



# Catonsville Emergency Assistance

October - December 2018

Check us out  
on Facebook!



CEA is open 9am - 1pm  
Monday - Thursday

## Be Part of #GivingTuesday on November 27

Get ready to participate! CEA will be part of the global day of giving on Tuesday, Nov. 27. #GivingTuesday kicks off the charitable season and follows Thanksgiving and the widely recognized shopping events Black Friday, Small Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday.

On November 27th, join the movement and give – whether it's some of your time, a donation, or a gift. And use the power of social media to help us help our neighbors in need. All funds raised go toward food, utility turn-off prevention, and eviction prevention right here in Greater Catonsville.

# #GIVING TUESDAY



25 Bloomsbury Ave., Catonsville, MD 21228 • 410-747-help (4357) • [www.catonsvillehelp.org](http://www.catonsvillehelp.org)

## Making the Holidays Special

We try to make the holidays as festive as possible for our clients. Holiday food bags are distributed in November and December; and on December 19th there is a holiday toy shop (see page 2).

Each household receiving food during November and December will receive an extra holiday bag. Some fun extras go into the bag such as cookies, candy, hot chocolate, and toiletries.



Volunteer Patti Palattella with some of the holiday foods already donated to CEA.

Holiday food contributions are most welcome. A cash donation allows us to purchase items at a savings from the Maryland Food Bank, so that also welcome.

You may drop off food items from 9 am to 1 pm Monday through Thursday, and other times by appointment. Call 410-747-4357 to make an appointment. You may donate by check or online at: [www.catonsvillehelp.org/donating-money/](http://www.catonsvillehelp.org/donating-money/).

### Items needed for holiday bags:

- Supermarket gift cards
- Cream soups
- Canned yams/sweet potatoes
- Canned gravy
- Broth
- French onion soup
- Canned pumpkin
- Canned pie filling
- Pudding mix
- Evaporated and/or condensed milk
- Stuffing
- Cranberry sauce
- Boxed mashed potatoes
- Cookies
- Candy
- Hot chocolate mix
- Toiletries (travel size)



## Donations Welcome for Holiday Toy Shop



CEA will help our clients provide gifts for their children with our Holiday Toy Shop on December 19. Thanks to the generosity of local churches and organizations we hope to have enough toys to fulfill clients' needs. We welcome your donations! This year we are especially looking for gifts for teens including hoodies, cool socks, and gift cards.

Donations are now being accepted. New unwrapped toys can be dropped off through December 11 at CEA, 25 Bloomsbury Ave. during business hours (9 am to 1 pm Monday through Thursday).



## Do You Know About ALICE?

ALICE is an acronym for families who are: **Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed**. These families have income above the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), but when ALICE households cannot make ends meet, they are forced to make difficult choices such as forgoing health care, child care, healthy food, or car insurance.

The ALICE Report was released by United Ways throughout the state of Maryland (<http://www.uwcm.org/main/alice/>). ALICE households live in every county in Maryland and include women and men, young and old and all races and ethnicities. Of Maryland's 2,193,000 households, 209,000 (or 10%) earn below the Federal Poverty Level and another 616,400 (28%) are ALICE.

Reasons why there are so many ALICE households:

- Low wage jobs dominate the local economy. More than half the jobs in Maryland pay less than \$20 an hour with most paying between \$10 - \$15 per hour.
- The basic cost-of-living outpaces wages.
- Jobs are not located near affordable housing.
- Public and private assistance helps, but doesn't provide financial stability.

### KEY FACTS:

- **40% of Baltimore County households are ALICE and poverty households (from 2014 data).**
- Food for a family of four (2 adults, 1 infant and 1 toddler) costs approximately \$612 a month, a 20% increase from 2007.
- Housing costs for the same family are \$1,123, a 25% increase from 2007.

## Meet Kevin, One of Our Clients

Sometimes all it takes is one bad moment to unravel your life. For Kevin, being in a four car accident on the Capital Beltway in July 2017 started a series of problems that he is still dealing with. “That’s tough for a 60-year-old guy who has always worked with his hands,” Kevin explained. Right now, money is tight, which is what brought him to CEA.

It happened on work time while he was using his own vehicle, and it has presented a host of issues for him including a lengthy and involved worker’s compensation case and having to deal with multiple insurance companies. “I had to swallow my pride and ask for help with food so I can pay other bills,” he said. “I’ve curtailed my spending and dipped into retirement funds for which I paid a penalty.” He described himself as the kind of guy who would be the first to help with charity causes. “I never thought I’d be getting help.”

The accident wasn’t Kevin’s fault, but he was badly hurt. “I have an injury that doesn’t show – a compression of the nerves in my neck and a shoulder, which limits my mobility and gives me a lot of pain,” he said. Since the accident he has been unable to work, and he won’t be able to go back to his job as an environmental mitigation specialist. One bright spot according to Kevin has been finding CEA. “I found CEA on Google,” he said, and coming to CEA has been a surprisingly positive experience for him. “The respect that clients receive is phenomenal,” he said. “I am treated so well, and I feel understood.” He added, “I feel I’m getting food from the heart.”

## CEA Happenings

### Lowe's Heroes Help CEA



CEA just got a mini makeover thanks to the **Lowe's Hero's Project**. The front yard was freshly landscaped including a weed barrier and mulch; there's now a brightly colored rug in the front room, an additional freezer and refrigerator in the kitchen area, some new metal shelving for our basement storage area, and an outdoor storage shed among. When the weather permits, Lowe's employees will return to repair and pain the front porch and and resurface and paint the back deck.

Thanks to store manager Dawn Crook and her dedicated team working as part of their "give-back" day, CEA has a fresh look and some much needed upgrades. Approximately 20 people pitched in at CEA on September 11.

Lowe's encourages its employees to volunteer and make a positive impact on their community. In the past 10 years it has developed the Lowe's Heroes program, which motivates employees to team together and adopt a volunteer project with a local nonprofit organization or public school and make a difference.

### It Really Was Like **Christmas in July**

Except for the warm rainy weather most of the week, CEA's Christmas in July Food and Fund Drive was festive and fruitful. CEA was decked out like December with Christmas trees, lights, and holiday music playing.

Things started with a kick-off on Wednesday evening, July 25, and an open house on the following Saturday. And the best part is that some **3000 pounds of food were collected and more than \$2,500 in donations came in.**



Delegates Dr. Clarence Lam and Dr. Terri Hill attended the tree lighting kicking off the festivities. Shown with Executive Director Bonnie Harry.



Volunteers and guests at CEA's Christmas in July Open House.

*CEA extends its condolences to the Harry family on the death of Alan Harry, husband of Executive Director Bonnie Harry.*

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**Volunteer Spotlight:  
 Food Bank "Shoppers" Help Fill Shelves**

Jackie Hopkins has been a Maryland Food Bank shopper for the past four years. Once or twice a month she heads to the food bank in Halethorpe to select produce, dairy -- usually cheese and yogurt -- and miscellaneous items such as crackers, juice, and paper products that the food bank has on hand.

One of the main things she does is pick up the frozen meat and poultry that Executive Director Bonnie Harry has ordered. Then it's onto the rest of her shopping. "On a good day, the produce will be plentiful and fresh; it just depends on what has been donated by local grocery stores and other suppliers to the food bank," she said.

Once the shopping is done, everything gets weighed. One thing is for sure, you can't beat the prices. CEA and other food pantries pay a fraction of supermarket prices for the groceries they buy. CEA pays between 19 cents and \$2 a pound for food. We are one of more than 1000 network partners with the Maryland Food Bank. Using its network partners, the food bank knows the food will be given quickly to those in need.



*Jackie Hopkins is unloading the food she brought back from the Maryland Food Bank.*

Jackie is one of four CEA food bank shoppers. The others are Jim Murduck and Maureen and Steve Parkhurst. Jackie started volunteering at CEA after she retired from nursing.

"Shopping is just one part of the job," Jackie said. "The food is then loaded into my vehicle, usually with one of the food bank employees helping with the heavy lifting." She adds, with a smile, "that frozen meat weighs a ton."

Back at CEA it's all hands on deck to help with the unloading. The meat and poultry are placed in the freezer; other things are refrigerated, put on storage shelves, or placed in the front room so they can be taken by clients that day.

The Maryland Food Bank is an important and crucial resource for CEA, and using it means that we are able to offer clients a variety of protein options, which helps them make nutritious meals.



*Mary Kay Willing is organizing the freezer where meat and poultry from the food bank are stored for distribution to clients.*

