

# Manna Works

Uplifting News About a Caring Community

Volume 16 Issue 2

Winter 2015

## Focusing on Dreams...

Samuel and his son, Joseph, moved to the United States three years ago so that Joey could have a better education. Samuel found part-time work but it wasn't enough to pay their bills. Eventually, they lost their house and became homeless. Samuel and Joey stayed in a shelter, but it was difficult to find work due to shelter restrictions. They needed to leave the shelter each day with all of their belongings by 7:30am and return by 6:00pm. Many of the jobs that Samuel found required second shift or evening hours. The days were becoming very difficult for Samuel and Joey.

Then, through Interfaith Hospitality Network, Samuel and Joey were connected to Manna. They started shopping in our food pantry twice a month and found an affordable apartment nearby. Samuel shared that, "Having food security is so important. Once one domino goes down, all the others go down. Having enough food each month kept us from falling over."

After a while, Samuel found a job driving a taxi! But, with all of the stress he was facing, he began having seizures. He was shocked, as he had been healthy all his life. Due to the seizures, he was unable to drive regularly and began looking again for work.

Samuel recently attended one of Manna's job readiness classes, and is developing his resume with one of our volunteers. He hopes to find work while attending the Montgomery County Community College Surgical Technology AAS Program. He is committed to a better future for his family. For now, he is grateful to be connected to Manna. Samuel shared that, "Manna is a bridge that doesn't exist anywhere else. Families in crisis are very unique in what they need. In the struggle to survive, you forget that you have skills. Sometimes all you can see is what's in front of you. Manna has helped us to focus on our dreams."



Samuel and Manna will continue to work together to provide food for his family and job readiness assistance. Samuel is deeply proud of his son's accomplishments. Joey volunteers, serves in ROTC and wants to apply to college for engineering. His future is bright, and with Manna's support, Samuel knows that he and Joey will both be successful.

## Winter Food Needs



Soup Kitchen  
Cheese (grated or sliced)  
Fresh fruit  
Fresh vegetables  
Lettuce  
Pan spray (e.g. PAM)  
Small butter tubs

Food Pantry  
Baby wipes & diapers  
Canned & fresh fruit  
Canned tomatoes  
Cat food  
Cleaning supplies  
Paper products (paper towels, tissues, toilet paper)  
Toiletries  
Tomato sauce



## Manna's New Year Resolutions

Feed more families. With your help, and the support of our caring community, Manna will nourish more neighbors in need. We are committed to feeding and caring for all who walk through our doors, whether it be through a warm, healthy meal from our soup kitchen, food from our pantry, or a loaf of bread from our entrance bread racks; we believe that no should go hungry.

Create connections. Manna is a hub for community connections! Our case managers provide more than 100 referrals each month for various programs and social services as well as an average of \$6,000+ each month in emergency aid. We seek to do more in the year ahead, linking individuals to resources that help them become more food and financially secure.

Build sustainable change. Our education program provides job readiness, financial planning and computer classes to help individuals develop self-sustaining opportunities. We aim to further develop this program in the months ahead, connecting individuals to needed resources and tools.

We resolve to more deeply serve our community in 2015. Will you join us? Start this New Year off with a renewed commitment to fighting hunger in our community. We encourage you to volunteer, donate food, and give financially. Here are just a few examples of the incredible impact you can make!



- \* 3-hour volunteer shift = 60+ meals served in our soup kitchen (avg)
- \* 1,000 lb food drive = 18 food pantry visits for neighbors in need (avg)
- \* \$50 donation = emergency night stay for someone who is homeless

**Join us in 2015! Let's serve together so that all might be fed.**

## Now at Manna: Fresh Kids!

Fresh Kids is a dynamic nutrition program designed to empower children to make healthy lifestyle choices. During each 30-minute lesson, children learn about a special food or food group, and then do a fun activity on that topic. **We're starting** the new year off by learning about the tradition of healthy New Year resolutions, and by taking the Fresh Kids Resolution to eat more fruits and vegetables in 2015.

The objective of Fresh Kids is to improve child and family nutrition in our community by offering an accessible and enjoyable way to learn about healthy foods and behaviors. The lessons are free and take place during pantry and dinner service hours so that parents can drop their children off for the program while they shop or eat a meal. Join us Mondays at 6:30pm or Wednesdays at 4:30pm! To be notified about Fresh Kids volunteer opportunities, or for more information, contact [mikaela@mannanmain.org](mailto:mikaela@mannanmain.org).



*Thank you to the North Penn Community Health Foundation for supporting this program, as well as The Food Trust for helping Manna adapt their Kindergarten Initiative curriculum!*

## 182 Employees Give Time to Manna

Is time too expensive to give? For 182 Merck employees, it's not!

This past year, 182 Merck employees volunteered at Manna by stocking shelves, unloading deliveries, serving soup kitchen guests, and answering phones. We are extremely grateful to all of these individuals for setting aside their own objectives to help those who are less fortunate. So, how much time was given in 2014? Oh...just 733 hours through five Merck-sponsored, week-long events!

These volunteer hours were matched by a program called "Merck Gives Back," donating \$8,500 to support Manna's services. What an incredible gift and inspiring program to encourage volunteerism!

Thank you to our friends at Merck and to all of our extraordinary volunteers! You are truly the heart and soul of Manna and we are so thankful to serve our community with you.



## The Story of Roger...

This time next year, we will be preparing Manna for its move east on Main Street to North Penn Commons. As we get closer to our move-in date, we ask ourselves, “What will it be like for our clients? How will they feel about Manna’s new home?” To help us visualize the possibilities that the Commons holds, the story of Roger was created. Roger is based on a composite; however, the circumstances and needs are a reality for the people we serve.

Roger is a long time Lansdale resident. Living on a fixed income, he finds it hard to make ends meet after paying his rent, bills and the prescription medicine he needs. He shops at Manna’s food pantry twice a month. After his wife died, he began coming to Manna for meals in the soup kitchen. When he learned that Manna was moving to North Penn Commons, he wasn’t sure how he would like the switch but anything was better than eating his own cooking.

Waiting in the North Penn Commons lobby for the food pantry to open one day, Roger wandered over to watch a group of men playing pinochle and was invited to play when a new game started. He learned that they were from PEAK and that in addition to playing cards together, they meet for lunch at PEAK’s

community meal each day. He decided to join them and learned to his surprise that Manna supplied the delicious food for the meal. He also learned that PEAK offers classes for seniors including a technology class taught by youth from the Y’s teen leadership program and an exercise class taught by Y instructors.

Later that week he went to talk with Manna’s client services manager; he was struggling to pay his heating bill. She suggested that he speak with PEAK’s social workers and she made a call to them. They helped Roger complete a LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) application and benefits check-up, where he learned that he was eligible for more SNAP benefits. Before leaving the Commons that day, he stopped to say goodbye to his PEAK buddies in the lobby and noticed the swim team practicing in the Y pool. He sat down in the comfortable chairs facing the large glass wall that separated the pool from the lobby. It made him smile to see the fun they were having splashing each other when the coach wasn’t looking. He left that day feeling part of a caring and dynamic community.

To learn more about North Penn Commons and how you can support the One Four All Campaign, visit [www.northpenncommons.org](http://www.northpenncommons.org).

## From Our Kitchen to Yours

Each day is a culinary adventure for Manna’s Chef, David Hannah! When he arrives, he sorts through donations and hunts for needed spices to create delicious meals. We’re deeply grateful for your food donations and his talents as our meals surpass expectations. Below is a sample, weekly evening menu to share how your donations are being transformed. And, Dave wanted to share a recipe with you to try at home! This vegetable soup recipe was provided by the Health Promotion Council and recently used in our nutrition education class.\*

Sample Manna Menu: Homemade Pierogi from a local church, Turkey Tetrazzini, Beef Stew, Homemade Meat Loaf, Pork Chops with homemade apple sauce, Assorted Quiches & Roast Pork

Recipe (Serves 6): 2 tsp vegetable oil, 6 cups of broth, ½ cup chopped onion, 1 can of tomato sauce, 1 tsp chopped garlic, 2-3 cups rinsed canned or frozen veggies, 1-2 cups chopped winter root veggies, 1 can rinsed beans | Heat oil in pot. Add chopped onions & garlic. Sauté until soft for 3-5 min. Add chopped winter veggies and 2 cups broth. Bring to a boil, then lower temp & simmer for 15-20 min. Add the remaining 4 cups liquid. Add other veggies & beans. Bring to a boil, then lower temp and simmer for 5-10 min. \*HPC’s nutrition programming is federally funded through the SNAP-Ed program.

## Our Refrigerator is Stocked with Milk!

Through the generosity of Lehigh Valley Dairy Farms, families receive a gallon of milk each time they shop in our food pantry. This is a deeply appreciated donation, especially for the children, seniors and high-risk populations we serve. In addition to providing milk for Manna, Lehigh Valley Dairy Farms donates milk to the North Penn Boys & Girls Club and Nutrition Coalition, a consortium of food pantries in the North Penn region. Milk is delivered to Manna each week and we serve as the distribution hub, ensuring that children and families throughout the North Penn community have greater access to these critical vitamins and nutrients.

Thank you, Lehigh Valley Dairy Farms! With your tremendous support, our community is healthier and more food secure. We are grateful to partner with you!



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*Manna on Main Street ... that everyone might be fed*

MANNA WORKS

Winter 2015

**Staff:**

Cory Chiang: Food Program Assistant  
Nancy Day: Weekend Food Service Manager  
Kristyn DiDominick: Program & Development Coordinator  
Arleen Godshall: Financial Coordinator  
Suzan Neiger Gould: Executive Director  
David Hannah: Food Service Manager  
Paige Harker: Development Officer  
Janae Hoffler: Education & Volunteer Coordinator  
Scott Lukens: Building Assistant  
Teri Martin: Assistant Case Manager  
Julie McCabe: Events & Food Outreach Manager  
Nadja Mummery: Client Services Manager

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Color printing & distribution of this newsletter courtesy of:

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Thank you to the *many amazing* neighbors, organizations, faith communities and businesses for helping **to make the holiday season so special! With your support, we...**

\*Distributed 246 Thanksgiving and 152 winter food baskets to families and seniors in need;

\*Prepared and served a community Thanksgiving meal for more than 100 guests;

\*Adopted more than 600 children and 255 families through our adopt-a-child gift program!

Here is one note of thanks from a mother whose son received special presents from our adopt-a-child gift program.

To The Family who sponsored my family; I can't thank you and your family enough for your kind and caring generosity. I work as a caregiver and still struggle. Because of you my son will have the best Christmas. I hope and pray this card finds you. May God always bless you. Thank you so much.  
Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays