



WINTER 2024

# CEA NEWSLETTER

## Letter from CEA's Executive Director

Happy New Year, Neighbors! Even though 2024 is well underway, I'd like to thank each of you for making my first holiday season at CEA a huge success. Because of your generosity, we exceeded our End-of-the-Year Campaign goal and raised over \$50,000 to help assist those in our community who are facing food insecurity. We also received over 13,000 lbs. of food from the community in November and December!

The end of 2023 was not only met with an outpouring of community donations, but we also welcomed some special visitors to CEA, including **State Senator Charles Sydnor, County Councilman Pat Young, and Delegate Alethia McCaskill** (who visited remotely). These and several other community leaders are interested in our recent purchase of the 23 Bloomsbury building (next door) and are working to help our organization secure funding to help our organization grow.

Did you know that approximately 33% of people living in our 21228 service area suffer from food insecurity? Did you know that we are currently reaching only about 10% of those in need? An expansion of our facilities and operations will enable us to bring more help to those in need.

Not only do we hope to begin expanding our facilities in 2024, but we also want to extend our community partnerships with local businesses, churches, and other community organizations. In December, brought back the donation boxes, starting with **Better World Imaginarium**. So, look for the boxes when shopping in the 'Ville, because every little bit of change helps!

We were also thrilled to have a presence at the **Catonsville Sunday Farmer's Market** during their Holiday Market. We are thankful for our partnership with the **Catonsville Chamber of Commerce**, and we look forward to being at their market when it returns in the spring. Special thanks to **New Hope Community Church** for hosting a Pasta Drive for us, and we were grateful beneficiaries of an Open House Walk-In donation drive with **Beacon Home Team of Keller Williams**. We are always looking for creative ways to engage with the community, so please feel free to reach out to me at [director@catonsvillehelp.org](mailto:director@catonsvillehelp.org).

Thank you for your continued support!

Caitlin Kirby, Executive Director

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

Culinary Craft Workshop: Food Drop-Off Location: Every Friday in February. 75 Mellor Ave. Catonsville.  
Catonsville Elementary School Food Drive: 2/12-2/15  
Hillcrest Elementary School Fill-The-Bus Kick-Off: 2/23

Watch for CEA's "What We Need Wednesday" posted each week on Facebook.  
<https://www.facebook.com/CatonsvilleEmergencyAssistance> and [Instagram @catonsvilleemergencyassistance](https://www.instagram.com/catonsvilleemergencyassistance).



## Food Support from the LDS Church

**On the third Saturday** of the month there's a flurry of activity, as some 2000 pounds of boxed canned goods are unloaded from the CEA van, carried inside, and shelved.

The food donation comes thanks to a grant from The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints and is from the Baltimore Bishop's Storehouse. It has all been grown and produced by church groups around the country, explained Elizabeth DeGiulio, CEA volunteer and board member, and a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints.

Giving food to those in need started during World War II, according to Elizabeth when a women's church group began growing wheat and progressed to having farms throughout the country.

Elizabeth thought the church might be able to help CEA. She introduced CEA President Pat Dempsey to the manager of the church's Welfare and Self-Reliance Services to discuss a grant. Because of our increased food needs, CEA was awarded a year's worth of food, valued at almost \$40,000.



*Pastor Joe Miller of New Hope Community Church*

In the spirit of cooperation in our community, Pastor Joe Miller of New Hope Community Church, also a CEA board member, volunteered to pick up the food in the CEA van. Members of his congregation often assist.

When the food gets to CEA, it's all hands on deck (including the youngsters) to unload and shelve the boxes.

If you are interested in learning about the LDS farm operation, click [here](#).



*Elizabeth DeGiulio and her son Jarom*



*Pat Dempsey CEA president; Patti Palattella, board member; and Eric Furst of New Hope Community Church*





## Salem Lutheran Church Long-Time CEA Supporter

**Houses of worship** have been the backbone of CEA. And from the beginning, Salem Lutheran Church has been one of CEA's staunchest supporters. Community outreach is an important part of Salem Lutheran's ministry.

"I view our support as doing the gospel," Pastor Dave Asendorf said. "Our job is to feed the needy, and having CEA in the community means we can feed the needy without having our own food pantry," he said. "It's a gift to be able to send people to CEA and know they'll be well taken care of."

In addition to leading a supportive congregation, Pastor Dave, as he's known, has been a CEA board member (and a former president) for the past eleven years. He is currently vice president.

The church's generosity has been especially evident recently when Salem gave \$100,000 toward the purchase of the building next door to CEA. The funds were a crucial bolster to other funds CEA had secured. The additional building will enable CEA to better serve the community by streamlining and expanding the food operation, expanding parking, and welcoming more volunteers.

The congregation regularly donates to CEA. When Bonnie Harry, CEA's former executive director and Salem Lutheran member died in May, the church donated \$15,000 in her name.

"CEA is one of our missions," Pastor Dave said. And as a reminder, he said, the church still keeps a wicker basket in a prominent place where congregants can drop food donations every Sunday and during the week, too.

Salem is the oldest continually operating church in Catonsville, having begun in 1849 (yes, they are celebrating their 175th anniversary this year). The current building at the corner of Newburg Avenue and Frederick Road was built in 1903. And you can still see the original church on Ingleside Avenue where small events are occasionally held.



## Portrait of a Neighbor: Gina

**About six months ago** Gina and her fiancé, Rickey, were struggling to pay their bills. Rickey had taken time off so they could see his brother off to boot camp in another state. Then he got COVID, and they fell behind in their rent. To make matters worse, there was a problem with their food stamp application, and they received food stamps for only one person. It's something they're still trying to straighten out.

Gina, a stay-at-home mom to their two young children, said her neighbor recommended CEA. "He used to go there and told me they could help," she said. "I turned to CEA, and they have been great, everyone is so friendly" Gina said. "We really need CEA to survive."

She's appreciative of receiving bread and meat in addition to shelf stable items and says it's helpful to have things like dish soap and toilet paper. Sometimes there's even a sweet surprise. CEA gave her a cake that happened to say, "Happy Birthday." It was Rickey's aunt's birthday, and they were sad not to have a gift for her. "All of a sudden we had a wonderful birthday cake that was fresh and yummy," Gina said.





## IN MEMORIAM

### MARGARET "PEGGY" CARR

Margaret "Peggy" Carr volunteered at CEA for 10 years. She passed away on Oct. 25, 2023. As noted in her obituary, Peggy gave her heart and soul to Catonsville Emergency Assistance (CEA) where she served on the Board of Directors and as "resident housekeeper on the weekends." Each Saturday she opened the building for volunteers and worked diligently to make sure everything ran smoothly.

In addition to positions with the Department of Defense, Peggy was a dedicated member of the community. She served various roles during her eight years with the Rotary Club of Catonsville, including one year as club president, was a Boy Scout/Cub Scout committee member for 20 years and was an active member of Catonsville Presbyterian Church taking on many roles in church life.

Our condolences to her husband David and the rest of her family.



### RICHARD HITESHEW



Richard Hiteshaw passed away on Oct. 30, 2023. Richard was a long-time member of the CEA Board of Directors, including serving as president. When CEA was in a small, cramped space on Newburg Avenue, Richard secured funding to allow the organization to move to its present location at 25 Bloomsbury Ave. He worked for a financial services and accounting firm.

Our condolences to Richard's family.

## HOW TO HELP



Consistent donations of food and funds are critical to achieving our mission!

**Food donations can be dropped off:**  
Monday - Thursday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm at  
Catonsville Emergency Assistance  
25 Bloomsbury Avenue, Catonsville, MD 21228

**Financial donations can be made by scanning the QR code or at:**  
[catonsvillehelp.org](http://catonsvillehelp.org)