

# Gaithersburg HELP News



Spring 2015

Visit us at: [www.GaithersburgHELP.org](http://www.GaithersburgHELP.org)



## Gaithersburg HELP Volunteer Appreciation Potluck Dinner!



We hope all HELP volunteers will join us on Sunday, April 26 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm for our Volunteer Appreciation Potluck to be held at Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church, 610 South Frederick Ave. We want to share a meal, have a great opportunity to meet and share experiences with our fellow volunteers, and most importantly to say Thank You to each of you!! If you have not already received and responded to your Evite, please contact us with your RSVP at [info@gaitersburghelp.org](mailto:info@gaitersburghelp.org).



Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church



Gaithersburg HELP depends on donations from individuals. Workplace campaigns are an easy way to give. Please consider designating Gaithersburg HELP to receive a portion of your **United Way**, **CFC**, or other campaign contributions. **JustGive** is available at any time for your gift.

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## Linda Hanson, “Person of Character”

Our own Linda Hanson, Executive Director of HELP, was honored as a Person of Character by those who have witnessed her long tradition of selflessness. For this all-volunteer organization, she provides collaborative, inclusive leadership that makes emergency food, transportation and prescription assistance available to our community's most vulnerable. She also will become President of the Gaithersburg Rotary Club in July, she is involved with PTA and Interact Clubs, and has served in advisory capacities on several City committees. The award was presented by the Mayor and City Council on January 20.

***We congratulate you, Linda!***

## Another Successful Food Drive

The January cold weather didn't dampen the enthusiasm of the Gaithersburg HELP volunteers who participated in the Manna Food Drive at the Flower Hill Giant on January 17 and 18. The generosity of those shopping at that Giant meant we could deliver more than 750 pounds of food to our pantry at the end of the weekend. Thanks to all volunteers who gave their time. It was especially heartening to have the support of a number of energetic teenagers.



*Volunteer Opportunity...*

## Upcoming Annual USPS Food Drive

scheduled for **Saturday May 9**. We need SSL as well as adult volunteers starting at 3 p.m. Work consists of sorting, loading and unloading donated food. It will take 3+ hours total. The food will be transferred to the pantry and will need to be unloaded there. Interested volunteers should contact our wonderful volunteer coordinators at [volunteer@gaitersburghelp.org](mailto:volunteer@gaitersburghelp.org).



## Pantry Cleaning Crew

We owe a big THANKS to the group from **First Baptist Church** for making our pantry shine in October! They were a delightful, hardworking team that scrubbed, dusted, vacuumed, and washed everything from windows to refrigerators.

If you have a group that would like to participate in a monthly pantry cleaning, please contact [volunteer@gaitersburghelp.org](mailto:volunteer@gaitersburghelp.org).



## Open Volunteer Positions

*Is there a job for you?*

- Monthly pantry cleaning, evening or weekend; small group
- Work-from-home people
  - Infant Needs phone line, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm on Tuesdays or Thursdays
  - Infant Needs packer, 2:00 to 4:00 pm on Tuesdays or Thursdays
  - Spanish translators, mornings 2-3 times per month
- Client drivers, daytime hours

*Plus these leadership positions*

- Administrative Assistant
- Assistant Executive Director
- IT Director
- Social Media Assistant
- Transportation Program Director
- For a current pantry volunteer—coordinate and supervise pantry work for small groups of adult volunteers from community services organizations



## Food Recovery is Happening Here!

### Gaithersburg HELP Supports a Countywide Initiative Focused on Food Recovery

We are all very familiar with accepting cans and boxes of donated food for our pantry. But what about the food left over from a catered event, or the extra bread that remains unsold at the supermarket, or the vegetables left in the field after the harvest? If these and similar sources of food are not “rescued” or “recovered,” they are just thrown into our landfills or are plowed back into the fields. Meanwhile, more than 35,000 children in Montgomery County live in food insecure households, and more than 8 percent of the residents of the county do not know where their next meal is coming from. The environmental impact of such waste is that 23 percent of the solid waste in the county landfill is food.



#### Montgomery County Food Council

Challenged by these statistics, the Montgomery County Council formed a Food Security Council in 2011 that was given the mission of forming a “coordinated, collaborative system of businesses, agencies, and organizations that recover good food before it is thrown away and redirect it to feed the hungry.” The Food Council formed several working groups, including Food Access, Food Literacy, Food Economy, Environmental Impact, and Food Recovery. **Gaithersburg HELP Executive Director, Linda Hanson**, joined representatives of other nonprofits, local government organizations, and educational systems in the food recovery effort. Through her participation, Gaithersburg HELP has a voice in influencing food-related decision making that will have an impact on our organization and can share insights based on her extensive experience in the area of hunger relief.

Led by Manna Food Center and a representative from Full Plate Ventures, the pilot phase of food recovery recently concluded. During that phase, components of the matching system were tested, including the participant profile and donation surveys, tool kit, food safety sign-off forms, matches, and three-way communication among

donor, recipient, and food runners. Working group members also documented the time it took from initial donation offer to successful food delivery. When automated matching software is operational, the matching and reporting will be streamlined, the process faster, and the matching service available 24/7. In the next phase, Manna will continue as the coordinator. The software selected that will enable online matching between donors and recipients will be set up, and a backup call center will be activated. To build awareness of the need for food rescue and to encourage donors, the working group will create marketing materials targeted for different audiences. In a separate program, Family Services will lead training for staff and volunteers who must understand the protocols surrounding safe food recovery and distribution. And a recognition program is being developed for those restaurants, markets, and farmers who participate in food recovery. The word needs to get out: there are 4,000 licensed food businesses in Montgomery County, and right now, only 40 participate in food rescue.

The benefits of food recovery do not stop with humans. Recovered food that cannot be eaten by humans can be given to animals, if safe. Further, if the food is unsuitable for humans or animals, it can be composted to enrich gardens. Last year, growingSOUL, one of the nonprofits in the food recovery working group, composted 635,000 pounds of food, and Manna Food Center redirected 65,000 pounds of food to feed local farm animals.

Gaithersburg HELP has already made use of food donated by Chipotle and Starbucks this year. Our volunteers are committed to the recovery process and will continue as stakeholders in the Food Council’s working groups to advance the goals related to recovery, literacy, environmental impact, and access.

For more information, please visit [www.communityfoodrescue.org](http://www.communityfoodrescue.org) More help is welcomed.

—Margo Goldman



## Welcome to our new volunteers and Board members

- **Darlene Finneyfrock** – food coordinator
- **Janet Fujikawa** – food coordinator
- **Lynda Tolbert** – food coordinator
- **Ermon Belew** – IT team
- **Abhijit Ghorpade** – IT team
- **Devanand More** – IT team
- **Elizabeth So** – IT team
- **Natasha Bravo** – Food Driver
- **Nathalie Marchand** – Food Driver
- **Jose Ramon Bawa** – Pantry worker
- **Judy Camper** – Pantry worker
- **Lisa Doiron** – Pantry worker
- **John Gerken** – Pantry worker
- **George McElpatrick** – Pantry worker
- **Patti McGowan** – Pantry worker
- **Venkata Polavarapu** – Pantry worker
- **Judy & David Potasznik** – Pantry worker
- **Ed & Sandi Reynolds** – Pantry worker
- **Page Salazar** – Pantry worker
- **Durga Tangirala** – Pantry worker
- **Margaret Valentin** – Pantry worker
- **Page Salazar** – Infant Needs
- **Robert Dymond** – Client Transportation
- **Joe Golden** – Client Transportation
- **Patricia Kaufman** – Client Transportation
- **Bob Miller** – Client Transportation
- **Janet Fujikawa** – Fundraising
- **Karen Raetz** – Fundraising
- **Karen Raetz** – Grant writing team
- **Maya Reyes** – Grant writing team

*Continued...*

- **Margo Goldman & Barbara Richardson**, First Baptist Church of Gaithersburg – Board members  
*Leadership Position*
- Margo Goldman** – Giant Food Drive Coordinator

### Calendar of Upcoming Events

*See website for latest updates.*

April 10 .....	Executive Committee Meeting
May 8.....	Executive Committee Meeting
<b>May 9.....</b>	<b>USPS Food Drive</b>
May 26 .....	Board of Directors' Meeting
May 25.....	Memorial Day – Pantry Closed
June 12.....	Executive Committee Meeting
<b>June 14 .....</b>	<b>Celebrate Gaithersburg Day</b>
<b>June 16 .....</b>	<b>Dine Out Event</b>
July 10 .....	Executive Committee Meeting
July 28 .....	Board of Directors' Meeting
Aug 14 .....	Executive Committee Meeting
Sept 7 .....	Labor Day – Pantry Closed
Sept 11 .....	Executive Committee Meeting
Sept 22 .....	Board of Directors' Meeting
Oct 9.....	Executive Committee Meeting
Nov 13 .....	Executive Committee Meeting
Nov 24 .....	Board of Directors' Meeting (Elections)
Nov 26 .....	Thanksgiving Day – Pantry Closed
Nov 27 .....	Pantry Closed
Dec 11 .....	Executive Committee Meeting

**Note:** *Executive Committee and Board of Director's Meetings are held at Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church.*

