

ON THE COVER

# Local Organizations Help Feed Families In Need For Thanksgiving

BY MIKE ADAMS

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A rainy afternoon did little to dampen the spirits of the men, women and children who volunteered their time and energy to do their part in making sure every family in Roslyn has a warm Thanksgiving meal by donating dozens of turkeys and other food items to the Sid Jacobson Jewish Community Center's (SJCC) food bank in East Hills on Sunday, Nov. 24.

Armed with smiles, carts and a whole bunch of turkeys, group of local families, who wished to remain anonymous to encourage others to give what they can rather than highlight their own contributions, dropped off a total of 41 turkeys, as well as a few dozen bags of cranberry sauce, stuffing and potatoes, which will go to 41 families they never meet.

"If they can act as an inspiration to other people in the community, I look at that as a really positive thing," Susan Berman, director of the SJCC's Center for Community Engagement, said.

"These are young families with young children, so they're passing down really basic humanitarian and Jewish values. In Judaism, these anonymous giving opportunities are considered the highest form of *tzedakah*, which means social justice."

The SJCC started up a food bank back in April to help supply the many food pantries throughout the surrounding area. The bank, which is affiliated with Island Harvest, accepts donations of canned and/or non-perishable food, as well as household items like toiletries and cleaning supplies. Besides the nearly four-dozen turkeys and trimmings the volunteers dropped off, the bank was stocked with ramen, soup, canned beans, peanut butter, jelly, tuna, salmon, pasta, honey, condiments, mac and cheese, tomato sauce, applesauce, coffee, cereal, oatmeal, baked goods, snacks, oatmeal, cooking oil, matzo, baby food, vitamins, shampoo, tissues, first-aid supplies and cough drops. And the SJCC had been making deliveries all week, so that pantry wasn't even fully stocked.



The SJCC's food bank serves food pantries throughout the Town of North Hempstead. (Photo by Mike Adams)

Research from the nonprofit Feeding America in 2014 showed that around 316,000 people on Long Island struggle with food insecurity, which the U.S. Department of Agriculture defines as a "household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food." Despite the North Shore's reputation for affluence, Berman said putting food on the table is a struggle for more locals than people might expect.

"Food insecurity doesn't always look the way you think it does," Berman said. "It could be the senior citizen who lives next door who's on a fixed income. It could be a single mother. It could be college students. The need is tremendous."

Berman and company aren't the only local residents working to feed those in need this Thanksgiving. East Hills resident Adam Haber put together a turkey drive of his own in tandem with Bishop Lionel Harvey and the First Baptist Cathedral in Westbury. This year, Haber's drive pulled in around 60

donations, in addition to 60 turkeys he paid for out of pocket.

Echoing the sentiments of everybody who's ever lent a helping hand to the needy, Haber said that being able to give to others this way is one of the most enjoyable experiences of all.

"People want to help, and giving them an avenue to participate is enriching," Haber said. "Giving back, in my mind, is one of the keys to the joys of life. It just fills a need that we all have to try and be productive members of our community. It's an amazing privilege, and I'm glad to be able to do it."

Outside of Roslyn, the Great Neck Rotary Club put together its most successful turkey drive to date this past weekend, gathering enough food to give 1,500 families a Thanksgiving meal. Roger Chizever, who heads the Rotary Club's Thanksgiving project, now in its 30th year, said that thanks to the generous donations of community members and local businesses, each family will receive a turkey and a 16-pound bag of Thanksgiving

trimmings, good enough to feed a family of six and still have plenty of leftovers. The meals wind up being distributed to families as far out as Suffolk County.

"This year we're going to provide 1,500 families a complete Thanksgiving dinner, we even have pasta," Chizever said gleefully. "It's for people who need this stuff, that's what it's about."

But while this outpouring of generosity around the holidays is well-appreciated, Berman took time to emphasize that the people who need help around Thanksgiving generally struggle with food insecurity the whole year 'round. She looks at this time of year as a great way to rope in "repeat offenders" to continue contributing what they can when most people have retreated back into their own lives, which is part of why the Center for Community Engagement was created in the first place.

"It's about creating opportunities for people who have the ability to give

see **FOOD DRIVE** on page 7

IN THE COMMUNITY

# Golden Wedding Anniversary

Kathryn and Angelo Grande are celebrating 50 years of marriage this year. They renewed their vows at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Roslyn at a mass celebrated by Reverend Paul Hampson of Dublin, Ireland. Kathryn was the former Kathryn Della Ratta, born and raised in Greenvale. Angelo was born in Brooklyn, and moved to Queens when he was a teenager. Kathryn was a second grade teacher at Glen Head Elementary School and Angelo taught business and computers at the North Shore High School and computers at the middle school.

The Grandes celebrated their 50th anniversary with a reception at Verdi's of Westbury. It was a wonderful celebration with family, relatives and friends. This was followed with a cruise to Alaska. Kathryn and Angelo have two children, Ignatius and

Angela Rose. Ignatius is married to the former Toni Ann Ferretti and they have two sons, Peter and Anthony. Angela Rose is married to Philip Wasserman and has two children, Gabriel and Lily Rose.

—Submitted by Kathryn Grande



**FOOD DRIVE** from page 4



The SJJCC's food bank takes donations of non-perishable, shelf-stable food like canned goods, rice, pasta and cereal.

(Photo by Mike Adams)

back," Berman said. "The majority of individuals who want to volunteer surface during the holidays. I want to look at that as a jumping-off point for connecting individuals and being able to keep them connected for other opportunities."

Sid Jacobson's food bank is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and serves both kosher and non-kosher dietary needs. Anybody who wants to donate non-perishable, shelf-stable food such as canned goods can drop off donations during that time, or contact Berman at 516-484-1545 ext. 202 or sberman@sjcc.org to schedule a food pickup with their church, temple or other contributing organization.

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