**Food for thought**

**Fighting Hunger One Meal at a Time**

**Donate a jar of peanut butter, feed a child this summer!**

April & May are Peanut Butter Rally months, which means you can be a part of this fun campaign to ensure that the children who rely on the Rock River Valley Food Pantry can enjoy a PB & J sandwich during the summer months.

Why is this so important? Over 70% of the children in the Rockford Public School system are eligible for a free or subsidized lunch and/or breakfast, when school is out, these children are at risk for going hungry. Having nutritious peanut butter on hand for these children is crucial.

Our goal is 9,000 jars, and with your help, we can achieve that goal! **Donate a jar, sponsor a case of peanut butter for $20.00** (just indicate “Peanut Butter Rally” on the memo section of your check), or better yet, **host a Peanut Butter drive!** You can host a drive at work, church, school, or even at your service meetings. We’ll supply the barrels and pick them up at the end of your drive, so call 815-965-2466 to schedule your drive today.

The RRVP provides food to more than 2,500 children on a monthly basis.

**Increased Demand**

Client usage has increased by 12% during the first six months of our fiscal year. From July through December, we experienced 44,536 user visits, compared to 39,557 in 2013. The need is great, so please consider helping those that are going hungry in the community through food drives, food, and/or monetary donations. Every can and every dollar makes a difference to someone who’s going hungry today!

![Graph showing increased demand](image)

**RRVP Immediate Needs:**

- Canned Fruits & Vegetables
- Tuna Fish

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**PEAK Run Against Hunger**

Join us for the 2nd Run Against Hunger 5K on May 17 at PEAK Sport Club on Perryville. A great course awaits the competitive to the beginner runner, and a ¼ mile Kids Run will be hosted on site as well. Promote fitness with your family and run to raise money to fight hunger in our community! Race proceeds will be used to purchase food for the RRVP clients, so thank you to all that sponsor this event and participate.

*Lace up your shoes and register at: www.imathlete.com/*
We are pleased to announce that the Rock River Valley Pantry is the recipient of several recently awarded grants that will assist us in accomplishing our mission, “to fight hunger in the community by providing food to those in urgent need.” Thank you to the following agencies:

- **Healthy Foods, Healthy Folks** - The $3,000 grant was made possible by the Margaret K. Aldeen Christian Ministries Fund of the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois. Funds will be used to purchase nutritious, nonperishable food for family food bags.

- **Got Milk for Kids** - BMO Harris Bank granted the $4,000 to purchase milk for the families that use our services during the summer. More than 1,700 families per month will receive milk during the summer months when children are out of school. This is the fourth year that BMO Harris Bank has supported this program.

- **Food for the Hungry** - The Mission and Benevolence committee of Westminster Presbyterian Church granted $3,000 to purchase canned fruit and canned vegetables. The church is committed to outreach and supporting the RRVP’s mission.

- **AED and Training grant** – This grant, awarded by Rockford Memorial Development Foundation allows the RRVP to have on hand a life-saving device in case of a medical emergency.

- **Applesauce grant** - Winnebago County Medical Society Alliance for Community Health approved $1,450 for the purchase of applesauce for the food bags. The monetary support will allow us to provide more than 3,000 cans of applesauce to families and individuals.

**BACKPACK FOOD PROGRAM**

A great partnership is underway with the Jr. League of Rockford, RPS 205, and the RRVP! Children at a local school, that have been identified as food insecure, are being provided with a bag of healthy, easily prepared food for their weekend consumption. Jr. League members, who will measure the impact on the children, expect to see children report to school on Monday that are well-fed, and thus more attentive to their lessons.

**Grants Awarded This Quarter**

- **Client Stories**

  Judy, a Wednesday volunteer, posted her perspective to her Facebook page on February 26, 2014: “It was below zero here all day and will be worse tomorrow. There weren’t a ton of people at the pantry today, but those who were there braved dangerous temperatures to get food. One woman walked from Fairgrounds to the pantry. I don’t know how far that is, but it is farther than I would walk on a summer day. Others had to wait for the bus. One couple came in for food for themselves and their new baby. Both parents were veterans; the husband had been in the last group to leave Iraq. There are so many people going hungry.”

**Half Marathon/5k/Kids 1 Mile Fun Run**

**Saturday, June 14, 2014 • Start time: 11:00 am**

*The Biggest Loser RunWalk is coming back to Rockford!*

A portion of proceeds from this year’s race will be donated to Rock River Valley Pantry! This is a race for all fitness levels, whether you are ready to set a personal record or whether this is your first race. Come join us at The Biggest Loser RunWalk!

Don’t forget to bring the kids for their very own fun run (ages 4-12) hosted by Kids Fit Foundation! Kids Fit programs and events are designed to be a day for kids to reach their goals and to celebrate their healthy lifestyle achievements with their family and friends.

http://www.biggestloserrunwalk.com/Rockford_IL-Half-Marathon-5K-2014

**RRVP CAN ALWAYS USE:**

- Cereal
- Pasta & Rice
- Canned Fruits and Vegetables
It's time to get the transplants started, maybe even put out your cold-weathered crops if you are itching to get into the garden. The RRVP garden was sowed with spinach last fall, and covered with a heavy blanket of straw, with the hope that we would have an early crop. After this winter, though, we may have to reseed! Produce is greatly appreciated by the RRVP clients as it is healthy and fresh! Volunteers are needed to assist the Master Gardeners with 21 raised beds and 18 large containers. Contact us if you would like to help in the gardens. This is a great service project for high school teens, scouts, or service clubs.

The Pantry’s Purchasing Power

The chief executive of a company that sells breads, soups, and sandwiches decided to try to eat on $4.50 a day, a figure someone came up with as what the less fortunate have to exist on. He had trouble doing it, he said. I thought, ‘Whenever I’ve bought food for the Pantry, I’ve always tried to stretch what I spend to get the most, and healthiest, foods that can help lead to a balanced diet. To me, $4.50 per person would be a pretty good amount if it’s spent right.’

With that thought in mind, I toured Valli (neither the most expensive, nor the least expensive marketplace in our town) and started putting together foods to buy for the Pantry for a simple, nutritious supper. I started with Hunt’s pasta sauce, a pound of pasta, and two cans of green beans. The total came to $3.00, including sales tax, and I estimated it would provide a reasonably balanced supper for about six people (four, if two of those eating were teenage boys). Three dollars, feed four, pretty good, huh?

I then asked the Pantry director, Kim, what RRVP could do with three bucks. I told her about the supper I had figured out for six people, and she went to work. Here’s what the Pantry’s purchasing power can do for the same meal, at twice the buying power:

1 lb. semolina spaghetti.......................... $0.54
15 oz. spaghetti sauce (low sodium, meatless)................... $0.47
15 oz. can green beans (2 @ .24)............................... $0.48
Total Pantry price ........................................... $1.49

In this scenario, I can feed four people with $3, but RRVP can feed four people with half that. Wow!

The point of my story is, if you are sending the Pantry a donation, they can buy even more with your dollars, sometimes up to 3x! Either way, though, if you donate some food or donate some dollars, some folks who would otherwise go hungry will be able to sit around the table and have a good meal.

- F. Lierman, Board of Directors

United States Postal Drive

Stamp Out Hunger is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. Please help your community fight hunger on Saturday morning, May 10th, by leaving your bagged, nonperishable food donation next to your mailbox. Postal carriers throughout the area will collect the food and donate it to local pantries.

Together, let’s set a new record for total food donated!

Schnucks’ Thanks

A BIG thanks to the Schnucks Supermarkets for their food donations. On a daily basis, our food rescue program is extremely successful due to the generosity of the stores in the Rockford area. Schnucks’ continued contribution of perishable and nonperishable food items makes a difference in the lives of all our clients. Additionally, in celebration of their 75th anniversary, Schnucks is supporting local hunger organizations with a “red barrel” drive. Please consider dropping in a nonperishable item to be donated to a local food pantry.

You also can make a difference by registering for the Schnucks e-scrip card and naming the RRVP as your charity of choice. Sign up at any Schnucks customer service counter and swipe your e-scrip card at the register. The store will then donate up to 3% of your grocery bill to the RRVP. It’s our goal to use the monthly proceeds to fund our Got Milk for Kids program.
RRVP Mission Statement:
Rock River Valley Pantry fights hunger in the community by providing food to those in urgent need.

We Need Your Help!
Do you know someone that needs our help?
Yes, I want to make a difference and fight hunger in our community!

List of other food resources:
- a 4 week short process. They will receive with 3-4 days worth of food and a
- afternoon distributions. Once a family or individual is registered, which is
- after hunger relief Mon-Fri. From two locations, including morning and
- we are able to provide food to those going hungry in our community.

We are proud to provide food to those going hungry in our community.

Do You Know Someone That Needs Our Help?

Want to Help? Need Help? Call us at 815-965-2466
Visit our website at www.rrvp.org. Like us on Facebook!
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Want to Help? Need Help? Call us at 815-965-2466
Visit us at 421 S. Rockton or 1100 Broadway, Rockford, IL

RRVP: Respect, Responding, Valuing, Partnering!

Contact us today at 815.965.2466 or go to our website

Want to make a difference in the lives of those going hungry? Donate or

Yes, I want to make a difference and fight hunger in our community!

Use my donation to purchase food that is urgently

needed. Please respond today!

$50 = 50#s of Mixed Vegetables
$100 = 25#s of Mince Meat (Beef)
$250 = 25#s of Ground Chicken

Due to our buying power from food brokers we are able to purchase up to 2 to 3 times what you can

purchase food for 1/3 less than what you spend at the retail stores. Also, we can purchase what we

urgently need and we're able to make enormous buying power. We can usually

note that many donations allow us to purchase what we urgently

need. If you have any questions regarding this program, please

contact us at one of our locations or call at the pantry.

Here's a food drive: send a donation to feed a family or

volunteer today! Host a food drive, send a donation to feed a family or

volunteer at one of our locations, including morning and

afternoon distributions. Once a family or individual is registered, which is

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