olive, Dover, Roxbury and Netcong as well as make deliveries to ten senior housing units across the County. Our Mobile Program accounted for more than 1/3 of the 10,000 household visits we have accommodated already this year... a 125% increase from 2020!

This Spring we concluded our study with the **Drew University** Social Policy students under the direction of **Professors Patrick McGuinn** and **Lisa Jordan**. Some may be surprised to learn our survey results indicated that most of our current clients are not visiting as a result of the pandemic, rather they still represent a significant, ag-

ing segment of our population with annual incomes of under \$30,000/year. Only about 15% are here because they are unemployed due to the pandemic. We are currently exploring ways to ensure our pantries and resource center will be well-positioned to accommodate future growth or spikes in demand. Now for the good news: *85% of respondents indicated that they and their families were eating healthier since becoming a client!* Many reported changing their diets, gaining a greater understanding of the correlation between diet and health, learning the benefits of and how to prepare specific foods, and much more. These outcomes are very good news and we owe a great deal of thanks to **Morristown Medical Center's Community Health Department** who partially funded our **Healthy Choices Nutrition Program** for two years.

None of what we do would be possible without the most incredible and dedicated volunteers. We are so happy to welcome back old friends and many new ones! Our "staff" volunteer levels are back to our pre-pandemic numbers, about 250 regulars. We have even resumed our **Kitchen 2 Table Program**, thanks to a dedicated group from **Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Church**, one of our founding parishes.

With your support, we are making great strides in our efforts to remove the barrier to a healthy life caused by food insecurity. Thank you as always, for making a difference!

Warm Regards,



#### Current Food Needs\*

- ▶ **Parmalat, Other Shelf Stable Milk, Dry Milk** (1 qt. size)
- ▶ **Soups** (hearty, low sodium & condensed)
- ▶ **Side Dishes** (Rice-A-Roni, Stuffing, Instant Potatoes, Hamburger Helper, etc.)
- ▶ **Pasta & Spaghetti** (1 lb size preferred; including whole wheat)
- ▶ **Tomato Products** (sauce, crushed, whole, diced, puree, paste)
- ▶ **Canned Vegetables & Beans** (all types)
- ▶ **White Rice/Brown Rice** (1 or 2 lb. bags preferred)
- ▶ **Canned Meats/Meals, Ravioli, Hash, Stew, Chili**
- ▶ **Boost, Boost Glucose Control, Ensure or Glucerna**

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

*Save These*  
**DATES**

- ▶ **Monday September 13**—Our **Annual Golf Outing**, Mount Tabor Country Club. Details on page 3.
- ▶ **Thursday, November 25**—Our **Annual Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot**. Details on page 3
- ▶ **Friday, April 22, 2022**—Our **Annual Spring Gala**, at the Birchwood Manor in Whippany.

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## COVID-19: IFPN Happenings

### NDMC Prepares Meals For the Homebound



NDMC volunteers (l to r) **Connie Habegger, Anne Roda-Farrell, Mary McGovern, Diana Thomas and Lisa Simone.**

Wonderful smells are emanating from IFPN's **Healthy Choices Kitchen** thanks to participants from **Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel's (NDMC) Food Rescue Ministry**, led by **Beth Vecchio**. In May the group began coming in regularly

to prepare meals for our home delivery clients. They prep the food, cook the meals and prepare them for delivery in microwave safe containers. The meals are then frozen and readily available when our home delivery volunteers come to pick up food for their clients. Thanks to the group, home delivery clients are enjoying tasty, healthy home cooked meals again!

**Tim Lockwood, IFPN Board President and Carolyn Lake, IFPN Executive Director** present an earth-friendly award to **Christine Kostantakis, Osman Vallecillo and Sonya Kougasian** of Parsippany based **ECOS**. The manufacturer of sustainable cleaning products recently donated three 55-gallon drums of environmentally friendly laundry detergent as well as hand soap for IFPN clients. Our clients did their part by reusing their own laundry containers, saving energy and reducing pollution, and receiving a wonderful product that is needed but not covered by SNAP.



**We've Got Your Back**



Now in it's 10th year, our "We've Got Your Back" school supply program is currently underway. During the month of August, over 500 children are sporting new backpacks complete with

all the supplies they need to kickoff their return to in-person classes. We are grateful to all those who helped make this program the success it is. Special kudos go to the **Page Hill Foundation, Good Shepherd and St. Mark's Lutheran Churches, Presbyterian Church of Madison** and several anonymous donors.

### Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are needed for the following positions:

**Saturday Distribution** 9:30am to 11:45am.

**Wednesday Evening Distribution** 5:30pm to 7:45pm.

Positions involve selecting food from our Pantry shelves for our clients based on their IFPN shopping list. Must be able to stand. If interested contact Allison 973-538-8049, ext. 218.

### New Board Member Welcome!



A warm welcome is extended to **Amy Komoroski Wiwi** as she joins the **Interfaith Food Pantry Network's Board of Trustees**. Amy will serve the IFPN in the areas of community outreach, event planning and education. She is very excited to work with our organization and looks forward to "helping the IFPN achieve its mission to fulfill this basic need of food security for our communities."

Amy is a partner at the **Lowenstein Sandler Law Firm** in the employment counseling and litigation practice group. She has assisted the IFPN on a pro bono basis in the past. Amy is married to Chris and they have two sons Miles and Leo and three cats. When not working or volunteering, Amy is interested in nutrition and enjoys reading, gardening, skiing, crocheting (her new found "pandemic" hobby), and spending time with her boys. We are happy to have you with us Amy!

### IFPN Launches New Teen Council

This July the IFPN launched the **Summer Teen Council**, a service and learning program for Morris County students between the ages of 13 and 18. Under the direction of **Kiley Powell, IFPN Education Coordinator**, each session includes a learning and discussion component, Q&A with IFPN staff and leadership team and various service activities. The goal of the program is to encourage teen advocacy through service and education, leading to a deeper understanding and awareness of the issue of hunger and food insecurity. Participants will also develop small group projects to benefit IFPN clients, such as a fundraiser or food drive. For entry into the program, students were asked to submit an essay on why they feel ending hunger is an important issue. Based on the incredibly insightful essays, 9 students were selected to participate in each of two cohorts this summer. Look for more information in our next Newsletter.

### Food Drive Honor Roll

Thank you to the students and administrators of the following schools and scout groups who are making a huge difference for our neighbors in need with their second quarter food drives! Kudos to all!

**Rockaway Valley School**, Boonton, 1,184 pounds

**Madison Junior School**, Madison, \$1,062

**Randolph Middle School**, Randolph, 912 pounds

**Kings Road School**, Madison, 884 pounds

**Red Oaks School**, Morristown, \$539

**Brownie Troop 97804**, Madison, 538 pounds

**Morristown-Beard School**, Morristown, 497 pounds

**Whippany Park High School**, Whippany, 487 pounds

**Girl Scout Troop 96524**, Riverdale, 462 pounds

**Normandy Park School**, Morristown, 455 pounds

**St. James School**, Basking Ridge, 395 pounds

**Girl Scout Troop 6709**, Madison, 316 pounds

**Patriot's Path Council**, Chatham, 280 pounds

**Villa Walsh Academy**, Morristown, 222 pounds

**Morristown High School**, Morristown, \$200

# COVID-19: Pantry Events

## Impacting Those In Need: A Client Story



Helping clients get back on the road to self-sufficiency is always a goal of the IFPN. Many of our clients are able to move on but sometimes there are a few who may need a little extra support. This is Mitch's story. Mitch is in his fifties and single. He first sought our help in March 2020 when the pandemic began. He needed help with food when he lost his job and then caught the COVID-19 virus. He had lingering health issues as a result, then developed a foot injury which limited the types of jobs he could seek out. As months dragged on he was in jeopardy of losing his housing and was already living at the bare minimum. He was trying to help himself but due to certain circumstances beyond his control, he wasn't eligible for many of the programs he applied for. Exhausting his outlets for support, the IFPN stepped in with one-time monetary assistance through the **Neighbors Helping Neighbors Fund**. Mitch applied for this assistance with the help of **Zoe Garcia, an IFPN Client Services Associate**, and was approved. He received two months of rent paid to his landlord. This helped Mitch get back on his feet and lifted a huge weight off his shoulders. This was exactly the lift he needed! Without all the stress, his health started to improve and he was able to find a new job. He is also trying to eat healthier and is thankful for the food he has received from the Pantry, *"for the past year the food pantry has helped keep me nourished when I did not have any income and the food I received is always so good. I am very grateful for all the help you have provided, including the rental assistance. I am very happy and relieved."* Sometimes a little extra support is all a person needs to get back on track. The IFPN is glad we were able to make such an impact!

## Thanksgiving in August? We're all Over It!



Yes, we know it's August! But our teams are already meeting, planning and preparing for the big Turkey Day. This year we expect to provide turkeys and all the trimmings to 2,000 families. We are actively seeking schools, houses of worship, civic groups, and businesses to

hold food and turkey drives to help meet the need. Every can of cranberry sauce, canned yams, turkeys and more will go directly to our neighbors in need here in Morris County.

Thanksgiving food donations are needed by November 1<sup>st</sup> so now is a good time to start planning for a Fall food drive event. **Please contact Val at [vschuszler@mcifp.org](mailto:vschuszler@mcifp.org) once you have dates for your food drive.** He will be able to answer any questions and will coordinate a time for you to drop off the food.

Monetary donations are always welcomed at this time too. Financial contributions give us flexibility to purchase what we need when inventory from food drives fluctuates. Please know, that however you choose to help us, we are most grateful. It certainly doesn't have to be Thanksgiving for you to know how much we appreciate your support each and every day!

## The Turkey Trot Is Back!



**The Read Feed Run Turkey Trot 5k** will be back at Ginty Field this year. We are so excited to be planning our in-person race once again! This year is the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this race, and many families have been with us since the very first year (that's a lot of Turkey tees!). Whether you are continuing the tradition or starting a

new one, the camaraderie and holiday spirit that emerges from this Thanksgiving morning, Morris County institution, is unmatched. Enlist your family and friends and join your community in support of the **Interfaith Food Pantry Network and Literacy Volunteers of Morris County**. In addition to the 5k, there's a 1-mile run/walk and a 50-yard kids trot. **Register for all events at [readfeedrun.org](http://readfeedrun.org)**

Sponsorship opportunities are available. Get your business noticed by thousands of athletes, spectators and friends of IFPN. Contact Sandra at [sbenedict@mcifp.org](mailto:sbenedict@mcifp.org) for more info.

## SNAP Into Summer with IFPN

The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** (formerly "Food Stamps") provides an average of \$4.40 a day to individuals struggling with food insecurity. Can you imagine how limited your diet would be if that was all you had to spend? The **SNAP Into Summer** program challenges people to give it a try. \$4.40 a day does not buy a lot of fresh produce, low fat dairy and lean proteins like the ones we offer our clients. When you eat on \$4.40 a day, you get a new perspective on just how critical IFPN's mission is. We challenge you to do it for as long as you can stand it, 1 day, 7 days or anywhere in between. Details can be found at <https://p2p.onecause.com/ifpnsnap/challenge>. Contact Sandra Benedict at [sbenedict@mcifp.org](mailto:sbenedict@mcifp.org) for more info.

## Wine of the Week Holiday Raffle Gets Bubbly!



Who couldn't use 52 bottles of wine about now? Enter to win our annual holiday raffle that now includes craft beer and champagne to add a little extra sparkle to your holiday. **First prize** is 52 bottles of wine (that's like having one per week!) and a bottle of champagne. **Second prize** is 12 bottles of

wine, 4 bottles of liquor and a bottle of champagne. There are 5 **third place** winners who will take home 12 bottles of wine, 1 case of craft beer and a bottle of champagne. See enclosed insert to purchase tickets or scan the QR code.



## Golf Outing Returns

Please join us at **Mount Tabor Country Club** for a round of golf with the IFPN community! The event will be held **Monday, September 13** beginning at 11 am. Try your hand at the Putting Contest while enjoying lunch at the Clubhouse.

Then tee off for 18 holes before joining us for dinner and cocktails. It's a full day of fun! To register scan the QR code or contact Sandra at [sbenedict@mcifp.org](mailto:sbenedict@mcifp.org).



**Board of Trustees**

*Meets 7:00pm on third Wednesday of the month*

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Jim Silence, mobile program & warehouse support  
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**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

1st and 3rd Tuesday 6pm - 8pm

Saturday 10am - 12noon

**Food Distribution - Satellite Pantry**

*190 Speedwell Ave., Morristown*

Tuesday 9:30am - 12 noon

Wednesday 9:30am - 12 noon

Thursday 9:30am - 12 noon

2nd and 4th Thursday 5pm - 7pm

**Calendar**

**September**

9/13 IFPN Annual Golf Outing

**October**

10/3 Morristown Fall Festival

10/21 Volunteer Recognition Dinner

**November**

11/19 Holiday Wine Raffle Drawing

11/25 Annual Turkey Trot

*For details please visit [www.mcifp.org](http://www.mcifp.org)*

**2021 January - June Statistics**

Lbs. of food distributed (total)	830,555
IFPN Pantries (lbs. food)	715,040
IFPN Mobile Pantry (lbs. food)	115,515
Households Visits	12,511

**Ways to Give**

The IFPN can accept transfers of appreciated securities/stocks or if you are 70 ½ or older, you can make gifts directly from your IRA and reduce your taxable income.

**Double Your Donations**

Many employers will match donations to non-profit organizations, doubling the value or more. Check with your employer to see if they have a matching gift program.

For more info check out our website at [www.mcifp.org](http://www.mcifp.org).

Interfaith Food Pantry Network  
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Morris Plains, NJ 07950  
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