



ROTARY EXPRESS

Rotary Club of Harrisonville, Missouri | March 17, 2021 | **Service above self. One profits most who serves best.**

Today's program



Lori Watson's guest today is her husband, **Jason Watson**, who will be speaking on the current college application environment and how it has

been affected by COVID-19. Jason is Director of Engineering for the National Research Center for College and University Admissions, a part of ACT.

Future programs

March 24 - Chuck Weedman

March 31 - Fifth Wednesday: Focus on membership development and flag program

April 7 - Monthly business meeting and classification/Rotary education talk by **Mark Muller**.

April 14 - Judy Franklin

April 21 - Keith Mills

April 28 - Brent Probasco

Birthdays

April 3.....Jon Kling

April 6.....Anne Hickman

April 15.....Judy Franklin

April 19.....Sam Styron

Officers & Directors

President.....Doug Meyer

President-Elect.....Lori Watson

Secretary.....Lori Watson

Treasurer.....Jessica Junge

Sergeant-at-Arms.....Carol Looney

Past President.....Nancy Shelton

Directors.....Judy Franklin,

Cindy Greenwell, Gabe Sweitzer,

Jeff Kleinsasser, Larry Pfautsch

Dist. Gov.....Jacqueline Howard

Asst. Dist.Gov. .Bing Schimmelpfenning

More people using food pantry, but biggest challenge now is volunteers

Debbie Glazner, a guest of Gabe Sweitzer and an active board member of Shepherd's Staff Food Pantry, recounted the challenges and rewards faced by the pantry over the past year. She told Rotarians it was year that reflected "the goodness of mankind and the faithfulness of God."

Linda Smith, who oversees the pantry as director, was a guest at the meeting and was praised by Debbie for her many years of dedicated service and positive attitude, even when conditions were dire.

Going into 2020, the pantry was focused on three things — financial stability, improving safety and efficiency, and increasing its volunteer base. Then the pandemic hit and things started shutting down. Meanwhile, the demand for food assistance grew significantly.



Linda Smith, left, director of Shepherd's Staff Food Pantry, accompanied guest speaker Debbie Glazner at last week's club meeting.

The pantry had to come up with a new drive-through pickup scheme, but this essentially doubled the number of volunteers needed at a time when many churches and older volunteers were unable to help. Yet it was so much safer and more convenient for both clients and volunteers. Debbie said she is grateful for those who stepped up to help, including many home-schooled students and their families.

The nearby Thrift Store operated by the Ministerial Alliance and directed by David Noble, has long been a source of income for the food pantry, but the store also had to shut down for a time. Fortunately, other sources of funds presented themselves. That included PPP money through the County Commission, and a "generous check" received from Harvesters Community Food Network when the pantry agreed to become a mobile distribution site serving a wider area. About 43% of revenue was COVID-related last year, Debbie said. However, that is not a continuing source of funds.

A handout (see back page), explained the background of the pantry and some statistics that reflect the great need in our community — more than 23,000 individuals served representing over 7,600 households and more than 992,000 pounds of food products handled. The monthly average of households served was 636. About 30 volunteers are needed to distribute food each Friday.

Debbie expressed gratitude to Rotarians for their past support of the pantry, which included help with the walk-in cooler. She asked the club to consider volunteering on a regular basis, perhaps 6-8 people once a quarter. She also addressed a few questions about the building's financial status and maintenance needs.

Shepherd's Staff Food Pantry

1311 Sanders Street 816 844-0078



Background

The food pantry originally started in the back of the Harrisonville Nazarene Church. As it outgrew this space and resources, the pantry came under the umbrella of the Harrisonville Ministerial Alliance.

The HMA purchased a church building directly behind the Thrift Store in 2008 which provided an excellent facility for the pantry.

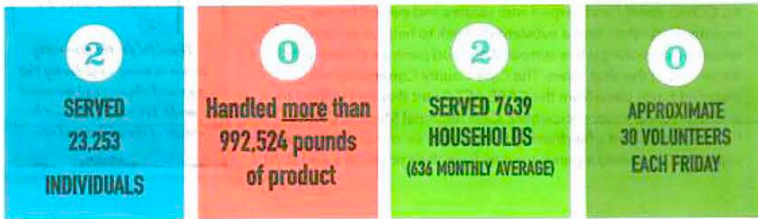
There is an Advisory Board for the pantry that is filled by representatives from the churches who participate in the Ministerial Alliance. The Director, Linda Smith, gives oversight to all operations of the ministry. The other two staff positions are a custodian and a truck driver who picks up donations.

Harrisonville Ministerial Alliance and the Thrift Store provide some of our base funding. Local churches, individuals, and businesses also make monetary donations. We are the recipient of two Trust funds that send contributions once a year.

Generosity of 2020

Grants from KC COVID Response; American Farmers Grow Communities; CARE ACT funds from Cass County Commission; Harvesters Community Food Network

Donations of items: Family Center (shopping carts), Sales Rep for General Mills (food samples), Church & Dwight (personal hygiene/laundry) Gillen Pharmacy (hand sanitizers),



Our food provisions come from several sources. Harvesters sends us food since we are a mobile distribution site for them. We also purchase some items from their website.

We pick up donated from the Raymore and Harrisonville Walmart 3 times a week, from the local Price Chopper once a week and Daylight Donuts 7 days a week. We also receive product from truckers whose load was refused at their delivery site. And we are always grateful for the food drives help by our community.

Looking forward in 2021, we anticipate an increase in client numbers. The month of January saw 773 households which is higher than our average in 2020. Harvesters is continuing to provide a semi-truck load of food every week (approximately 22 pallets) as long as we continue to operate as a mobile distribution site.

MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2020

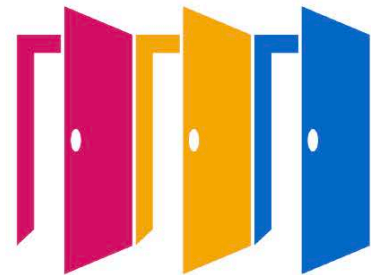
We were the recipient of several grants: American Farmers Grow Communities helped with the purchase of an upgraded box truck. KC COVID Relief Fund helped with utilities and payroll for two months, Harvesters sent a substantial check to help us since we remained operating while surrounding food pantries closed in the beginning of the shut down. The Cass County Commissioners awarded funds twice from the CARE ACT Grant that was utilized to address COVID related expenses. Cass Regional Medical Center Foundation shared a fundraising benefit with us and at the end of the year CRMC donated a generous sum from their physicians and staff.



Congratulations to Katherine Graeve, our Service Above Self Award recipient from McEwen Elementary School for February.

Announcements from last week's meeting

- Kevin Shelton won the Secret Greeter dollar coin.
- Bill Mills contributed to the Sad emoji benefiting PolioPlus with the news that the 60-year-old father of one of our previous Rotary Exchange students from Belgium had passed away from COVID-19.
- Kevin Shelton contributed to the Happy emoji in celebration of the re-opening of the United Methodist Church for in-person worship.
- Carol Looney announced that our Fifth Wednesday program on March 31 will include a discussion of the 2021 flag program. This meeting is also slated to include discussion of membership development.



Rotary Opens Opportunities