



## Perry County Food Bank

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“Non nobis solum nati sumus. (*Not for ourselves alone are we born.*)” — Marcus Tullius Cicero

Brrrrrr! A week ago the temperature was close to normal for this time of year at 40 degrees. Now it's a “not so toasty” high around 20 degrees (if we're lucky) and lows in the single digits and even negative single digits. Once the temperatures drop like this, there are all kinds of problems that arise for our clients, especially the homeless ones.

We see many people who live in mobile homes, sheds, campers, and older homes with little or no insulation so that heat disappears almost as fast as it is produced. If you are living at the poverty level you are making tough decisions, one of which is “heat or eat?” In many cases, you can't do either of them adequately. In Perry County the food bank is available to these people so that the “eat” part can be provided freeing some cash for the heating part.

It is the beginning of a brand new year. As we reach this point, we wanted to take some time to stop and look back over the previous year and see where it is that we've come from as we look forward to beginning 2018. Because we work with state and federal agencies, we work with three different calendar years. We have the normal one that starts on January 1 and goes through December, but we also have the state fiscal year that runs from July 1 through June 30 and the federal fiscal year that runs from October 1 through September 30.

Keeping that in mind, we try to put our statistics for the previous year into the normal January to December 2017 calendar. Looking at our numbers – families and people served, donations of money, food, and services — we accommodated 14,503 total households/families and 35,008 individuals with food, both in our store in New Bloomfield and at our 8 remote distribution sites around the county on the weekend of the third Saturday of the month. We received \$53,265.51 in state grants; \$89,786.54 in private donations; a much needed \$35,000 Hoverter grant; and 121,565 pounds of donated food valued at \$210,610.36. In addition to the donated food, we purchased 518,222 pounds of food from the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank at a cost of \$55,541.56 and received 33,278 pounds of food from the US Department of Agriculture valued at \$38,612. We also purchased nearly 55,000 pounds of food from our grocery wholesaler. The Backpack program received \$29,793 in donations and grants and sent home nearly 50,000 pounds of food with elementary school students.

We see all of this in little bits and pieces throughout the year as we are kept busy trying to assure that we have food for our distributions each month and for stocking our store in New Bloomfield as well as paying the bills, arranging transportation for food and Backpack deliveries and making sure that we are adequately staffed with volunteers to handle the volume of business that we expect on any given day. It's only at the end of the year that we look back and put all of the pieces together and stand amazed at what has happened throughout the year. In the end, cash in and cash out pretty well match up. It is the donations of food that puts us over the top in being able to provide amazing amounts of fresh produce and extra items that allow our clients to leave with more than a minimal amount of food at each visit.

All of you who are reading this play a very active role in making this happen. Look at the numbers. Together we have supplied nearly 778,000 pounds of food to those in need in Perry County and in backpacks of food each week during the school year to elementary school students and we have done it all for about 37¢ a pound.

Thank you for being a part of making all of this happen day-in and day-out as we all strive to meet the goal that “no one in Perry County should be hungry.”

Happy New Year!

Linda Bates & John Kiner

Co-directors, Perry County Food Bank