

Food for Thought

A newsletter published by Community Kitchen of Monroe County, Inc.

December 2023

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Sevita
Stone Belt
The Rise
United Way of Monroe County



Christmas at Community Kitchen

Christmas is right around the corner. Since Christmas falls on a Monday, we will serve our holiday meal on that day. Each year we seek to make a festive holiday meal for folks who, often times, don't have family or friends with whom to enjoy the holiday. We will serve on Christmas Day from 3-6pm at our main (1515 S Rogers St) and Express (1100 W 11th St) locations. The food truck will not be running but folks are encouraged to visit one of our locations, or seniors can sign up with Area 10 for meal delivery (812-876-3383 ext 553).

At Community Kitchen, we have extra volunteer shifts to accommodate the many generous volunteers who want to be a part of our holiday meal and we serve an hour longer than normal. We've been scheduling volunteers and most, but not all, of those shifts are filled.

Please also consider contributing special holiday food. Below is a list of the items and quantities we will need for Christmas. Help us make it a special day for the needy in our community!

- 50-60 hams (boneless are preferred)
- Canned sweet potatoes
- Canned green beans
- Canned fruit: fruit cocktail, tropical fruit, pears, peaches, apricots, cranberry

Donations can be dropped off at our main location at 1515 S Rogers St from 8am - 6:30pm, Mon - Fri and 11am-6:30pm on Saturdays.

January - November Meal Counts

Rogers Street	41,522	Backpack Buddies	71,200
Express	36,010	A Friend's Place	12,865
Food Truck	15,981	Senior Links	2,199
Feed Our Future	70,141	Nutrition Links	3,401
Head Start	47,166	Hotels for Homeless	155

Total 300,640



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THANK YOU!

We would like to thank the following organizational and institutional supporters and we encourage you to thank them as well. The groups below have provided financial, in-kind, or volunteer support since our last newsletter:

America's Charities
Area 10 Agency on Aging
Bailey & Wood Financial Group
Benevity Community Impact Fund
Bethel Lane Community Church
Blmngtn Coffee Roasters & Brown Co Coffee
Bloomington Farm Stop
Bloomington South Nat'l Honor Society
Bloomington Professional Carpet Cleaners
Bloomington Township Trustee
Bluegill Construction
Bridge Church of Christ
Butcher's Block
C-21 Scheetz
Carpenter Realtors Bloomington
Catalent
Childs Elementary School
Choice Realty & Management
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
Church Women United
Clendening, Johnson & Bohrer PC
Community Foundation of Blmngton & MC
Compassion to Action
Congregation Beth Shalom
Crane
Cross Roads United Methodist Church
Crumbl Cookies
Dallas Conder Family Farms
Delta Tau Delta
Dental Brigade
E&B Paving
Eagle Pointe
Embassy Church
Farm to Family Fund
Farmers & Mechanics Federal
First United Church
Force Fitness and Performance
Full House Fitness
Gaden Khachoe Shing Monastery
Gordon Food Service
Hand in Hand a Stone Belt Project
Highland Village Church of Christ
Hilger Enterprises - Orkin Pest Control
Hive
Hoosier Heights
Indiana Green Burial
ISU The May Agency
IU Football Team
IVY Tech Student Government
Jo Throckmorton Filmworks
Kappa Kappa Kappa - Alpha Chapter
Korean Presbyterian Church
Kroger Community Rewards
Lambda Chi Alpha
Light House Community Church
Little Union Baptist Church
MAPS at IU
MCCSC Community Transitions
Mennonite Fellowship of Bloomington
Michael's Uptown Cafe, Inc.
Monroe County Council
Monroe County History Center
Mount Pleasant Church of Christ
Nature's Way Inc
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Olson & Company, PC
Paypal Giving Fund
People's Market
Perry Township Trustee
Pre-Physicians Assistant Club - IU
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Simtra
Smithville Charitable Foundation
St. Charles Borrromeo Catholic Church
St. John The Apostle Catholic Church
St. Mark's United Methodist Church
St. Paul Catholic Center
Steve's Roofing & Sheet Metal
Stone Belt
Student Accounting Society
The Papa John's Foundation, Inc.
Trinity Episcopal Church
Union Savings Bank
Unitarian Universalist Church
United Way of Bartholomew Co.
United Way of South Central Indiana
Unity of Bloomington
Volunteer Corps
VOSH at IU
Wednesday Club
Woodhaven Christian Church CWF
Worthington Christian Church



Family Day in January!

The first Family Volunteer Day in 2023 will be on a Sunday afternoon in January. These events allow families the opportunity to volunteer together. We appreciate the desire to instill a spirit of volunteerism in your children and will have tasks that children of a variety of ages will be able to participate in and complete. Because we want to make sure to have plenty of space and keep everyone busy, we do require that families sign up in advance. Space will be limited. To reserve a spot, call June at 812-332-0999 from 8am-4pm, Mon - Fri.

Community Kitchen Wish Lists

If you like to shop online and would like to extend your online shopping to include donations for Community Kitchen, please check out our Amazon and Wal-Mart wish lists:

Amazon: https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1SPOOALICR4Y4?ref_=abls_nvfly_yl

Wal-Mart: <https://www.walmart.com/registry/RR/5a887596-14d1-4452-a937-f109824541ef>

Or visit our website for the direct links:

monroecommunitykitchen.com/donate

Your giving matters!

This time of year, at Community Kitchen, we're working to make the holidays festive for our community! We served a traditional Thanksgiving dinner for local folks who needed a safe place to have a nice holiday meal. We served 518 meals and handed out 200 bags of groceries. We will be ready to do the same thing on Christmas Day, as well. At Community Kitchen, we take our work and our role in the lives of our patrons, very seriously. We know that folks need to eat every day. We realize that feeding folks a meal once/week just isn't going to be enough to sustain them. We understand that if we miss a day of serving, someone will miss a meal, and maybe so much more. That's why we are open on holidays. It is both to provide holiday opportunities for folks who don't have access to friends or family on the holidays, but also, just because many folks are dependent on us to eat each day. Several of those folks are senior adults. We are honored to be a part of caring for our community's vulnerable citizens, and we take that role seriously.

It has been a busy year at Community Kitchen and it's hard to believe we are nearing the end of 2023! This year we have had the food truck out, serving six days/week, all year. We hired Dining Room Monitors, to help monitor behaviors and conduct in the dining room at Rogers St. Extra eyes and hands in the dining room allow our Kitchen Supervisor and Kitchen Staff to spend more time in the kitchen, assisting volunteers and handling prep and serving duties. We secured grant funding to put solar panels on our Rogers St building. That move saves us about \$450/month in energy costs, a savings that funds over 130 meals each month, while reducing our carbon footprint. We started working on our plans to rebuild our Express location on the same site at 1100 W 11th St (that project set to happen in 2024) and secured most of the funding we expect to need.

The biggest news for us this year has been the increase in meals served. For the first several months of the year, we were seeing 20+% increases. That has finally leveled out a little and at the end of October, we had seen an 11% increase, year to date, in 2023 over meals served in 2022. Some of that has been in our outreach programs. The food truck has provided 200% more meals so far this year than last year, because we are in more locations and out for six days/week. In addition to that growth, we have seen a tremendous increase in our Backpack Buddies program, through which we send home bags of weekend food supplies with children to help them and their families with their weekend food needs. Prior to this school year, we had never served more than 425 families with this program. We are now up to **490 across 21 local schools!**

Along with the increase in meals being served, we have faced increases in food prices. No doubt we have all seen that in our own household shopping. As folks have to spend more for their own food, they donate less food to us, so we have more to buy. In our Backpack Buddies program alone, we use **2 tons of food each week!** As we have to buy more and provide more to meet need, our food and other operating expenses climb. Your support this year is essential to us maintaining our level of service and quality! Last year **62% of the individuals we served were children; 15% were seniors and 14% had experienced homelessness**. Your gifts here, really do help feed the most vulnerable individuals in our community.

We appreciate the generous and loyal support that so many of you continue to provide to us and others in our community. We ask for your support once again. Since meals cost us about \$3.38 to provide, your gift, regardless of size, will make an impact in someone's daily life. Please use the enclosed envelope to make a gift now, to sustain our programs to feed our neighbors in need. We thank you for how you help us care for our community!

Successful Holiday Cookie Sale

We are grateful to all who ordered cookies from our Holiday Cookie Sale. We were able to sell **nearly 200 dozen cookies**, raising over \$4,000 for our hunger relief programs! This sale is something our board enjoys doing together to support our programs.

Community Kitchen Board of Directors (and Nick) handle this event from recipe to cookie pick up. Thank you to all of them for measuring ingredients, mixing and scooping dough, baking cookies, packaging and working the pickup days.

Thank you to GFS for donating many of the ingredients! We appreciate your support!

Gordon[®]
FOOD SERVICE



Backpack Buddies Food List

As our Backpack Buddies program has climbed by 133% this year, we use 2 tons of food for the program each week. Food donations are essential to the quality of what goes in the bags. Food donations are always accepted. Here are the items most helpful for Backpack Buddies:

- Canned or pouch tuna or chicken
- Peanut butter
- Meal helpers (like Hamburger/Chicken/Tuna helpers)
- Fruit cups – applesauce, mixed fruit, pears, peaches, etc.
- Instant Oatmeal – individual portions
- Macaroni & Cheese
- Easy to prepare food items – instant mashed potatoes, dried soups, beans, rice or pasta meals, etc.
- Granola/fruit/cereal bars
- Dried fruit – raisins, cranberries, cherries, etc.
- Small bread mixes – cornbread, muffin, biscuit, etc.
- Healthy snack crackers
- Small pop top cans or pouches of vegetables
- Small boxes of cereal

Kroger Community Rewards

Do you shop at Kroger? Carry one of those Kroger Plus cards? You can help support Community Kitchen when you shop by registering your Plus card on the website and 2% of your purchases support Community Kitchen each time you shop.



Follow the link below to register your card today. When you get logged in and registered, just move to the Community Rewards section and select Community Kitchen of Monroe County or organization #SJ831. It's that simple. We receive around \$1,200 each quarter of the year! If you haven't, please do so today!

<https://www.kroger.com/communityrewards>



Kitchen Wish List
 Vegetables - canned, fresh or frozen
 Canned tomatoes, sauce or paste
 Canned fruit
 Juice
 Salad dressing
 Backpack Buddies food
 Christmas dinner food

Member Agency



Bloomington, IN 47402-3286

PO Box 3286



Non-profit org.
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