

# Social Services

*Education*

*Information*

*Accountability*

**March 2014**

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## Summary

It has been a long, hard winter. In March, we saw continued requests for rental, heating and food assistance. Clients were invited to come to the Food Pantry each week, in addition to their monthly visits, for fresh fruit, vegetables, bread, and pastries. An elderly couple proudly shared with staff that they actually had money left in their checking account at the end of the month because of the Windham Food Pantry. Mission accomplished!

As in the previous month, to meet the increased need, staff

- increased hours of availability and the amount of food provided to each client;
- encouraged clients to visit the Clothes Closet for winter clothing;
- referred clients to other appropriate resources as needed; and
- partnered with local businesses and organizations to provide food and non-food items to Windham residents in need.

Additionally, due to the severe weather, staff

- conducted phone interviews and made food deliveries for house-bound clients.

As a result of these efforts, and the generosity of so many groups and individuals, assistance was provided to over two hundred and fifty (250) eligible individuals and their families while working to help them to achieve improved self-sufficiency.

## Progress

- Lee's Family Trailers donated various non-food items (toilet paper, dish soap, laundry detergent, and shampoo) for Food Pantry clients.
- The Windham High School National Honor Society held a food drive to benefit the Food Pantry.
- The "Helping Hands" group at Windham Middle School donated many personal items for Food Pantry clients.
- The Food Pantry continued to promote free education classes on Nutritional Cooking offered through Adult Education.

## Statistics

- The Food Pantry received/made two hundred and three hundred and eighty-seven (387) phone calls.
- Two hundred and nineteen (219) households were served through the Food Pantry; eleven (15) of which were new clients.

- Twenty-eight (28) volunteers worked a total of seventy-four (74) hours in the Food Pantry and Clothes Closet.
- The Clothes Closet received fifteen (15) donations (multiple boxes/bags) of clothing and linens and served fifty (50) households.
- The Food Pantry received thirty-three (33) donations (multiple boxes/bags of canned and packaged food from residents and local businesses; fresh fruit, vegetables, baked goods, and bread) from Hannaford and bi-weekly and donated bread from The Bakery Outlet.
- Twenty-four (24) thank you notes were sent to residents and businesses for their donations.
- General Assistance received/made over three hundred (300) phone calls – most inquiring about heating assistance. (This number includes calls for Gorham.)
- Ninety-five (95) individuals were interviewed for direct general assistance: forty-nine (49) Windham; forty-six (46) Gorham.
- Direct general assistance was provided to sixteen (16) Windham residents.

<b>Type of Assistance Requested</b>	<b>Assistance Provided</b>
23 requests for rental assistance and 1 request for shelter	9 were provided financial assistance for rent; all others were referred to Westbrook Housing Authority for Section 8 or Senior Housing.
6 requests for assistance with electrical bills	3 were provided financial assistance; all others were referred to DHHS and LIHEAP and were assisted in signing up for Efficiency Maine/Electricity Maine
19 requests for fuel assistance	4 were provided financial assistance; all others were referred to LIHEAP, DHHS, and Neighbors Helping Neighbors

*In support of the mission of Social Services, all clients were provided education and information regarding additional resources available to them. To ensure public accountability, the General Assistance Ordinance was objectively, consistently and uniformly applied.*

### **March Expenses/Donations**

- Direct general assistance provided: 3/01/14 – 3/31/14: \$ 4,870.38
- Food Pantry monetary donations: 3/01/14 – 3/31/14: \$ 944.26
- Food Pantry expenses: 3/01/14 – 3/31/14: \$ 2,428.30

### **Fiscal Year-to-Date Expenses/Donations**

- Direct general assistance provided: 7/1/13 – 3/31/14: \$ 32,567.05
- Food Pantry monetary donations: 7/1/13 – 3/31/14: \$ 26,215.88
- Food Pantry expenses: 7/1/13 – 3/31/14: \$ 18,412.78