

the Westside CARES

C O N N E C T I O N

Uniting religious fellowships of Colorado Springs' Westside in care and compassion towards those in need

SEPT. / OCT. 2011



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APRIL 2011 – MARCH 2012

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Steve Brown

Westside CARES

from
Steve's



Steve Brown

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN 3,000 pounds of cheese in one place? I did a couple of weeks ago when Care and Share (our regional food bank) made a special distribution of several different formats of cheese to some of their "Premier" pantries. It is mozzarella, cheddar, American. It was block, sliced, and shredded. It is now mostly frozen in about six different freezers and one walk-in.

We also had to arrange a lot of different schedules, because the cheese needed to stay frozen, or refrigerated, and it turned out to be one of the hottest days in August. The three different locations where we were storing this hill (it really wasn't a mountain, at least not in Colorado terms) had to be open and available. The trucks for hauling the processed milk had to be coordinated. The freezers had to be ready.

Not knowing how big this pile of protein was going to be, and not being quite clear about how much freezer space would be available, I made an appeal to the Bishop's Storehouse of the LDS church. Mr. and Mrs. Joseph are the volunteer operators of the Storehouse and they graciously agreed we could store one pallet in their walk-in freezer, as long as we made advance arrangements to withdraw some of the frozen product, because their freezer is already packed. Now six other freezers are also packed with protein (and fat, and other nutrients).

This cheese is a great source of high-quality food for the increasing numbers of people who find they cannot make ends meet unless they access one of our pantries. We are seeing a growth in the numbers of people being served by our six food pantries. At the same time we have been working harder to maintain an appropriate supply of food for these pantries. We ask for donations, we held a food drive, we buy food, seeking every sale and coupon special to stretch each dollar as far as it will go. We work closely with Care and Share.

The volunteers of our pantries are inspiring. They pay attention to the individual needs of the neighbors they are serving, they provide generously of whatever they have, and I think many of them go home in the afternoon and quietly pray that the Lord will provide enough donations for the next round of service.

(continued on page 2)

From Steve's Keyboard

(continued from front page)

So far, our prayers have been answered, through the efforts and donations of hundreds of generous friends and neighbors. We are not done asking; because our neighbors' needs continue. We trust the Lord will provide, but we will also continue to invite as many as we can to share in the providence of heaven.

Please remember our pantries, their volunteers, and our neighbors when you pray, and when you shop.



Steve Brown, executive director

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Ongoing Events

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Westside CARES Vehicle Donation Program

WESTSIDE CARES is now able to accept car donations. Whether the car is running or not, we can accept the donation of a used car. The donor will receive a tax credit for the value of the car and Westside CARES receives the major portion of the sales price. Contact Steve Brown, 389-0759, for further information.



Travel Toiletries

IF YOU FIND YOURSELVES with an abundance of travel size toiletries at the end of the summer, please feel free to drop them by the Westside CARES office at 1930 W. Colorado Avenue (in the basement of Bethany Baptist Church). We love to have them on hand to give to our neighbors.



Coffee Anyone?

IN JULY, Westside CARES got a call from Ryan at Buywell International Coffee on Northpark Dr. in Colorado Springs. He was wondering if our pantries could use some organic, free-trade coffee. Of course, the answer was a resounding "yes"! To our surprise, when we went to pick it up this generous donation we were thrilled to receive 90 lbs of coffee beans.

Assuming that most of our neighbors wouldn't have access to a coffee grinder, our challenge then became to find a way to grind all of that coffee. The pantry at Trinity United Methodist Church had a grinder they could use so took an ample supply for their use. The other pantries aren't so well equipped. After numerous phone calls to coffee distributors, roasters, and warehouses in the area, Assistant Executive Director, Maryann Stadjuhar, struck gold when she called Scott at Barista Coffee on West Colorado Ave. As Maryann shared our story and was enquiring about renting a grinder, Scott quickly offered to talk to his boss, Glenn, to see if Barista Coffee could grind the beans for us. Glenn gave the go ahead to grind 10 lbs a week (so the coffee doesn't go bad). Once ground, the coffee will be repackaged into smaller quantities to be handed out at the numerous Westside CARES pantries.

Our heartfelt thanks to Buywell International Coffee and Barista Coffee who, together, have made it possible for us to provide high quality, organic, free-trade coffee to our neighbors for the next few months. A real treat considering the price of coffee these days!

Alternative Gift Fair and Bake Sale

ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Broadmoor Community Church, 315 Lake Avenue, will present its annual Alternative Gift Fair and Bake Sale.

The fair will host 40 non-profit organizations which will bring unique fair trade gifts and crafts from all over the world: silk scarves from Southeast Asia, hand woven shawls and tableware from Nepal, embroidered clothing from India, handbags and paper craft from Brazil, handcrafted jewelry and woven baskets from several Africa villages, Peruvian sweaters, Rwandan coffee, elephant paper products from South Africa, and one-of-a-kind crafts and food from Colorado.

Proceeds from the fair will be used by the non-profits to help alleviate hunger, poverty, disease, and illiteracy in the artisans' communities. Bake sale funds help to defray expenses of the fair.

There is no charge to attend. Cash and checks are encouraged; Visa, MasterCard, and Discover are accepted. Plan to do all of your Christmas shopping at the fair; give a gift and help others at the same time!

Directions to the fair: Take Exit 138 (Circle Drive) west from I-25. Circle Drive becomes Lake Avenue. The Broadmoor Community Church is less than two miles on the left.

Program Updates

Diaper Drive Update



TO KEEP OUR SUPPLY of diapers stocked at Westside CARES, board member, **Liberty Ebright**, is coordinating a number of diaper drives with local churches. She is currently working with Christ the King Lutheran Church to conduct a diaper drive in February.

If you or your business, church, Sunday school or group of any sort would like to participate in helping to fill this important need in our community, please contact Liberty Ebright at 473-6268.



Back-To-School Backpacks Update



THANKS TO ALL of our **member churches** and various generous individuals for making this year's back-to-school backpack program a huge success. When all was collected, sorted, and stuffed, 500 new backpacks were available to assist an equal number of west side students start the school year with a level playing field.

Thanks to the volunteers from the **Church of Jesus Christ, LDS**, from **Boy Scout Troop #1**, and the **Weise family** for assembling the 500 back packs with ease and good nature. Thanks also to the **numerous volunteers** who volunteered their time to distribute the 200 backpacks from the Westside CARES' office and to those who delivered the 300 backpacks to west side schools.

This is such an important project. We obviously couldn't do it without all of your help. Thank you!



Among our faithful gardening team members is Murlene Williams (shown front).

Gardening Program Update

WITH SUMMER WANING and fall relentlessly knocking at the door the harvest at the Westside CARES' garden has been plentiful.

Tomatoes are rushing to ripen before the first frost. To date, over 15 pounds of tomatoes have gone from garden to pantry, with a slew of green ones yet to ripen. Thanks to volunteer **Linda Mooney** for sharing her tomato harvest with the pantries as well. The two bush zucchini plants have already produced over 13 pounds of squash. Since the last edition of the newsletter, nearly 10 pounds of onions, 12 pounds of carrots, and 3.5 pounds of cucumbers were also harvested.

With the help of the general west side community our pantries have also been supplemented regularly with extra produce from their personal gardens. Thanks to all of you for sharing your fresh veggies with neighbors struggling to make ends meet this summer. It has been wonderful to supplement the non-perishable items in our Westside CARES' pantries with truly fresh produce this summer!

Consider A Gift to Westside CARES

WESTSIDE CARES is grateful to receive memorial gifts, shared with love for a dear departed person. We can help that love spread more widely by using these gifts to support our caring services which meet some of the crucial needs of our neighbors.



Dedicated volunteer Norma Eure

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Westside CARES Spotlight
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on the special contributions of a dedicated volunteer
or one of our member churches

By Deb Mitguard

THIS MONTH'S SPOTLIGHT shines brightly on Norma Eure. Norma has been a volunteer Neighbor Advocate at Westside CARES since 2007. Finding herself in between volunteer positions, Norma heard about Westside CARES through her home congregation at St. Paul Catholic Church. Norma also had some friends who were volunteering at Westside CARES at the time who encouraged her to look into volunteering with the agency.

Being a registered dietitian, Norma's previous work experiences provided her with ample opportunities to work with people struggling to make ends meet. Particularly, her work with the Parent/ Infant Nurturing Center in Des Moines, Iowa where Norma worked extensively with failure to thrive babies. "One thing I've noticed", says Norma, "is that our neighbors here are much more appreciative than many of the people I've worked with in the past." "It's rewarding to be able to help people who really need it" continues Norma. "It gives you an idea of the kind of hardships people are facing." Growing up on a farm in Iowa, Norma never knew what it was like to be hungry. It's always an eye opener to see just how many people are in need of food.

Norma's quiet compassion, deep caring and ability to truly listen to our neighbors has made her a valuable asset to the work of Westside CARES. "Norma is always cheerful, competent and resourceful", says Program Director, Carol Keenan. Advocacy Specialist, Dorothy Alvarez, adds, "Norma is a delight because she serves without drawing attention to herself but she is fun to talk to and listens well". "Her gentle spirit has touched the lives of so many". Thank you, Norma, for enriching all of our lives!

Introducing Our Service Adventure Program Intern

LAST YEAR Westside CARES was approached by a representative from the Mennonite Church's Service Adventure Program with the hopes of forming a partnership between the two agencies. As a result, Alan Smith joined the Westside CARES staff for nine months.

Because of the success of that initial program, Westside CARES and Service Adventure have teamed up again this year bringing **Carina Kuebler** all the way from Oberschwandorf, Germany located in the Black Forest region. Though Carina has only been on staff for a few weeks, she has quickly made herself invaluable; learning the front office operations with ease, greeting neighbors and guiding them through our sometimes confusing system, assisting with data entry, and keeping the coffee and cookie area well stocked. She's even challenged her fear of heights by hiking Pikes Peak already, though she admits it was "scary."

When she first arrived, Carina confessed to not being terribly fluent in English. She has since conquered that obstacle with flying colors! Carina is a delight to have on staff and will most certainly add a sense of fun and efficiency to the workings of Westside CARES over the next several months. Welcome, Carina!

"Caring comes from the Gothic word 'Kara,' which means 'to lament.' So caring is not what a powerful person gives to a weaker one. Caring is a matter of being there . . . lamenting right along with the one who laments."

— "MISTER" FRED ROGERS

Thanksgiving Baskets

WESTSIDE CARES has committed to distributing 80 baskets in 2011 which is twice the number we have distributed in the past. Understanding that this increase may be difficult for some of our member churches to meet, we are asking our member churches to supply food for 40 baskets but if you are able to contribute more we'll be glad to receive those gifts.



The numbers below reflect what we need to collect for 80 baskets. Most family sizes will be between three and six people.

If you have questions please call Joan Corder at 687-6925 or Deb Mitguard at 389-0759.

Thank you in advance for your help with this worthwhile project!

<i>Church</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Quantity</i>
• All Member Churches	Frozen Turkey or Ham	One or more
• Bethany Baptist Church	Cool Whip	80 tubs (frozen)
• Broadmoor Community Church	Celery	80 bunches, fresh
• Central Christian Church	Gravy	80 cans or envelopes
• Chapel of Our Saviour	Butter	80 – 1 lb. boxes
• Christ the King Lutheran	Deep Dish Pie Crust	40 (2 packs), frozen
• Church in the Wildwood	Jell-O	80 boxes
• Church of Jesus Christ – LDS	Pumpkin	60 – 16 oz. cans
• Fellowship of the Rockies	Oranges	80 bags of 6
• Gateway Presbyterian	Sugar	80 – 4 lb. bags
• Grace Lutheran Church	Stuffing	80 packages
• Manitou Community Congregational	Apples	80 bags of 6
• Metropolitan Community Church	Cranberries	80 cans
• Pikes Peak United Methodist	Yams	40 cans
• St. Aidan's Anglican Church	Evaporated Milk	30 – 11 oz. cans
• St. Andrew's Episcopal	Spiritual Gift	80
• St. Paul's Catholic	Jelly or Jam	80 jars
• Tri-Community Catholic Churches	Juice	80 cans or jars
• Trinity United Methodist Church	Brown 'n Serve Rolls	80 packages
• Wilson United Methodist Church	Potatoes	80 – 5 lb. bags
<i>Items Already Covered:</i>		
• Food Drive Surplus	Corn and Green Beans	160 cans each
• Boy Scout Troop 187	Fruit	160 cans
• Care and Share Surplus	Flour	80 – 10# bags



Attention All Gardners! Do You Have Extra Produce?

WANT TO HELP supplement the non-perishable food bags provided by our pantries? Feel free to donate fresh produce directly to our food pantries on the days they are distributing food.

MONDAY AND THURSDAY:

- **Sacred Heart Pantry**, located in the Sacred Heart Center behind the church (Pikes Peak & 21st Street)
- Drop off fresh produce on Monday and/or Thursday between 8 a.m.–noon

TUESDAY:

- **Trinity United Methodist Church**, 701 N. 20th Street
- Drop off fresh produce on Tuesday between 9 a.m.–noon

TUESDAY EVENING:

- **Church in the Wildwood**, 10585 Ute Pass Avenue, Green Mountain Falls
- Drop off fresh produce on Tuesday between 10 a.m.–3 p.m. or 6–7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY:

- **Westside Community Center Pantry**, 1628 West Bijou
- Drop off fresh produce on Wednesday between 10 a.m.–noon

WEDNESDAY:

- **Stratmoor Hills Community Food Pantry**
- Drop off fresh produce on Wednesday between 9:30 a.m.–noon at Westside CARES, 1930 W. Colorado Avenue. Westside CARES will transport the produce to the pantry.

Westside CARES Fall Musical and Silent Auction — Call for Volunteers!

- Youth groups to help with the dinner show and with the set up and break down of tables and chairs before and after the show.
- Silent auction set up on Friday, October 7
- Silent auction tear down after the show on Saturday, October 8
- Two ticket takers for each show (2 p.m. matinee, 7 p.m. dinner show)

Interested individuals/teams/groups may contact Deb Mitguard at 389-0759, ext. 108, or e-mail Debra.Mitguard@westsidecares.org

July Food Drive A Huge Success!

THE WESTSIDE CARES July Food Drive was a huge success again this year. All premier pantries that work with Care and Share were required to participate in a food drive this past July. Though the lead time to organize this project was short, Westside CARES' food drive coordinators, **Ann Smith** and **Joan Corder**, rose to the occasion. During the last weekend of July 60 volunteers from 14 of our member churches completed 56 storefront hours. Despite the stifling heat, these dedicated volunteers greeted customers as they entered the west side King Soopers and Eighth Street Walmart stores distributing Westside CARES brochures and lists of pantry food needs. As a result, 5,400 lbs of food (valued at \$8,513) and over \$1,500 in cash donations were collected!

On the receiving and sorting end of the food drive, 32 volunteers worked a total of 101 hours. Over a two-day period, these volunteers sorted all of the food donated at the grocery stores, marked out the UPC codes, and helped to prepare for distribution to the various Westside CARES' pantries.

Many thanks to **everyone** involved, and to **Ken Smith** and **Steve Brown** for gathering the food from the stores and delivering it to the Bethany Baptist gym for processing.

Current Pantry Needs

Stratmoor Hills Community Food Pantry
Any and all non-perishable food items

Trinity United Methodist Pantry
Canned legumes (pinto, kidney, and pork and beans)
Canned tuna

Westside Community Center Pantry
Canned fruit
Canned legumes (pinto, kidney, and pork and beans)
Fruit Juice

Sacred Heart Pantry
Feminine hygiene products
Diapers

Church in the Wildwood Pantry
Canned tuna
Dry cereal
Hamburger Helper
Spaghetti sauce
Tuna Helper

Thanks!

Community Resource Coordinator
Westside CARES
1930 West Colorado Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80904
Ph: 719-389-0759, ext. 108 • Fax: 719-475-8949
www.westsidecares.org
Debra.Mitguard@westsidecares.org

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Formed in 1983, Westside CARES is an ecumenical and interfaith, nonprofit collaboration of 21 religious fellowships of the west side of Colorado Springs, united in care and compassion for those in need by providing crisis human services.

Vision Statement

Westside CARES is a faith-based organization called together in a shared mission to serve by:

- Providing emergency assistance to neighbors with critical needs
- Listening to one another, seeking to develop relationships that allow us all to understand the ways in which we can help each other
- Developing deeper relationships to clarify needs and honor the hope and potential of each person
- Providing more effective assistance as we strive to overcome barriers to fullness of life
- Growing with our neighbors' needs

Mission Statement

Care and compassion for neighbors in need — today, tomorrow, and beyond.

Member Churches

- Bethany Baptist Church
- Broadmoor Community Church
- Central Christian Church
- Chapel of Our Saviour
- Christ the King Lutheran Church
- Church in the Wildwood
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
- Fellowship of the Rockies
- Gateway Presbyterian Church
- Grace Lutheran Church
- Holy Rosary Chapel
- Manitou Community Congregational Church
- Our Lady of Perpetual Help
- Pikes Peak Metropolitan Community Church
- Pikes Peak United Methodist Church
- Sacred Heart Catholic Church
- St. Aidan's Anglican Church
- St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
- St. Paul Catholic Church
- Trinity United Methodist Church
- Wilson United Methodist Church