



## Perry County Food Bank

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*"I am reminded that we must show compassion to others. I am reminded that my circumstances are not as bad as I might think they are." Jason Ponzio, Devotional Thoughts For The Day*

We think that it is safe to say that anyone who comes in to the Food Bank in New Bloomfield to volunteer can testify to the truth of the quote from Jason Ponzio above. Most of us, even on our worst day, will find that there are many in this world who have circumstances far worse than we have. Once we come to realize this, compassion flows naturally from us towards others. Ironically, those people we think are worse off than us frequently have an attitude of compassion, as they are happy and grateful that their circumstances aren't as bad as others that they know. The lesson to be learned is to be grateful. There are always others who are much worse-off than you.

Last month we told you about our meeting with Dave Lloyd from the Central PA Food Bank and about getting the Summer Food Service Program from the PA Department of Education started here in the county. We are encouraged that there are several churches and organizations that are looking into trying the program out this summer. If you are interested in looking into this program to feed children in the summer when school breakfasts and lunches are unavailable, please contact either of us at the Food Bank. We will work with you in any way we can to help you navigate the new and uncertain waters involved with getting this program up and running.

We were contacted by Giant Foods in mid-February and asked to attend a press conference at their Enola store on Friday, February 24 to receive a donation. Also present that day were representatives from the Salvation Army of the Harrisburg Area, the Central PA Food Bank, St. Patrick's Parish in Harrisburg, and Project Share in Carlisle. During the conference, Giant Foods president Tom Lenkevich surprised everyone by presenting each organization with \$5,000 in Giant Food gift cards to be used to purchase food to restock their shelves. This was part of the start of Giant's "Bag Hunger" campaign where customers can give a dollar or more to the Food Bank when they checkout. Donations made at the Newport Giant are given to the Perry County Food Bank. Giant Foods at Newport also gives their leftovers from their bakery to our Food Bank and our customers gratefully accept those items.

March has arrived and it's time to get out and start to work in our gardens. The Penn State Master Gardeners of Perry County are part of the *Plant, Prepare, and Partake Program* of the Perry County Food Bank. This is an educational program that we have to show our clients how they can *Plant* gardens of their own, even in small areas, and grow their own fresh produce. We also try to educate them on how to *Prepare* the foods from their gardens, and also foods available from the Food Bank, in ways that are nutritional and tasty so that their families will *Partake* of the meals gladly. The Master Gardeners maintain a demonstration garden next to the Food Bank to teach both our clients and the community the best vegetable gardening practices recommended by the Penn State Extension. If you would be interested in learning about and/or helping with the garden during the growing season, please contact Rev. Bruce Woolever at 717-582-7564.

In the month of February, we served 1,200 households and 2,726 individuals. We had 39 new households and 80 new individuals. In January, our numbers were 1,271 households with 38 new households and 3,054 individuals with 102 of them new. Hopefully you were all able to get out on the warm 60 and 70 degree days and enjoy the taste of spring (and even summer!) before the Groundhog Grinch took them back and served up another round of cold, wet, winter weather. It's always amazing to watch the earth reawaken from its long winter sleep. Thank you for continuing to join us in caring for others.

Linda Bates & John Kiner  
Co-directors, Perry County Food Bank