



Saint Francis of Assisi Food Pantry
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Saint Francis of Assisi Food Pantry Newsletter February, 2022

"We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers"

A Bountiful Christmas at the Pantry

Our clients enjoyed an abundant Christmas at the pantry thanks to the generosity of the Sodality Club at **Bishop Manogue Catholic High School, Nevada Woodchucks, Reno Elks Lodge #597, Sierra Meat & Seafood, Western Nevada Supply, White's Creek Dental** and loyal community donors **Brett and Morgan Bargaquast, MJ Rader, Mary Robertson, and Terry Vaca**.

The Sodality Club at **Bishop Manogue Catholic High School** is a service organization for high school girls that serves children and the less fortunate. It is the biggest club on campus and made a big difference to our clients too.

This is the second year that the **Nevada Woodchucks** gifted the pantry with handmade wooden toys for our kids. This year these hardworking men and women volunteers made and donated 1,740 unique toys to the community along with 200 warm winter hats.

The **Reno Elks Lodge** donated canned food they collected over the holidays, always a helpful addition to stock our shelves.

Sierra Meat & Seafood is a 4th generation family-owned meat supplier who reached out to offer the pantry turkeys for Christmas. Many thanks to the Flocchini family for their generosity to our grateful clients.

Western Nevada Supply is a local company founded in 1964 by Jack Reviglio and Bill Higgins. Our thanks to the current President & General Manager, Rick Reviglio, for his steadfast support of the pantry over the years and his special gift of turkeys for Christmas.

White's Creek Dental provided us with 3 energetic volunteers who jumped in on short notice to assist at the pantry on the Thursday before Christmas when we were very short-handed.

Pantry supporters **Brett and Morgan Bargaquast** donated loads of cheery toys along with urgently needed items from Costco. **Mary Robertson** and **Terry Vaca** came bearing

armloads of toys for pantry families and made Christmas fun for lots of needy kids. **MJ Rader** made delightfully decorated bags of toiletries for pantry clients.

We are amazed and grateful for the kindness of these community partners who blessed our clients with food and toys at the holidays. The donations made the holidays brighter for families who received not only food and gifts, but reassurance that they are loved and cared for by our community. Our humble thanks to everyone who made a difference this past year to those in need in our area.



Boxes of donations from the Reno Elks Lodge #597; fresh food at the pantry; superstar volunteer Karrie Backlund



Toys donated by Nevada Woodchucks, Brett and Morgan Bargaquast, Mary Robertson & Terry Vaca





Gift cards donated by the Bishop Manogue Sodality Club; turkeys donated by Sierra Meats and Western Nevada Supply.



Christmas Luncheon for pantry volunteers
Upper right – volunteers from White's Creek Dental

New Mount Rose Ministries is Hard at Work

We are very proud to tell you about a new food outreach effort began by one of our most dedicated volunteers, **Kerry McKinney**. Kerry has been volunteering at Saint Francis of Assisi Food Pantry for several years now, managing the canned goods area among other things.

In her "spare time", Kerry has begun Mount Rose Ministries, a volunteer organization that distributes food to the needy at the south end of Reno. Many of those in need are low-income seniors who live in subsidized and/or senior housing, who struggle to get to pantries that are located in central and downtown Reno. This new ministry will celebrate its first anniversary in March. Way to go, Kerry!!

Toiletry Items Needed for Seniors

We would like to continue providing our senior clients with toiletries. Can you help? Small size items are needed and can include the items listed and more. You can drop off donations during pantry hours:

- Monday, Tuesday & Thursday every week: 1-3 pm
- 3rd Wednesday of each month: 5-7 pm
- Every Thursday 11 am-Noon: **Golden Groceries** for Seniors



Bar or liquid soap
Deodorant
Hand and body lotion
Mouthwash
Nail care items
Razors & shaving cream
Shampoo & conditioner
Shower gel
Toilet paper
Toothbrushes & toothpaste

New Ride United Last Mile Delivery Program

We are proud to be one of the first few food pantries in Northern Nevada to participate in the new **Ride United Last Mile Delivery** program sponsored by United Way and DoorDash. This is a new program to address food insecurity needs in various communities including Reno/Sparks.

The motivation for this new program is explained on the UnitedWay.org website: "Across the United States, a lack of reliable, safe, convenient transportation hinders hundreds of thousands of peoples' abilities to get to good jobs, access healthcare, seek healthy food, apply for public benefits and more."

"**Ride United** addresses these unmet transportation needs for individuals and families in communities across the country. With COVID-19 presenting new barriers to food access, especially for older adults and individuals with higher vulnerability, Ride United now offers deliveries of food and household goods."

Our first deliveries to homebound clients began the week of Feb. 8. We are excited about this new outreach to those in our community who struggle to get to the pantry due to not having a car and lacking access or funds to bus or taxi rides. Food from the pantry will be delivered to these clients at no cost to them, thanks to this new innovative partnership with DoorDash and United Way.



Sad Goodbye to Rachel Blanchard

We are very sad to report that one of our most outstanding volunteers has passed away. Rachel Blanchard was the cheerful face at the pantry Front Desk checking in clients for the past several years. She was always kind, positive and helpful and loved by her fellow volunteers and clients.

We will miss Rachel tremendously and offer our heartfelt condolences to her husband Steve, also a past pantry volunteer, and her grieving family.



New Pantry Shopping Carts Make Their Debut

We use shopping carts at the pantry to streamline the process as clients move through pantry rooms. The special small size carts are stationed in the canned goods/non-perishable food room where our clients make their choices, then travel with their cart to the next room to get their bread, cereal, snacks and pet food. Clients then roll their carts to the perishable food room at the back of the pantry where they obtain fresh fruit, vegetables, dairy, eggs, and meat or poultry. Clients then use the carts to bring their pantry items to their cars.

We proudly display our name on the handle:



Inflation is Taking Its Toll

The fastest and most significant inflation in the last 40 years is having a negative effect on food prices, not only at supermarkets but also for our country's food banks, who are seeing reduced donations at the same time they are having to pay higher prices to make up for the drop in donations. The additional food costs are compounded by higher gas prices and the global struggle with supply chain disruptions.

Inflation hits everyone, but has a greater impact on poor and middle-class families who typically spend a bigger portion of their income on food and other necessities. As noted in a report by CBS News on January 31, 2022, "Rapid price hikes in low-cost goods sold by Amazon, Wal-Mart and Dollar General are disproportionately hurting lower-income Americans."

Our local food bank, the Food Bank of Northern Nevada, is seeing few trucks arriving with perishable foods, such as fresh fruits, vegetables and meat. Even the normally plentiful and reliable supply of basic commodities donated to food banks by the US Dept. of Agriculture through its The Emergency Food n Assistance Program (TEFAP) has been diminished. All of these factors lead to higher costs for food banks, as they purchase food to make up for shortfalls in donations. They pass along these costs to their partner food pantries, including Saint Francis of Assisi Food Pantry, which at the same time is seeing an uptick in the number of clients needing assistance.



In order to keep our shelves stocked with sufficient food for increasing number of clients, we purchase food at Costco Wholesale, Grocery Outlet, and other local sources when less food is available from the Food Bank of Northern Nevada. We greatly appreciate and rely on donations from our local supporters to keep the pantry doors open and our shelves stocked with the variety of food necessary for clients, many of whom are families with children or seniors who struggle with chronic health and nutrition issues. Your support is needed now more than ever!



We are always looking for volunteers to pick up donations, unload trucks, place items on our shelves and/or assist clients. Contact Cindy Becher at 772-2759 if you would like to help. COVID-19 safety protocol is followed at all times.

Support the Pantry While You Shop!

If you are like many who shop online at Amazon, especially during this time of staying safe at home, we encourage you to log into Amazon Smile and choose St. Francis of Assisi Food Pantry as your designated charity. When you shop at Amazon Smile, which is identical to the regular Amazon website, the Amazon Smile Foundation will donate .5% of the dollar value of your eligible purchases to the pantry, at no cost to you.

Here's how to set it up:

1. Using your usual Amazon sign on information, log into <https://smile.amazon.com/>
2. Amazon will prompt you to choose a charity.
3. Search for **Saint Francis of Assisi Food Pantry Reno** and select it. It will remain your selected charity until you change or delete it.
4. Log in and shop at <https://smile.amazon.com/>

That's it! Very easy and you will be helping support the pantry with every purchase you make. On a quarterly basis, the Amazon Smile Foundation combines donations generated from all purchases designated for the pantry during the previous 3 months and automatically sends a donation to us. Just be sure to always log into <https://Smile.Amazon.com> to make the magic happen!



Together We're Making a Difference

We have received generous grants from the following organizations which allow us to continue providing the less fortunate in our community with healthy food and other items at no cost to them.

- ♥ **Food Bank of Northern Nevada** - their 2020 grant of \$5,000 allowed us to purchase 80 new heavy duty folding shopping carts for our clients to take home with them.
- ♥ **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints** – for their most recent gift of \$5,000 worth of food from the Bishops' Storehouse. We cannot thank this exceptionally giving and caring church enough for all the outstanding assistance they have provided to us from the beginning. Their help has always been extraordinary!
- ♥ **United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierras** – for generous grants totaling \$22,000 to support food purchases for our clients from January, 2020 – April, 2021.

