



## 2020 PR Campaign

PR Writing:  
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## **Public Relations Plan**

## **Executive Summary**

Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry has been a part of the Aurora community since the 1950's. The pantry continues to provide struggling families and individuals with nutritional support. The main objectives for the organization is to continue to carry out the message of Marie Wilkinson by utilizing social media and other brand exposures. The goals for the organization are to improve social media activeness, expand exposure, and improve the organization's image. In order to achieve these goals, MWFP should continue to promote the community's garden, as well as the East Pantry and expand community awareness about the organization's history. The organization should create a schedule that contains all of the festivities and activities and coordinate social media posts.

## **Situation Analysis**

Marie Wilkinson was a lifelong social and civil rights activist who fought for the powerless and the voiceless. In the 1950's she founded the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry after a near death experience which prompted her to dedicate herself to help the less fortunate. She started by giving out bags of food and soon after, gathered friends and neighbours to help. Later on, she started a soup kitchen and food pantry which now continues to serve the community and surrounding areas of Aurora Ill. Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry partners with local organizations and is dedicated to relieving hunger for individuals and families in Aurora. There are several community opportunities such as food sorting, packing, and restocking. Marie Wilkinson is the first food pantry to have a community garden and grow their own food for the community. The MWFP serves students, seniors, veterans, children, and others in the Aurora area. They also

provide a food rescue service for businesses who have a surplus of food. The MWFP is not the only food pantry in Aurora, as there is another one located seven minutes away: the Aurora Area Interfaith Food Pantry is seven minutes away from Marie Wilkinson’s location. Despite this competition, they still thrive with little to no financial struggles. Most monetary donations go to refilling groceries.

### **SWOT Analysis**

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Surplus amount of supplies</li> <li>● Location</li> <li>● Consistent services</li> <li>● Partnerships</li> <li>● Loyal volunteer base</li> <li>● Open to new ideas</li> <li>● Unique programs, fundraisers and features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Has own garden</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Weakness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lack of outreach to general public</li> <li>● Brand clarification</li> <li>● Difficulty getting emotional appeal from Marie’s story</li> <li>● Saving money</li> <li>● Bragging off their unique programs, fundraisers and features</li> <li>● Social media</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Expansion</li> <li>● Enhance community awareness</li> <li>● Continue to focus on events for major donations</li> <li>● Improve social media</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Competition with other nonprofits for donations</li> <li>● Aurora Area Interfaith Food Pantry</li> </ul>

### **Swot Action Plan**

We believe many of the weaknesses can be fixed with a clarification of their brand. MWFP has several logos and several slogans, which makes it hard to tell a story and reach out to the community. They have so much to brag about, yet never do so. Once they start, this can eliminate threats and the opportunities will begin to occur.

## **PR Objectives**

- Ensuring Marie Wilkinson's message is constantly carried out, by continuously improving the lives of others and providing them with support for their daily needs
- Ensuring the community knows who they are by educating their public as well as clarifying their brand

## **PR Goals**

- By April 2020, agree on one specific logo and slogan that will be used for ALL forms of communication (brand clarification).
- By April 2020, create a newsletter or thank you letter, whichever fits best with organization wishes.
- By May 2020, increase overall communication regarding Marie's Garden (National Garden Month is in April).
- By June 2020, increase communication to the community about the increase of public need due to pandemic.

## **PR Strategies and Tactics**

- Improve social media
  1. Slowly start using Twitter again. Ensure other social media platforms are being used to promote following Twitter. Use Twitter to connect with other organizations.
  2. Use Instagram daily to respond to messages. Instagram should only be used to capture important moments, do not post daily.
  3. Use Facebook daily to respond to messages, post updates, etc.
  4. Inform the public about Marie's story, take advantage of national months such as Women's History Month during month of March
- Flyer/posters/pamphlets information for Millennials
  1. Highlight the important information
  2. Mention the benefits for helping
  3. Straight to the point information
  4. More visuals
  5. Include partnerships
  6. Brag about what sets you apart from others-especially the competitor

## **Primary Target Market**

- Students - 9.0%
- Seniors- 6.0%
- Veterans- 4.0%
- Children- 35.0%
- Other (“working poor”, etc.)- 37.0%

## **Message Strategies**

- Create brand awareness by improving the organization's logo. Having a consistent logo will help with recognition.
- Simulate a response or action by sharing our work on social media and posting news release and feature stories.
- Increase interaction with the audience by providing information on volunteer work and community service. This will encourage the audience to partake in their programs.
- Continue to promote and build brand awareness by providing fact sheets to the community of Aurora. This will be used as a visual aid for the community on distribution percentages.

## **Media Strategy & Schedule**

- Post regularly ( 2-3 days a week)
- Be more active on Twitter and Instagram
- Post about who Marie Wilkinson is
- Post thanking partners

## **Budget**

They do not have a specific budget. However, they wish to save as much as possible being a nonprofit organization. They are open to any suggestions we have.

## **Responsibilities**

- Clients are responsible for providing the necessary information that is needed to build this campaign.
- Organization is responsible for the distribution of any material that is being made by the PR writers.

- PR writers are responsible for providing assistance and guidance to the organization by supplying the necessary content.

## **References**

Charity Blooms.[robert@charityblooms.org](mailto:robert@charityblooms.org), (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.charityblooms.org/>

East Aurora High School. Aurora, IL: PHONE:(630) 299-8000) (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://easthigh.d131.org/>

Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry Aurora, IL: PHONE: (630) 897-5431. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org/>

Marie Wilkinson's Print Brochure



# MEDIA CONTACT LIST



**Name:** Lisa Marie Farver

**Company:** Patch

**Email Address:** aurora@patch.com

**Social Media:** IG, @patch

**Notes:** Lisa has written about East Aurora many times and could potentially discuss how MWFP has a pantry at East Aurora High School. Email provided is not her personal one.

**Name:** Steve Lord

**Company:** Aurora Beacon News

**Notes:** Steve Lord has written for the Aurora Beacon News for 41 years. He has much knowledge on the Aurora community as he is a Naperville citizen. Could not find email\*

**Name:** ACTV

**Company:** Aurora Community Television

**Address:** 5 E Downer Place Aurora, IL 60507

**Notes:** This is the community bulletin board that displays upcoming events and general news on channel 10. Messages must be sent two weeks prior the event. Messages can't be political, personal, or commercial. This would be beneficial to display the events MWFP plans on hosting.

**Name:** Kane County Chronicle

**Email Address:** editorial@kcchronicle.com

**Social Media:** IG, @kcchronicle

**Notes:** This is the email in which you submit news release specifically. They provide news on Northern Illinois.

# MEDIA CONTACT LIST



**Name:** Beth Kanter

**Company:** Beth's Blog

**Social Media:** Twitter, @kanter; FB, @Beth.Kanter.Blog

**Notes:** Beth has 30 years of experience in the non-profit area. She posts once a week and is also in the non-profit marketing blogs. Email not present must contact through her website or social media.

**Name:** Family Radio

**Phone No.:** (800) 543-1495

**Address:** Family Radio Oakland, CA 94621

**Social Media:** Twitter, @FamilyRadioOrg; FB, @family.radio01

**Website:** familyradio.org

**Notes:** They broadcast Family bible reading fellowship and transmit to the Joliet community. Broadcasted on 91.9 FM. Email not present.

**Name:** Bible Broadcasting Network

**Social Media:** Twitter, @BBNRadio; FB, @BBNRadio

**Website:** bbnradio.org

**Notes:** Broadcast in WYHI - Park Forest / Chicago. They broadcast Bible sessions and transmit all over the world including the U.S. Broadcasted on 99.9 FM.

**Name:** WWBBM News Radio

**Social Media:** IG, @wbbmnewsradio; Twitter, @wbbmnewsradio; FB, @wbbmnewsradio

**Website:** wbbm780.radio.com

**Notes:** Chicago's news station broadcasted on 105.9 FM



## Crisis Communication Plan

## **I. Overview**

Crisis communication is a plan of defense designed to protect an organization from any public, social and environmental challenge. The purpose is to ensure the safety of others as well as guarding the reputation of the organization. This includes preparing for serious outcomes, including the harm/injury/mistreat/ tampering and theft that is placed against the organization potentially defacing our image.

We, as an essential organization are prone to be affected by several potential threats that can cause confusion and displeasure. The primary objective of this plan is to ensure that our image does not disrupt the public and the organization by listing our potential threats; it can help us visualize and prepare for these circumstances.

## **II. Purpose**

**Events that elicit crisis communication responses:**

- Pandemic
- Robbery, vandalism or destruction of property
- Alleged inappropriate conduct
- Complications with distribution items
- Food shortage
- Top employee resigns/gets fired
- Lost partnership with an organization

## **III. Objectives**

Our goal for the crisis communication plan is to carry out our message effectively and establish a strong foundation in the organization. These include:

- Defend the organization with diligence
- Improve communication
- Help anticipate more scenarios
- Maintain image
- Reduce offensiveness
- Focus on responsiveness

It is of utmost importance to inform our stakeholders as it is a great need to ensure them of our preparation and diligence over the situation. The necessary actions will take place in order to regulate our organization's normal function. Responding quickly is crucial for our organization because it enables us to control the situation. Having a strong communication allows us to guarantee that all of our messages get across in the most effective way possible.

#### **IV. Procedures**

The Crisis communication team includes:

- Theodia Gillespie - Board President
- Brian Dolan - Board Vice President
- Diane Renner - Executive Director
- Maureen Gasek - Marketing Manager

A. In charge of coordination: Theodia Gillespie, Brian Dolan, Diane Renner and Maureen Gasek.

B. Spokesperson: Maureen Gasek

#### **V. Response**

- Will use social media platforms to quickly notify the public
  - Facebook
  - Instagram
- All information will be uploaded onto the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry website
  - This link will be featured in the posts made on social media platforms
- Avoid defaming an individual or company
  - Specific details can be left out such as specific charges made against an individual or company
- Provide brief description of what occurred

- Provide future plans
  - Will you continue to operate?
- Be honest
- Provide suggestions as how to move forward
  - If there's a pandemic, promote staying at home

## **VI. Sample Statements and Communications**

- Pandemic
  - The Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry understands the hardships everyone is experiencing with the current state of (provide the place, whether it's Aurora, Illinois or the United States). We live by our mission of nourishing lives and will continue to do so. (Insert a friendly tip such as wash your hands or stay at home) More details to come.
- Robbery, vandalism or destruction of property
  - An incident occurred on (insert date and time) in which (describe the event). The safety of our community is our first priority. (Insert actions taken in regards to the situation-- were the police called?) We are currently investigating the matter and will keep the community up to date. We plan on (dis)continuing our regular distribution hours.
- Alleged inappropriate conduct (Discrimination, Racism, Sexual harassment, etc.)
  - We want to make you aware of an alleged (insert type of misconduct). (Insert actions taken in regards to the situation-- were the police called?) We are currently investigating the matter and will provide updates. We plan on (dis)continuing our regular distribution hours.
- Complications with distribution items (Expired, sickness)
  - An incident occurred on (insert date and time) in which (describe sickness). We value the health of our community. We have (insert actions taken in regards to the situation-- what safety procedures were taken?) We plan on (dis)continuing our regular distribution hours.

- Food shortage
  - We want to make you aware of the current state of our food pantry. We currently have limited items (insert what this means for the pantry-- are you closing? Are only certain people allowed?)
- Top employee resigns/gets fired
  - Recently, one of our employees (state name) decided to resign. We respect their decision and are in the process of replacing them. More details to come.
  - Recently, one of our employees (state name) was fired. We are in the process of replacing them. More details to come.
- Lost partnership with an organization
  - On (insert date), the (insert company) and the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry decided to cut ties and they are no longer our partner. We respect their decision and will move forward. (Insert the result-- did you find a new partner?)

All precautions will be listed in our brochures and newsletters to keep the community and stakeholders aware of the circumstances. There will be a premade brochure and newsletter for immediate use when any of the situations that are listed above occurs. All of the premade materials will have blank spaces that will allow us to fill in current information and then distribute the content out to the public with immediate effect.



Hold Until: April 1, 2020

Contact:

Diane Renner

834 North Highland Ave, Aurora, IL

Ph: 630-897-5431

[Info@mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org](mailto:Info@mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org)

### Plant Away the Hunger!

**Aurora, Ill. - March 23, 2020** -- The Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry in Aurora will host a charitable event, Planting with a Purpose on Thursday, April 23. The event will be held at Lizzie's Garden Center 24254 111th Street Naperville, IL 60564 (behind Caputo's on Rt 59) from 5:30p.m. - 8:00p.m.

Planting with a Purpose is a spring fundraiser that will help fuel hunger relief in Fox Valley. Donors will have the opportunity to take a greenhouse tour and create a planter filled with top-quality flowers, herbs, greenery and foliage.

Support the cause by joining the fundraiser event! All proceeds go to the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry. Reserve your spot by visiting our website:

<http://mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org/event/planting-with-a-purpose-april-25th/>. Walk ins are also welcomed.

Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry a nonprofit organization that caters to the community of Aurora on relieving hunger and supporting struggling families and individuals by meeting their needs.

###





HOLD RELEASE UNTIL: September 1, 2020

CONTACT:

Diane Renner

834 North Highland Ave. Aurora, IL

630-897-5431

[info@mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org](mailto:info@mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org)

## **Fill Your Bowls at the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry**

Aurora, Ill. Sept. 1, 2020-- The Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry (MWFP) will host their seventh annual FUNdraising event: Fill the Bowls, on Sunday, September 27. The Sunday brunch will be from 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. at the Gaslite Manor Banquets in Aurora, Ill.

Guests can fill their bowls with food from over 20 different restaurants. Some of these restaurants include East Aurora High School Culinary Team, Granite City Food and Brewery, Olive Garden Italian Kitchen, Tasty Vegans and many more. The event will also feature morning mimosas for those of age, raffles and live music.

Tickets are available on MWFP's website ([mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org](http://mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org)) or their Facebook, @MariesPantry, until the day of the event. Children under five are free, children 6-12 are \$10 and adult tickets are \$40. All proceeds go to MWFP and Community Garden Programs. Refunds issued seven days prior to the event.

MWFP continues the legacy of social and civil rights activist Marie Wilkinson. The MWFP is dedicated to meeting the hunger needs of individuals and families in Aurora and surrounding areas by educating, empowering and enlightening people to be self-sustainable through collaborations and partnerships.

###

Did you know that Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry is the first food pantry to feature a garden in Aurora?

Marie Wilkinson Food pantry recognizes that all communities need and deserve a well-balanced environment. This is why, for the past seven years, Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry has proudly provided locally fresh grown foods to our community.

There are many benefits to a local community garden. Not only does it help the planet by reducing pesticide pollution and conserving water, it provides individuals in our neighborhoods fresh and healthy produce.

The garden was founded in 2014. In 2018, Robert Vaughan, owner of Charity Blossoms, a local non-profit organization that works with volunteers to grow community gardens, became the garden manager.

Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry is proud of their garden because it is the pillar of their foundation as well as for their community. Once a plot of land with five houses the garden now provides a safe area for the community and residents take pride in maintaining.

Last year the garden had 14 renters and 287 volunteers and grew 1529lbs of vegetables, all of which were donated to the pantry. During the span of two years the garden has produced 3400lbs!

Diane Renner, Director of Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry, said, "Marie's Community Garden is absolutely outstanding since Charity Blooms became our partner. They have completely transformed this area to include green houses, picnic tables, sheds, water stations, solar power and an outside Kitchen."

The garden is also home to chickens. Yes, chickens! They provide fresh eggs and are humanely raised. The Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry is the first pantry to have chickens in Aurora!

Renner shares, "The garden is a continued work in progress with the addition of chicken coop, rabbits for poop tea that nourishes the growth of certain harvest, bee hotel for pollination, and a monarch garden being installed in 2020. The entire garden is a learning experience that will be developed into an educational tool for the community."

The garden has two functions as Vaughan states, "Renters work and harvest their own land for a fee...Volunteers work in other areas that are grown and harvested for donation to the pantry. When they harvest produce, I personally take it across the street and put it in the coolers for distribution the following day." Everyone can take part in the garden as it helps the community to grow and unite as one!

The garden is open to everyone in the Aurora community. If anyone loves to garden, then this is the perfect place to share their skills and insights about gardening! As our world continues to prosper, it is important for people to continue giving what they can to help others by donating and spreading awareness about the community garden. For more information about the community garden or the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry and its wonderful programs; Food Distributions, Food 4 Students, and Emergency Food. Visit our website at <http://mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org/>. We hope to see you soon!

Imagine getting ready for school and forgetting the most important thing---breakfast. However, it wasn't forgotten; it was inaccessible. Now, it is time for school and your stomach is growling. Though your school may offer free or reduced breakfast or lunch, you don't want to be isolated from your peers, so you decline it.

Sadly, it is not uncommon for students to attend class hungry. Hunger has a substantial impact on a child's academic success. According to Feeding America, 1 in 6 children struggle with hunger in Illinois. Food insecurity, the state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food, negatively impacts cognitive development in children.

Aurora, Ill. is an area where the largest demographic living in poverty are children from ages 6-11. Areas such as this depend heavily on food pantries. The Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry (MWFP) understands this dependence and lives by its mission statement of relieving hunger and nourishing lives.

In 2018, MWFP launched a program called 'Food 4 Students,' which is a second pantry located at East Aurora High School (EAHS). On the first and third Thursday of each month, food is shared with students to ensure "all young Aurorans have access to wholesome, nutritious food."

At the end of their school day, from 3 to 4:30 p.m., all students are invited to 'Student Food Day' to grab groceries in the hallway by their culinary arts kitchen. MWFP is environmentally friendly, so reusable bags are given to students and they are encouraged to bring the bags back to receive a sweet treat the next time they visit.

The only requirement is to show their student ID to prove they are an EAHS student. If they are new to the system, they fill out a registration form with sections asking for their name, home address, number of people in their household, and other relevant information. Students who have siblings that would like to participate can partake as well by filling out the form.

Food 4 Students provides twenty pounds of groceries including: breakfast and cereal, dairy, peanut butter, fresh fruit and vegetables, canned soups, rice, spaghetti and tomato sauce, and frozen meat. Snacks such as Doritos and Oreos are also provided, along with a recipe on easy meals to prepare with the food provided. Alongside the food are also essentials in a baggie such as shampoo, lotion, and body soap, donations from hotels.

One student explained, "The snacks last about a week thanks to my little brother, but the food lasts way longer." The MWFP ensures that the groceries could last for about two weeks, so that the next time they come the families are ready for re-stocking.

Without volunteers, this program would not exist. MWFP is entirely volunteer-based. People can sign up for different roles such as unloading the truck, restocking or even distributing food. East Pantry leader Cathy Ferrel and volunteer Dick Schindel are instrumental in recruiting and

organizing volunteer support. Many come from the Retired Teachers Association, and are passionate about helping students succeed.

An alumni of EAHS, Sharon Johnson, volunteers with the stocking and giving of the food. She explained, "I want to give back to my community." She found out about the program from her church.

100% of students at EAHS receive reduced lunch. Despite a stigma for those who receive these benefits, these students are very comfortable with accepting the generous donations. Students of all races, grades and gender take advantage of this offer and many look forward to these Thursdays.

"My mom doesn't have time to buy groceries because of work, so this is my way of helping her out," said one student.

These words were a general statement made by students who walked through the line. Many explained that they were trying to alleviate stress from their families and have the groceries ready for them. There were also others who took advantage of the given recipes and prepared meals for their siblings.

Ginger Neenan, a committed worker to the Food 4 Students program creates the recipes. "They are in high school, and it is time for them to become independent and I want to help make the process as simple as possible for them," explained Neenan.

Though some are forced to adapt to an independent lifestyle, it still promotes self-care and prepares students for the real world. Most of the recipes Ginger creates for the program are very simple such as spaghetti with meat and vegetables.

Many of the students who walk through the lines bring their best friends. Their friends help them carry their bags or just walk and talk with them, without judgement.

"This distribution is very helpful. My mom just had a kid and my dad works a lot, so we rely on this," explained a sophomore student.

With the assistance of their principal making announcements and flyers being pinned on walls, students around the school are informed about this program. The MWFP has a system where students tell who informed them about the Food 4 Students program. Whichever staff member tells the most, receives a prize.

The entire school is on board and engaged with this system, making it easier for students to be accepting of others as well as become participants of the program.

Students are highly appreciative of the donations with 'Thank You' coming out of all the participants' mouths.

Food 4 Students is just one of the many outreach programs the MWFP does to ensure they are minimizing the number of hungry people in the Aurora community. According to the USDA, 40.4 million Americans rely on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs monthly to provide for their families, with two-thirds going to families with children.

Many children do not know when their next meal will be. Many go to school hungry and struggle to pay attention making it hard for them to succeed as a student.

The MWFP wants to be another helping hand for those in need. In 2019, 7,215 household members received groceries from the 'Food 4 Students' program. Two thousand and five hundred thirty-three of those recipients were younger siblings. By volunteering and donating, hunger will be relieved and lives will be nourished.

## How You Can Be A Good Samaritan Today

COVID-19 has changed the world. This pandemic will go down in history, and we are living in it. During times like this, food pantries become a necessity to many households. On Saturday, March 21, we received one of our heaviest flows of traffic, with over 150 guests, and about a third of them were new to our pantry. During times such as these, how can we continue nourishing lives and relieving hunger?



**Picture by Rebekah Axtell**

*Due to covid-19 both of our pantries have been made 100% drive-thru.*

About 80% of all the food we share comes from those who participate in our Food Rescue Program.

Food rescuing is when businesses donate food that would have typically gone to waste such as bread, eggs or milk. After items sit on a shelf for a day, several companies must dispose of them, but why waste food?

The Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry is proud to have a program in which 40 trips to local grocery stores are taken each week to stock up on food so that we can help those who are without it.



**Picture by Rebekah Axtell**

*Thanks to our volunteers we are able to share food for those in need.*

Some businesses may not want it, we see value in these items. We are saving valuable nutrition from being wasted.

As Earth Day is slowly coming up, we want to promote saving the world by reducing waste and minimizing the number of toxic emissions, we are doing just that.

In 1997, the United States passed the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act to encourage the donation of food and grocery products. Anyone can choose to donate. Some of our donors include: Prisco's Family Market, Save a Lot, Jewel Osco, Aldi and Smallcakes.



**Picture by Rebekah Axtell**

*Guests have a plentiful amount of groceries to choose from.*

In 2019, we purchased a new food rescue van in partnership with the Dunham Fund. This allows us to easily pick up groceries - seven times per week. Like a grocery store, we allow guests to freely select what they desire. Three days a week we share food to nourish our neighbors.



**Picture by Rebekah Axtell**

*The van was designed by Joshua Shultz, Rebekah Axtell and Diane Renner.*



Thanks to those who participate in this program we are able to assist those in the Aurora community, veterans and their families, students from East Aurora High School and many others.



**Picture by Jada Hoffman**

*Food 4 Students is one of Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry's outreach programs in which they visit East Aurora High School and share free food with all students.*

We are grateful for our volunteers and donors and we are blessed to be able to serve our community. Volunteer and donate today by visiting our website:

<http://mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org/> Hope to see you soon!

## A Journey to The Community Garden

At the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry, we work hard to bring quality produce to Aurora and the surrounding community. Not only do we rescue foods from a variety of local stores, but we also grow our own!

Let's take a trip down to our community garden. So, what are you waiting for? Let's go!

Here at the community garden, we grow all the best foods you can imagine produce such as green beans, potatoes, and tomatoes and so much more!



**Pictures by Rebekah Axtell**

Thank you, Aurora Fire Department Station 3, for filling our tanks!

**A unique feature that helps our garden grow is the water tanks. Aurora Fire Department Station 3, voluntarily fills the water tanks when necessary.** One of the unique features that help our garden grow are the water tanks. The tanks are elevated, to build pressure inside, so the water can flow without the need of a pump. We are very grateful to the Aurora Fire Department Station 3, for voluntarily filling our tanks!

We are grateful to Robert Vaughan, owner of Charity Blossoms, who built a path that is wheelchair accessible. Now, anyone may take a stroll, enjoy the tranquil atmosphere and the plants.

Vaughan also built a bench as a way to unite everyone in the garden. One of the various attributes included is an outdoor kitchen that is powered by solar-panels. Guests are invited to sit outside and enjoy their meals prepared from the solar paneled kitchen.



**Pictures by Rebekah Axtell**  
Join us for a picnic!

As we continue our journey through the garden, we should talk about our volunteers. Most of our volunteers come from East Aurora High School and the surrounding community. We are grateful for the helping hands of our volunteers and fellow neighbors.

Speaking of neighbors, Jesse and his wife Margarita, keep a watchful eye on the garden and take care of the chickens. Hopefully when you come and visit us, you might have the opportunity to meet them!



**Pictures by Rebekah Axtell**  
Gather fresh eggs with us!

We are a loving family that welcomes everyone with open arms. Their willingness to do everything they can to meet the needs of those who have struggled with providing for themselves and their families.



**Pictures by Rebekah Axtell**

Come and enjoy our beautiful garden!

We love seeing the pantry at its best and we are truly grateful for the amount of dedication that our volunteers give to our garden. With the garden and its family growing, will you be a part of the change and give back to others and our planet? This place is where everyone can feast on their hard work and celebrate success!

To learn more about the garden and Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry, please visit our website at: <http://mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org/> . We look forward to your visit!



## NEWSLETTER

### LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

For over 60 years MWFP is known for finding hope, help and encouragement in challenging situations. We are continuing to serve those in need using a modified drive up distribution process. Our current distribution hours are Wednesday, 12-2 p.m., Friday 1-4 p.m. at Marie's West pantry and Saturday 8:30 a.m - 11 at Marie's East pantry. To protect you and our volunteers from COVID-19 we ask to limit the number of people in your vehicle and have your trunks or hatchbacks clear so we can load your food to be compliant with COVID-19 safety procedures. Home delivery will continue to the most vulnerable home-bound seniors partnering with Senior Services Associates. We cannot do this without the help of our community and our wonderful volunteer crew. I hope you and your families are staying safe and healthy and our world remains focused on social distancing and self-isolation for the sake of everyone across the globe and in our community. Thank you for your continued support!

Diane Renner, Executive Director



#### WE ARE HERE FOR YOU

Despite this pandemic we have been able to continue to help those in need. We've seen more people than ever before and we're keeping up with it.

#### THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!



We are thankful for our dedicated and committed volunteers.



#### DURING PANDEMIC

In March, we served an average of **1,019** people per week  
In April, we served an average of **2,491** people per week

#### MOVING FORWARD

Currently we are unable to accept food donations. Please consider monetary donations to help us provide food for those in need.



#### NEW PARTNERSHIPS

We have partnered with the Relief Coalition to help support those who found themselves unemployed.



(630) 897- 5431



[marieswilkinsonfoodpantry.org](http://marieswilkinsonfoodpantry.org)



@mariespantry



# Outside



### How You Can Help:

- \* Donate
- \* Volunteer
- \* Host a Food Drive
- \* Work in the Garden
- \* Fundraise an Event

Thank You Community  
Partners!



MARIE WILKINSON  
**FOOD PANTRY**  
Nourishing Lives Since 1957



### Location & Time:

801. Zeigler Ave. Door #33  
@East Aurora High School  
Saturday's 8:30 AM - 11 AM



### Contact us:

Phone Number: (630) 891-541



### Email us:

Info@mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org



### Follow us:

Facebook & Instagram @MariesPantry



### Visit us:

mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org



### Value

Engage our community  
as a leader in the  
ongoing fight against  
hunger.

# Inside



## Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry

### *Accomplishments*

In 2019, Marie's  
Community Garden  
harvested over  
3,453 lbs of vegetables.

Pantry guests brought  
groceries home to over  
57,187 household  
members.

"If you're low on food they are  
the best and offer a wide variety  
of all foods. There are healthy  
choices and dessert, breads, all  
sorts of goodies and nice people."  
-Debra Byers

"Amazing food pantry with such caring  
and compassionate volunteers. I've  
volunteered a few times myself with  
much joy. They run a tight ship and  
watch every penny spent to make sure  
your \$ donations are spent wisely."  
-Alice Hale

### *Our Mission*



To continue the legacy of Marie  
Wilkinson, the Marie Wilkinson  
Food Pantry is dedicated to meeting  
the hunger needs of individuals  
and families in Aurora and surrounding  
communities by educating,  
empowering and enlightening  
people to be self-sustainable  
through collaborations and  
partnerships.

### *Food 4 Students*

- \*Program established  
in 2018.
- \*Free food for all EAHS  
students with ID
- \*First and third Thursday  
of each month.
- \*Between 3 - 4:30 PM

### *What Do We Serve?*

- \* Breakfast cereal
- \* Dairy
- \* Fresh Fruit
- \* Fresh Vegetables
- \* Frozen Meat
- \* Canned Soups
- \* Rice
- \* Spaghetti



# Stamp Out Hunger

**Saturday, May 9, 2020**

Join food pantries nationally by leaving  
donations in a bag by your mailbox.

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**Acceptable Donations:**

Pasta, Peanut Butter, Tuna Fish, Hamburger  
Helper, Mac 'N Cheese, Beef Ravioli.

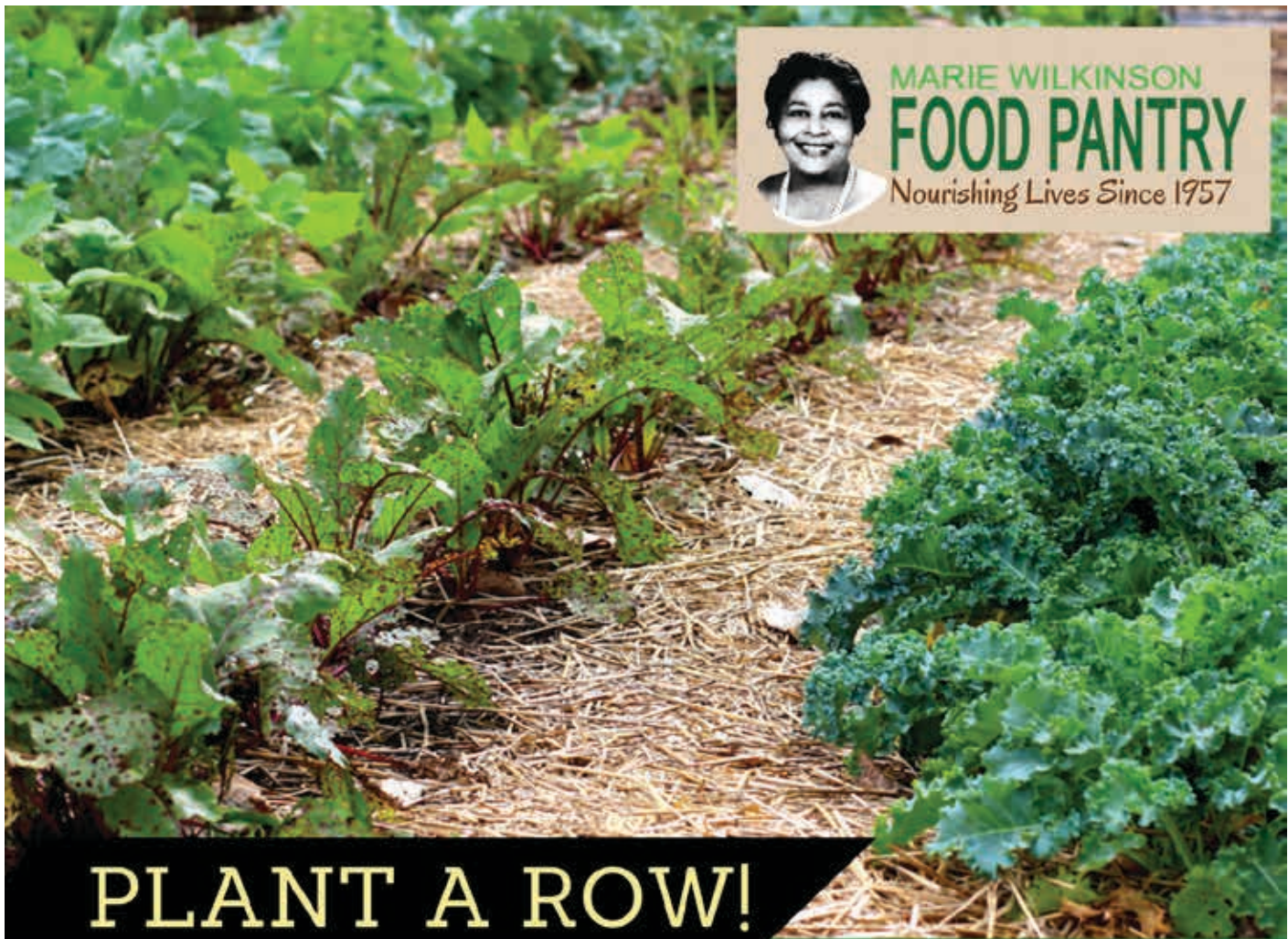
For monetary donations visit our website:  
[mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org](http://mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org)







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# PLANT A ROW!

## Can You Beat The Community Gardeners?

Join us for our annual Plant a Row event where you can help plant a variety of vegetables. Our goal this summer is to grow 5,000 lb of fresh produce.

Will you help us achieve our goal?

**Save The Date:(insert date and Time)**

For more information check our website & Don't forget to follow us on social media!



**CALL US:**  
 (630) 897- 5431



**FOLLOW US:**  
 FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM  
 @MARIESPANTRY



**CHECK US OUT:**  
 MARIEWILKINSONFOODPANTRY.ORG





# WHO IS THE MARIE WILKINSON FOOD PANTRY?

## OUR MISSION

Dedicated to continuing the legacy of Marie Wilkinson by meeting the hunger needs of individuals and families in Aurora and surrounding communities.

## OUR VALUES

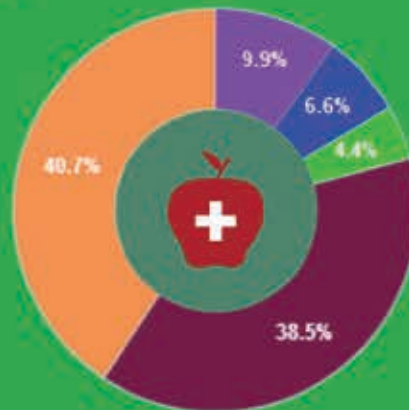
Engage our community as a leader in the ongoing fight against hunger.



## WHO DO WE HELP?

Caters Towards  
MARIE WILKINSON FOOD PANTRY

- Students
- Seniors
- Veterans
- Children
- Other



## MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Distribute Food  
Host a Food Drive  
Stock Shelves and Unload Donations  
Every \$1 donated, the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry purchases \$8 of food to feed hungry families.

## HELPING THE COMMUNITY

Food 4 Students  
Providing students with food and easy to follow recipes.  
Community Garden  
Help the community by growing your own food!  
Assisting Veterans  
Help returning veterans with the necessities.



@mariespantry



mariewilkinsonfoodpantry.org



(630) 897-5431



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Liked by [thereliefcoaliton](#) and 12 others  
**mariespantry** In honor of [#NationalGardenMonth](#) we will be sharing tips on how you can take care of your garden. If you don't have a garden, grow one! First tip: If you are unable to go to a store to buy seeds, you can do it online. Some sites you can search are Seeds of Change or Burpee. Enjoy shopping and stay tuned for more tips!

[View all 3 comment](#)

30 April



**mariespantry**

Today at 3:00pm • 🌐

At Marie's Garden we celebrate #EarthDay daily as we grow our own fresh fruit and vegetables to share with our guests. Tell us how you celebrate Earth Day.



👍 😄 ❤️ 43

3 Comments 10 Shares

❤️ Love

➦ Share

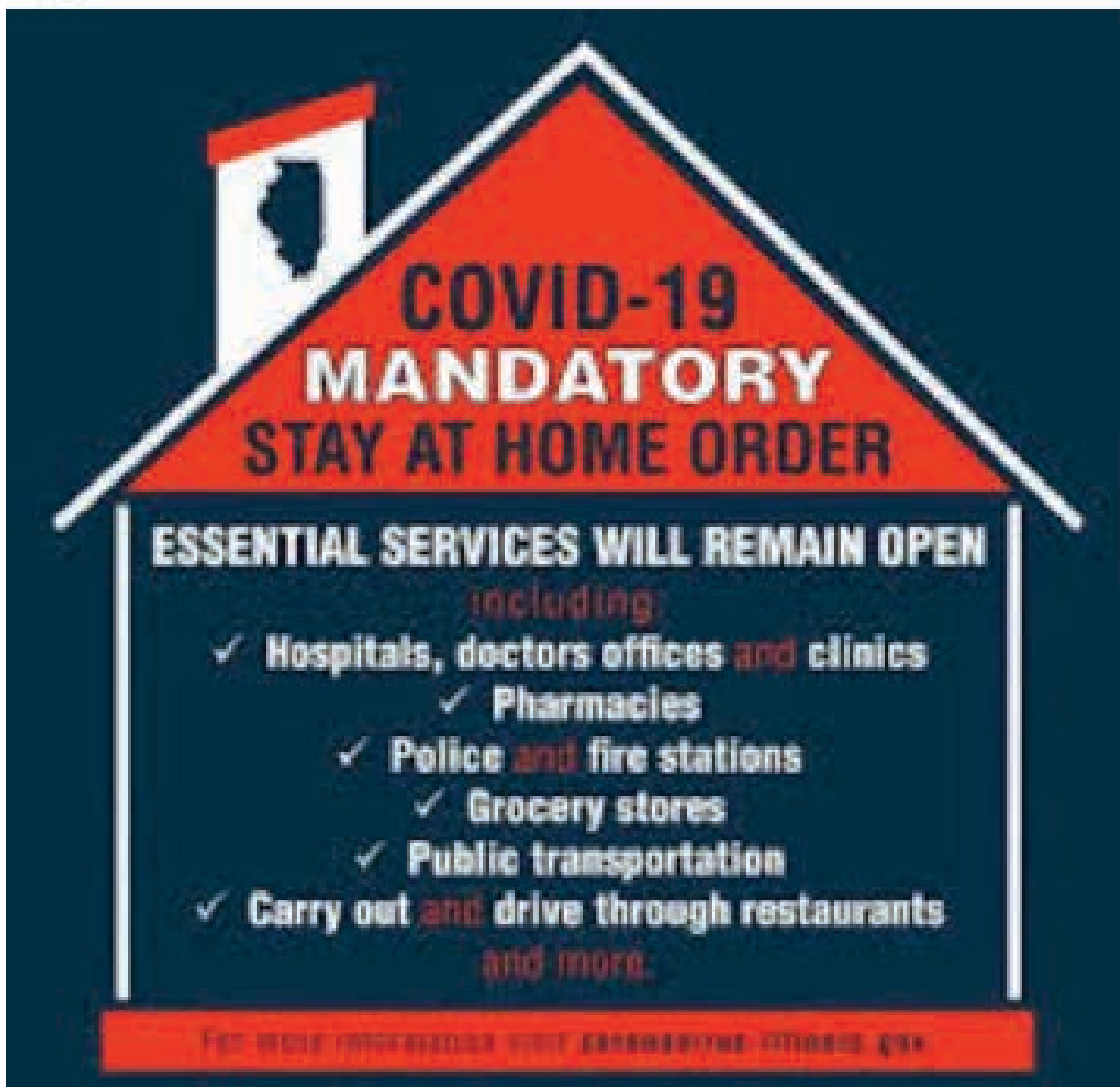


Write a comment...





mariespantry · [Follow](#)



Liked by avacaurora and 10 others

**mariespantry** Due to COVID-19 all of our events scheduled in April have been canceled. We care about you all's health and to ensure we can **#flattenthecurve** we want to encourage every to **#stayathome**

[View all 3 comment](#)

30 April



mariespantry · [Follow](#)

Aurora, IL



Liked by lovelyweather and 8 others

mariespantry Mother Earth works hard every day! We will do the same! Did you know that composting helps reduce the use of chemical fertilizer? [#CompostWeek](#) Starts on May 3-9 [#lovecompost](#) ... more

[View all 4 comment](#)

3 May



mariespantry · [Follow](#)

Aurora, IL



Liked by lovelyweather and 8 others

**mariespantry** Let's continue to appreciate the earth by planting more! Its THYME we do something for the environment! Join us for World Enviorement Day in our community garden!

[#WorldEnviorementDay](#) [#flowerpower](#) ... more

[View all 4 comment](#)

8 Jun





**mariespantry**



May 15 at 8:00am • 🌐

Marie Wilkinson grew up in a rich cultured environment where she learned many different customs and traditions. Let's continue to reflect the importance of family in our community by celebrating [#InternationalFamilyDay!](#) [#may15](#)



👍❤️😄 40

21 Comments 10 Shares

👍 Like

➦ Share

[View more 16 Comments](#)



Write a comment...

