



## NOVEMBER 2024 DONOR NEWSLETTER

To our donors,

Thank you for your continued support. You make it possible to help so many families in our community whose needs would otherwise go unaddressed.

With a volunteer editor, we plan to publish a Donor Newsletter quarterly for the next year. It would help us if we could send these to your email address rather than by mail. If you are willing to share your email, please write to [mgrenier@frontiernet.net](mailto:mgrenier@frontiernet.net) with permission to send communications.

### NEW HOLIDAY MEALS PROGRAM

We have told you of our Meals Center program in which food insecure families get month-end distributions of bags containing three dinner meals for a family of four persons, just when the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP - formerly *Food Stamps*) run out for those most in need. Larger families get two bags or more. We have provided nearly 11,000 meals in the past year.



*Volunteers setting up Thanksgiving distribution.*

We have expanded on that with a new program this year by adding holiday food distributions in collaboration with Webster HOPE and the Gathering Place Webster. The first two holiday distributions were Spring holiday (Easter/ Passover/ Laylat al-Qadr /Holi, etc.) and 4th of July. The Chest was the lead organizer for the November distribution of Thanksgiving dinner foods.

### THANKSGIVING DINNER MEAL DISTRIBUTION

The power of collaboration shone on Monday, November 18 as a dozen Webster Community Chest and Webster HOPE volunteers gathered to distribute Thanksgiving dinner supplies to over 200 pre-registered Webster families. The distribution followed months of food and monetary collection from donors and shoppers, weeks of logistical planning and days of more volunteers from both organizations organizing the foods to be distributed. Distribution volunteers were trained to deliver bags of food to waiting carloads of families and manage traffic control. An anonymous donor came in at the last minute to donate over 200 \$10 grocery gift cards so families could purchase a protein course (such as turkey) for their holiday meal.



*The Team from West Herr Ford distributed their donated bags of apples.*



*Volunteers receiving instructions*



*From left, Kris Lombardo and Tracy Dennis (Community Chest Benefit Counselors) and Margery Morgan (Director of Hope House) were the organizers of the event.*

This is the Webster Community Chest's third collaborative holiday distribution for 2024.

It's a tribute to the dedication of leaders and volunteers from both organizations that they were able to carry off such a successful event all the while maintaining their regular food distributions that same week.

#### **WEBSTER MASONS SPAGHETTI DINNER FOR THE CHEST FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6TH**

**Take out service is available at the door.**

The Webster Masons hold a Spaghetti Dinner on the first Friday of every month from October through June and each benefits a Webster charity or not-for-profit organization. The one on December 6th from 5 to 7 p.m. benefits the Community Chest. It is at the Masonic Lodge #538, 30 Orchard Street in Webster. On the menu is spaghetti and meatballs with either marinara or garlic sauce. Garlic bread, salad, water/coffee/tea, and ice cream with a cookie are included, and diners may have seconds. The cost is \$12 for adults and \$6 for children aged 12 and under.

The meals are prepared by the Masons and will be served by 36 volunteers from the Chest and from both Webster Schroeder and Thomas High School. The students at the event are from such groups as the National Honor Society, Rotary Interact, The Library Club, CARE Club, and Key Club. Both the food and service will be excellent.

### **Webster Masonic Lodge #538 SPAGHETTI DINNER TO BENEFIT THE WEBSTER COMMUNITY CHEST**

**DATE:** Friday, December 6th  
**TIME:** 5 -7pm  
**PLACE:** Webster Masonic Temple  
30 Orchard Street  
**COST:** ADULT \$12.00  
CHILDREN 12 & UNDER \$6.00



If you would like to buy advance tickets, you may at <https://webcommchest.org/spaghetti>.

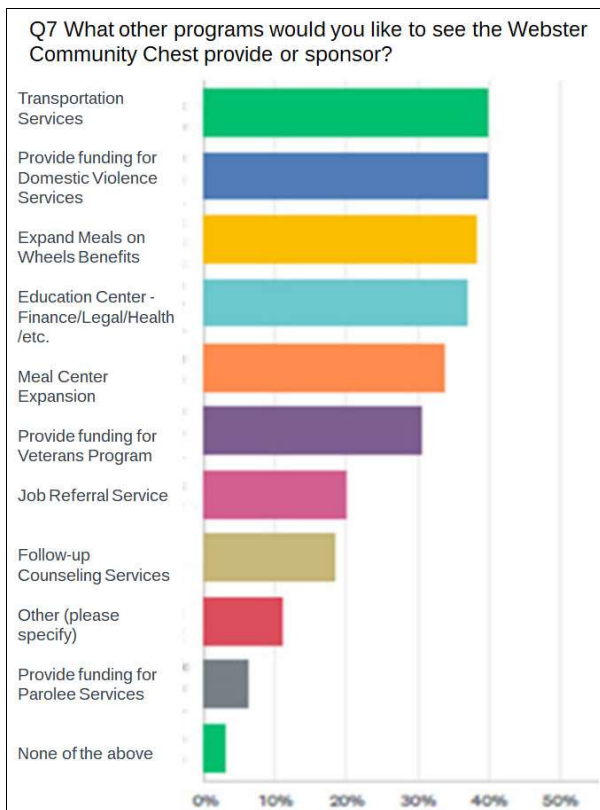
The Masons will also be collecting "Toys for Tots" there and a visit by Santa Claus is expected.

#### **2024 WEBSTER COMMUNITY CHEST DONOR SURVEY**

Thanks to all of you who completed our recent donor survey. Those responses helped guide the Webster Community Chest's decision-making for the future.

The survey was conducted to collect data for our 2024 Strategic Plan and to ensure we are listening to all our stakeholders as we chart the future of the WCC. We also surveyed our clients and volunteers and, with that data, have completed our Strategic Plan which has been presented to the Board of Directors. Our next step will be to implement some of the recommendations from the Strategic Plan over the next several years. Some of that activity has already begun.

As an example of the results of the survey, here is what donor respondents said would be priorities for new programs in the future:



### NEW PHILLIPS VILLAGE FOOD PANTRY PROJECT

During the 2024 Webster Community Chest Strategic Planning effort, our team members identified actions that could be easily implemented and were aligned to our core values and mission.

The committee's work uncovered the unique needs of Phillips Village, a very large low-income housing community on the eastern edge of Webster Village and distant from many food distribution opportunities afforded by the Webster Community Chest and church-affiliated food pantries in the village proper. There was an outdoor food pantry on-site built and installed by a Black Lives Matter group during the pandemic, but it was weather-beaten and showing its age.

Once those needs were raised at a committee meeting and targeted as an immediate initiative, two committee members volunteered to get the program up and running. They immediately consulted with the Phillips Village management, acquired three more volunteers and sought the board approval of two months of beta-testing and their initial plan for one delivery a week was underway. Volunteers were supplied with directions for delivery and food safety guidelines, which vary with seasonal temperatures.



*The now refurbished "Little Pantry" at Phillips Village. Of the six in Webster, only this one had no sponsor.*

Following the test's success, the Board approved a 4-month continuation of the program. Volunteers purchase and deliver groceries to the food pantry and the Board approved the pantry's refurbishing at cost by yet another volunteer.

Most of the volunteers donate the groceries they deliver; some request reimbursement up to \$40 from the Board. Because of the generosity of these volunteers, the initial budget was re-submitted for 2025 in November with no increase.

The project has been gratefully received by the Phillips Village management and residents. There have been no issues, other than the request for more frequent deliveries, as the pantry is depleted soon after it is filled. Team leaders will approach the board with a request for expansion in March, pending continued success of the current program. They have already recruited six new volunteers.

This is a wonderful example of the efforts of our volunteers, taking an idea from conception to planning to implementation. The Webster Community Chest thanks all the volunteers who have worked on this project.

### WEBSTER MUSEUM FESTIVAL OF TREES. VOTE FOR OUR TREE (PLEASE!)

The Webster Community Chest will again decorate a tree for Webster Museum's Festival of Trees. You can visit our tree (and all the other trees, of course) from December 7th to the 31st at the Webster Museum, 18 Lapham Park in the village.



You can vote in person during open hours 2-4:30 Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, or go to their website [www.webstermuseum.org](http://www.webstermuseum.org) to vote online.

Decorators will provide other clues to the tree's theme with decorated cereal box ornaments and a donation box for any breakfast foods visitors wish to provide.



*You will know our tree when you see volunteer John Dennis' custom designed and crafted topper in this photo.*

Aside from the public awareness provided by this event, the Museum awards a small cash prize each year for the tree receiving the most votes from visitors... so your vote will count! Be sure to see the museum volunteer inside the museum's entry for your ballot and pencil. Both can be returned to the table in the central exhibit room.



**Sunday, December 8, 2024 from 8am to 11am**

DONATIONS AT THE BREAKFAST GREATLY APPRECIATED. Proceeds to benefit Webster Community Chest, Webster Hope, and other charities.

#### **NEW LOCATION!!!**

Schroeder High School, 875 Ridge Road, Webster  
Pancakes - Sausage - Scrambled Eggs, Juice & Coffee  
Raffles for all ages and FREE vision screening for children ages 6 mos. to 12 yrs.

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Thank you for this and all the ways you support the Webster Community Chest.

For more information, visit us at <https://webcommchest.org/>.



(Contributions by Kathy Taddeo, Steven Yahoodik, Tracy Dennis, and Michael Grenier.)