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Green Bag News • Feb 2023



Did You Know?

Last week OPB's *Think Out Loud* program broadcast a story about one of Portland Food Project's pantry partners. The Portland Open Bible Community Pantry on SE 92nd Avenue served over 61,000 people last year, including diverse populations from the area's Chinese, Vietnamese, Russian, African American, and Latino communities. [Listen to Dave Miller's interview](#) with the Pantry's Executive Director, Betty Brown, and Olivia Estrada, a Happy Valley resident, who is one of the Pantry's clients.

Here's what we've accomplished together!

Dec. 2022

Food Donated: 20,567 lbs.
which makes: 17,139 meals¹

2022 Total

Food Donated: 115,847 lbs.
which makes: 96,539 meals¹

¹ The Oregon Food Bank calculates that 1.2 lbs. of food = 1 meal.

Meet Our Pantry Partners: Francis Center



Francis Center

Portland Food Project interviews Rudy Grigar, the director of the Francis Center.

Where is Francis Center located and who do you serve?

Francis Center is located on SE 82nd Avenue. We are open Monday through Thursday and we are currently serving about 1,000 individuals and 25-30 families per day. The area around SE 82nd Avenue has a fair amount poverty and homelessness. Of the people who come to our pantry, about 1/3 have no home and another 1/3 are families having trouble making ends meet. We used to restrict those we served to the nearest four zip codes, but recently we have expanded to assist anyone who shows up.

Francis Center also partners with four schools in the area—Lane Middle, Kelly, Whitman and Woodmere—helping to supplement their food pantries.

How long has Francis Center been open and how did you start?

Francis Center, started by a Franciscan father, has been feeding people since 1967. We provide clothing (via private donations) as well as food. Francis Center is a standalone, all volunteer run program.



Photo Credit: [Francis Center](#)

How do you serve people?

Whether it be homelessness, health issues, unemployment, underemployment or immigration issues, the Francis Center is here to help disadvantaged residents break the cycle of poverty and hunger. Our focus is on the vulnerable—serving the needy no matter their age, race, religion or sexual orientation.

We try to impart some dignity in the process. We ask people if they have a way of cooking and give them food accordingly. If housed, people can pick up food every 30 days, if unhoused, once a week. We try hard not to judge the people who come to our door. We don't know their stories.

How has Francis Center been impacted by the pandemic?

Before the pandemic, people were allowed inside to “shop” for food and clothing. Now we bring everything outside to our clients. We have just completed building a permanent canopy so we can operate in inclement weather.

What would you like to tell our Portland Food Project donors?

Providing enough protein is a big challenge for food pantries. We are always in need of dried beans, tuna, salmon, chicken, spam, mac and cheese, pasta, rice and oatmeal.

Francis Center is a big supporter of the Portland Food Project. We send several volunteers to help at the drop off point for every food collection. The food donated by Portland Food Project is a big part of what sustains us. Thank you so much!

Please visit franciscenterpdx.org to learn more about our program.

Donor Profile: Judy Romano



It's with grateful hearts that we bid farewell to Judy Romano, a long-serving Portland Food Project steering committee member and neighborhood coordinator. Judy has been volunteering with the Portland Food Project since 2013, when she was recruited during PFP's infancy by founder Richard Nudelman.

Richard recruited Judy as a neighborhood coordinator. Her warm personality made it easy to engage neighbors as new donors. Since she had difficulty lifting heavier bags and going up stairs, instead of going door-to-door she arranged a central neighborhood drop off spot. Collection days became a great way for her donors to drop off their bags and chat with their neighbors. Judy says, "It has been a rewarding experience. People have thanked me for making it so easy to donate."

Richard also convinced Judy to join the steering committee. He thought her experience as a local business owner would be a valuable asset for the budding organization. In addition to her business acumen, Judy has done a terrific job conducting newsletter interviews and organizing street fair booths and local events.

"I'm proud of what we do. Proud to be part of Portland Food Project. Doing interviews for the newsletter gave me the opportunity to see the full scope of the project—what happens to the food and how people benefit from what we do. The food we collect provides people with variety, dignity and choices. That's powerful."

SHARE YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Portland Food Project is a 100% volunteer-run organization. Contact us to volunteer today: 503.775.2110 - info@portlandfoodproject.org

We are currently recruiting neighborhood coordinators, steering committee members,

Mark your calendar now!
The upcoming 2023 collection dates are:

February 11th

April 8th

June 10th

August 12th

October 14th

December 9th



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