



“Food for Thought”

Client Newsletter

January 2010

Welcome to Loaves & Fishes! We are pleased to be able to serve residents of Ayer, Devens, Groton, Harvard, Littleton and Shirley. We hope that this newsletter will help you to understand how the pantry operates and what we are able to do to help you.

New Opening Admission Policy

The doors to the pantry open at the following times:

Wednesday & Friday 9AM

Tuesday evening 5:15PM

Saturday morning 8:00AM

We have implemented a lottery system to determine the client order and token numbers. Each driver/individual client will pick a random token based on the number of people in line when the doors open. If you are a passenger you will not pick a token. You will shop after your driver and be given a number such as 10a, 10b.

This means that being first in the parking lot no longer means you are the first served at the pantry. We hope that this will allow you to use your time more effectively and make the entry process fair for all the clients.

If you arrive at the pantry after the lottery is over, you will take a token from the Greeter as usual based on the number of clients already in the pantry.

Please see the Client Advocate if you have any concerns about this.

Weather Policy

During the winter, if the Ayer Public Schools are delayed or closed due to the weather, the pantry will be closed.

On weekends and evenings, you can call 978-772-4627 for a recorded message regarding pantry closure.



Please put your cell phones on silent or vibrate while you are in the pantry. Please use them only to call for rides or for emergencies.



Help Us Go Green!

We spend a lot each year buying paper and plastic bags. Please help us save that money for food by bringing in your own recyclable cloth bags for packing your groceries. If you have two cloth bags with you, you can pick an item off of our special “GREEN” shelf. We hope that in the future, everyone will have at least four bags for their own groceries.

From the Stewards' Desks



Baby, It's Cold Outside!

We want to help you make sure that your home is warm! The federal fuel assistance program has revised the income guidelines so many who could not get help in the past now qualify for assistance. Please ask the steward for information about applying for fuel assistance. It is not too late to apply! We have information about who to call and the paperwork you will need.



For the safety of your children, please keep them with you at all times. Do not leave them unattended in the waiting room. Children age 12 and under must go with their parent through food distribution. Children age 13+ should wait in the waiting room while their parent shops.

It's that time again!

Please remember to bring in a yearly proof of residence for everyone in your family. Be sure to bring your own proof of residence with you every time you come to the pantry. See a steward if you have questions about what you can use as a proof of residence.



Welcome to the Clothing Room!



You are welcome to browse in the clothing room after you have checked in with the clerk and received a clothing room pass. Please observe these guidelines:

- Limit the amount of time you spend there to about 10 minutes so others can shop.
- You may take 2 small grocery size bags of clothing. If you need more, talk to the steward about it first.
- Keep children with you. Don't allow them to play under the racks.
- Please put clothing back on the racks if it falls on the floor.
- Put hangers in the boxes that are available for that purpose.
- If you need to leave to talk with the steward or shop before you are done, ask for a "Return Clothing Pass" from the attendant and leave your bags of clothing in the room.
- The clothing room closes 30 minutes before the end of the open session in order to get everyone through food distribution in a reasonable period of time.

We do accept donations of clean, seasonal clothing in very good condition. They may be brought in on Mondays from 10AM to Noon and from 7PM to 8PM. We cannot accept them any other time.