



July - September 2016

25 Bloomsbury Ave., Catonsville, MD 21228 410-747-help (4357) • www.catonsvillehelp.org

Support CEA

At Frederick Road Fridays

Look for our table at the Chamber of Commerce's Frederick Road Fridays – we'll be collecting canned and dry goods for our clients.

We're there on Friday, June 24 when CEA will receive the proceeds from the beer and wine tent.

We'll also collect food on **Friday, July 1**, **Friday, July 8** (thanks Rotary Club of Catonsville) and **Friday, July 15** (thanks YMCA of Central Maryland – Catonsville).

The location is 15 Mellor Avenue from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. Pass the word on to your friends when they come!



Special Thanks

Printed copies of this newsletter were provided through the courtesy of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 929 Ingleside Ave., Catonsville, MD 21228. The previous newsletter was printed courtesy of Jennifer L. Murduck.



Megan M. Rigos,
Executive Director

Leaving No One Behind

From the Executive Director

At CEA, we strive to make Catonsville a place where no one is left behind. A woman (I'll call her Diana) recently came to CEA looking for help because she could not pay her rent. She was in danger of losing her apartment where she lived with her young son.

She had bravely left an abusive relationship and found work at a temp agency. When the man followed her and harassed her at her new job, she lost her placement there. The temp agency found a new placement for her but the position did not start for another month. Without any income she was unable to afford her rent.

Diana cried describing how hard it is to leave an abuser. However, her spirits rose as she explained her determination to use her experience to encourage other women who felt like they had no place to turn.

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Open Monday –Thursday 9am - 1pm

Dig it! Library Garden to Help CEA



Braving the rain to plant the community garden are library staff members Megan Crews (left) and Amber Robinson.

The Catonsville Branch of the Baltimore County Public Library has begun a community vegetable garden. And, the vegetables they raise will be donated to CEA. They're looking for some help and are asking community members to do drop-in gardening any time the library is open.

Patrons can borrow a garden tote bag at the front desk with helpful tools and consult the list of daily tasks which could be weeding, looking for signs of unwanted insects, watering, harvesting, mulching, etc. All you need is a library card or state ID.

Gardeners are also needed to commit to gardening once a week over the summer. If you'd like to sign up for a regular garden time, see a library staff member.

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To start giving to CEA when you shop, go to <https://smile.amazon.com> and request that Catonsville Emergency Assistance be the recipient of Amazon's donation. You can locate us under Catonsville Emergency Assistance, Catonsville, MD.

For more information see:
<https://smile.amazon.com/about>

Cans Film Festival Benefits CEA

Catonsville Library
July 15, 2016, 6:30 pm



The Catonsville Branch of the Baltimore County Public Library is holding a super-special, family-friendly movie extravaganza. Admission: A can of food! The food will be donated to CEA.

The next movie night is **Friday, July 15 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.** And the last movie night is **Friday, August 19 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm.** Attendees are encouraged to come in costume and dance, sing or quote along with the film. Bring your own comfy chairs if you desire. Water and popcorn will be provided.

Contact the library at (410-887-0591) for titles and ratings. This is an after-hours event, and doors will remain open until 7:30 p.m. It is sponsored by the Friends of the Catonsville Library.

Money Matters: Financial Info for Clients



Thanks to board member Cathy Monroe and Woodforest National Bank, CEA is offering financial education consultations for clients. In weekly sessions

clients can get advice on improving their credit, opening a bank account, obtaining a credit card and saving money among other topics. The consultations follow the FDIC Money Smart Consumer Financial Education curriculum. However, clients also can meet one-on-one with Cathy (a Woodforest Bank branch manager) to address any money-related questions. "My goal is to help people who want to learn the

importance of understanding their own finances and ensuring what they have is working for them rather than against them," she said.

Cathy is at CEA each Tuesday from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm. She is also willing to meet with clients by appointment.

This is one of the ways CEA goes beyond emergency help by giving our clients tools to support themselves. Our aim is to improve the lives of Catonsville residents by providing them with the ability to become more self-sufficient. Some 12 people met with Cathy in the first few weeks.

Helping Homebound Seniors



Several homebound senior citizens in Catonsville are now receiving food from CEA thanks to a pilot program with the County Department on Aging's Home Team. "We realized that some of the clients we were serving were also food insecure and we turned to area pantries to see if they could help us get food to these people," said Danielle Singley, Home Team director.

Singley approached CEA, and in February, two volunteers began helping Catonsville area clients. Clients first go through an assessment process to determine their need for food delivery. "We looked at the barriers to getting food such as whether it was financial or whether it was accessibility," Singley said. And the Home Team also provides nutritional information to clients.

The seniors also go through the CEA client assessment process. "We're encouraged by how well it is going," said Megan Rigos, CEA executive director. She said for food safety reasons only dry and canned goods are delivered, and dietary requirements and preferences are considered.

According to Singley, other seniors who've seen their neighbors getting food, are now interested. "And the clients are really thankful for CEA and for the volunteers," she said. The Home Team program is piloting with nine other food pantries around the county.

They can expand the CEA program with additional volunteers. Potential volunteers and clients can contact the Home Team via hometeam@baltimorecountymd.gov or call 410-887-4141.

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Leaving No One Behind

Since Diana would be starting her new placement shortly, she just needed help covering her rent for that one month. We were able to provide assistance to bridge the gap so that she and her son could stay in their home.

As well as directly providing service to people like Diana, CEA has a mission to know where clients can find additional services as well. We regularly refer clients throughout Baltimore County and City to programs that will best fit their needs. No matter what our clients need, we try to help them find it.

A winter jacket? We partner with Southwest Emergency Services so our referred clients can "shop" at their thrift store for clothes for free.

Signing up for healthcare benefits? The Maryland Health Connection is a nonprofit that walks individuals through the application process.

Getting free from alcohol addiction? We actively keep track of local Alcoholics Anonymous meeting times around Catonsville and keep them posted in our lobby.

Job training? Our contact at the Community College of Baltimore County provides us with flyers for free job training classes to receive certificates in construction, cooking, and other jobs.

Computer skills need to be brought up to date? We make appointments for our clients to have a one-on-one session with a librarian to address all of their computer questions.

It has been said that it takes a village to raise a child, but we know that it also takes a network to help someone in need. We make it our job to not only help families like Diana and her son stay in their homes, but to partner with other agencies to make the biggest impact on the individuals and families we see.

Volunteer Focus

Maureen Parkhurst

Whether it's picking up food at the Maryland Food Bank, answering phones in the CEA office, or serving on the CEA board, it's all good for volunteer Maureen Parkhurst. And she's even recruited her husband, Steve, to give her a hand.

Several Mondays a month she and Steve head out early in their large van to the Maryland Food Bank in Halethorpe to select food for CEA. "I've been trained by the Maryland Food Bank to be a shopper," she said. Only trained volunteers can actually do the shopping, so as she selects items the Food Bank is giving away such as fresh fruit, vegetables, dairy and bakery items, Steve puts them in the cart and loads them in the van. They also load the poultry and other meat that director Megan Rigos has ordered.

Once back at CEA the food is unloaded, and if no other volunteers are available they put it into the refrigerator and freezers. Steve jokes, "I'm Maureen's muscle; I just do what she tells me."

One day a week Maureen also staffs the reception desk answering phones, returning calls, and making appointments. "I like connecting with people, and giving back to the community. It's a nice feeling to be able to help out so that people who need food will have it," she said. If needed, she'll also fill food bags, a job she did before moving to the reception desk.

Maureen actually began volunteering in the 1980s when founder Alice March began what would eventually become CEA. "My kids were in grade school, but after I started working I had to stop volunteering," Maureen said. Now both she and Steve are retired with more time to share with the community.

Maureen also is active with the Catonsville Co-op and the Catonsville Women's Giving Circle. "Now I have time to give back and I enjoy it," she said.



Maureen and her husband, Steve Parkhurst.

New food donation location!

Hair-M Family Hair Care

Hair-M Family Hair Care at 1701 Edmondson Ave.

Is now accepting your food donations for CEA during their business hours of 9 am to 6 pm Tuesday through Saturday. Please note that the salon is actually on Dutton Avenue (at Edmondson) next to Scittino's. Because salon space is limited, donations should be kept to one or two bags.



2016 Yard Sale: Many Treasures and No Rain!

The two baskets Diane Johnson (right) is holding caught her eye right away. Jackie Hopkins, a CEA volunteer, is arranging some throws.

The 2016 yard sale was a big success -- first because in an extremely rainy month, there was no rain that morning, and second, many people came out early to donate goods, and best of all, many people came out to shop! Thanks to Christian Temple for allowing us to use their grounds and to the 15 volunteers who set up, staffed the sale, and cleaned up at the end. The items remaining were taken to Goodwill.

A Salute to Our Students

As the school year ends, we would like to thank the many area schools and teachers that provided encouragement and supervision during student community service hours at CEA.



Helping with brush trimming is Catonsville Middle School student Hikaru Belzer (left) and his father, Matt Belzer.

During the year we saw students from area schools including Catonsville Middle and High Schools, St. Mark's School, Mt. St. Joe's and Mount de Sales Academy. Their dedication and flexibility to do whatever was needed was sincerely appreciated, including sorting canned and dry goods, re-stocking shelves, hauling boxes of canned food to/from basement storage, weeding the gardens, and breaking down boxes for recycling.

On the college front, we also saw students from the Community College of Baltimore County Catonsville campus, and the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity and Phi Mu sorority from University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC). The college students performed a variety of "muscle" duties that included mounting venetian blinds, moving shelving, and installing computer cable covering.

We would like to especially thank CEA Student Volunteer Coordinator Patti Pallattella and the teachers from St. Mark's and Catonsville High School for dedicating many hours on Wednesday afternoons to make the student service learning opportunity possible.

Drinking Tea and Having Fun

It was fun, it was festive, and the food was great. That seemed to be the consensus of the lucky attendees at CEA's first-ever PlenTea, the April 24 fundraiser. Lucky it was because tickets for the tea sold out two weeks after they went on sale.

The tea planning committee turned Fellowship Hall at Christian Temple into a bright tea room filled with round tables for guests, a table of door prizes, and a room divider hung with a small art exhibit. The planning committee led by Pat Lafon included Jane Byers, Mary Kay Willing, and Susan Bloomer. Committee members provided the food and Edible Arrangements donated chocolate dipped strawberries. The door prizes were donated by Dimitri's International Grill and Restaurant, Narcissus Salon, Cafe di Roma, Mary Kay Willing, Gene Cashour, Jane Byer, Blue Iris Flowers, and Classic Interiors. Pat created bookmarks that included the menu and designed name tags for the servers.



Janice Kellner (left) and Jane Byers having a good time at the greeting table at the PlenTea.

A note of thanks goes to the volunteer servers: Edie Jones, Laurie Lane, Vicky Fisher, Amy Bower, Kathy Kruger, Maureen Parkhurst and Susan Bloomer. Many guests said that it was the best tea they had ever attended. One guest sent a note that said, "Just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed the "High Tea". It was really lovely. Even the window sills looked lovely – what a clever idea. Everything was done in such good taste."

Thanks For the Help

We are grateful to each of our donors for the food they give us. Here's a shout out to some donors who've helped us with large donations in the past few months. Two Boy Scout Troops held food drives – Troop 307 donated 2,409 pounds, and Troop 456 donated 729 pounds of food. The Coldwell Banker food drive brought in 277 pounds, and Catonsville Pharmacy's community shredding day (free shredding with a food donation) brought in 122 pounds of food.

The Student Sharing Organization at Catonsville High's Hop For Hunger Food Drive in April brought in 1,525 pounds of food, and Our Daily Bread donated 673 pounds of food.

Many thanks to area churches: St. Marks donated 1,600 pounds of food; St. John's United Church of Christ 825 pounds; Catonsville United Methodist Church 538 pounds; Saint Agnes 411 pounds and Salem Lutheran Church 341 pounds. The Catholic Community at Relay, Catonsville Presbyterian Church and Christ Lutheran Church also contributed food.



CEA volunteer Mike Hilditch and Catonsville Pharmacy representative Lisa Dalton wheel in the donations collected from the pharmacy's community shredding day.

The Catonsville Cooperative Market is donating its excess fresh produce to CEA twice a month. The market is a community-based cooperative operating a bi-weekly food and goods market of fresh, local produce, local and humanely raised meats and seafood, bulk dry goods, fair trade and organic coffee and tea, locally made bread, syrup, salsa and honey. For more information go to www.catonsvillecoop.com.

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