Our Mission
The Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry is an affiliation of faith-based congregations dedicated to providing supplemental food to underserved residents of Northern Westchester. We are committed to creating a healthier and stronger community. Our volunteer efforts respect the dignity of those we serve and are an expression of the spiritual mission of our sponsoring congregations.

Did you know 99¢ of every donated $1 goes directly to our feeding program?

Please send your gift to:
MKIFP
P.O. Box 834
Mount Kisco, NY 10549

Please make checks payable to:
The Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry

To donate on-line:
www.mountkiscofoodpantry.org

The Food Pantry is a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Your gift is tax deductible.

Yes, I want to make a tax-deductible contribution!

Name: ____________________________
Street Address: ____________________________
City/State/Zip: ____________________________

Would you like to be on our social media list? Please give us your email address.
Email: ____________________________

Amount: ☐ $25 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $150 ☐ $250 ☐ Other:

This is a gift in honor, memory, or support of: ____________________________
Honoree’s Name: ____________________________

Amount: ☐ $25 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $150 ☐ $250 ☐ Other:

F/W 2019

Facing the Hidden Hunger of Seniors
by Suzanne Chazin

Leila never thought she’d need food assistance. The Mount Kisco senior had worked her whole life. Then retirement hit, followed by a divorce. “I was on a limited budget,” she says. “Social security and my small pension weren’t enough to cover all my costs.”

She was thankful to be able to turn to our Pantry for assistance. “The people there were so kind and the food so fresh, I ate much healthier than I would have otherwise.”

Her experience is far from unusual. In 2018, the Pantry saw a 12% increase in the number of senior clients. For many older people living on a fixed income, food often takes a back seat to other budget-breakers. “Doctors and medications cost so much, that’s often their first priority,” notes Margaret DeRose, a social worker with Family Services of Westchester which runs My Second Home, an intergenerational daycare center in Mount Kisco. “It can be hard to find money for fresh fruits and vegetables.”

For many seniors, the notion that they might need food assistance can be the first barrier to getting any help. According to a Feeding America survey of member food banks across the country, only 42 percent of eligible senior clients made use of SNAP (food stamp) assistance.

“A lot of seniors are embarrassed to say they need help,” notes Leila. “I brought a (See Senior Hunger, continued on page 3)

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The rate of hunger among senior citizens in our country is shockingly high; nearly 8% of senior households, almost five million older adults, were food insecure in 2016. Westchester County statistics mirror the national average. Imagine, your elderly neighbor may lack nutritious food in order to pay for medication, or be unable to afford fresh produce after paying the electric bill.

The Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry recognizes the challenges faced by our senior neighbors, and makes a special effort to serve this particular population—with deliveries of healthy groceries to homebound seniors, by providing low-sodium and protein-rich options to accommodate special dietary requirements, and with free health screenings to help identify and monitor chronic conditions. It is unacceptable that they go hungry in a nation of plenty; it is our mission, and our passion, to help.

Fortunately, we don’t work alone. Local businesses partnered with the Pantry during Hunger Awareness Week to raise funds and spread the word that we are here to help. Our extraordinary volunteers, sometimes senior citizens themselves, are neighbors helping neighbors.

Thanks to them, and to you, for engaging with us in being part of the solution.

Kelley Housman
Board President

The Food Pantry’s Hunger Awareness Campaign
A Special Week of Neighbors Helping Neighbors
September 22–29, 2018

Thank you to our loyal donors, businesses, organizations, and volunteers!

Volunteers MaryAnn and Bob Neidzwiecz provide our senior clients with a warm and gracious welcome.

MaryAnn and Bob love the social interaction and new friendships they forge as volunteers. Volunteering also makes them “appreciate what we have . . . while feeling so good about giving back.” MaryAnn considers the Pantry “a place of compassion and kindness for others to draw from.”

Bob put it simply, “It doesn’t matter if you are 20 or 75. Just come if you need to.”

Longtime Pantry volunteers MaryAnn and Robert Neidzwiecz are a dynamic duo, working the protein rack together, good naturedly teasing one another and greeting clients with a smile. Members of St. Mark’s Episcopal Church, they have been helping at the Pantry for over ten years.

As senior citizens themselves, MaryAnn and Bob understand that their contemporaries may be reluctant to visit the Pantry, not wanting to ask for help.

“But once they come they are more comfortable than they thought they would be. Credit goes to the Pantry staff for creating a welcoming atmosphere.”

“When I asked her what she’d do a presentation,” says Montano. “One of my seniors fell and was dizzy. When I asked her what she’d had to eat that day, she said, ‘French fries.’ Good nutrition and good health go hand in hand.”

Families joyfully gathered to support the Pantry at Laps for Lunches on September 23.

Restaurants held a special 10% Tuesday, September 25.

Drives at ShopRite, Stop&Shop, De Cicco & Sons, and many other businesses throughout the week.

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Restaurants held a special 10% Tuesday, giving patrons discounts and donating to the Pantry!

The Pantry served over 40,000 clients last year. We serve on average 300 families a week.

“Just come if you need to.”

Facing Senior Hunger (from pg. 1) friend to the Pantry who wouldn’t have gone if I hadn’t pushed her.” Local agencies that serve seniors concur that pride and embarrassment keep many seniors from taking advantage.

“When you bring in representatives from SNAP to do a presentation,” says Kerri-Anne Montano, Nutrition Site Manager at the Fox Senior Center in Mount Kisco.

“I’ll have thirty to fifty seniors in the room, many of whom are eligible, and one or two will sign up. They’re from the Depression-era generation.

“They’ll tell me, ‘I don’t want to take this from someone who needs it more.’”

And yet, what seniors often don’t realize is that food insecurity can have many damaging medical, social and psychological effects. A 2007 study in the Journal of Nutrition found that low-income seniors who participated in a food assistance program were less likely to be overweight and depressed than those who did not.”

“A lot of seniors are embarrassed to say they need help. I brought a friend to the Pantry who wouldn’t have gone if I hadn’t pushed her.”

Seniors who can’t make it to the Pantry have two other options. Since 2014, the Pantry has helped support a mini-pantry at the Fox Senior Center. In addition, homebound seniors and others with disabilities can take advantage of the Pantry’s home-delivery program.

Leila no longer needs the Pantry’s assistance but she’s thankful for the year she relied on it. She believes more seniors could benefit. “I was shocked at how many people in my situation use the Pantry. It helped to see that I wasn’t alone.”