Cache Food Pantry gears up for the holidays

11/07/2014

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November 7th, 2014 Posted in Arts and Life

Story and photo by Michael Royer

LOGAN — It’s the beginning of November, the season of giving. And the Cache Community Food Pantry is reaping the benefits.

“Our contributions and donations are easily up five times in November and December than other months of the year,” said director Matthew Whitaker. “It blows my mind how thoughtful and giving people of Cache Valley are.”


The nonprofit organization, which has been in Logan since the late 1970s and an incorporated business since 1994, provides emergency food and assistance for struggling individuals and families. Qualifying for the food pantry is an easy process, Whitaker said. “All applicants need is a proof of address such as a bill, and proof of household income.”

Whitaker said the main goal of the pantry is to get people back on their feet who have fallen, and at some point “we will all fall and need help back up.”

Farrell Layne retired from his job in 2010 and started volunteering at the pantry in 2012.

“I didn’t have anything to do so I decided to volunteer,” Layne said. “There is no better feeling in the world than knowing what you are doing is helping others, so that is what keeps me coming back to work.”

November and December are the busiest months for the food pantry, Layne said. “It gets very intense around here this time of year,” he said. “There are so many items coming in and being dropped off it is hard to keep up. There are days when I don’t stop moving the whole day.”

Christine Rich has been volunteering time at the pantry since 2012, and has served on the advisory board for the pantry since 2007.

“This community is unlike any other I have ever been around,” Rich said. “There is so much support for people who need help, it can be overwhelming at times.”

The support of Cache Valley citizens as well as several state grants helped the food pantry build its new building located at 359 S. Main St. in the fall of 2012.

“We work in a great place,” Rich said. “This whole organization is a reflection of the people of Cache Valley — without them, none of this would be possible.”

Although the pantry prepares no meals, volunteers will offer a Thanksgiving-themed event on Nov. 18. “We will supply turkeys and fresh vegetables for all of those who otherwise wouldn’t get to enjoy the Thanksgiving tradition,” Rich said.

Without the help of volunteers such as Rich and Layne, the food pantry wouldn’t be as successful as it is today.

“At the end of the day sometimes I just sit back and think about all of the generosity around this city,” Layne said. “I hope all of Cache Valley who participates in this pantry knows just how appreciated they are.”

Whitaker has been director of the pantry since 2002, and has seen the organization grow each year since then.

“The best feeling is when you have helped someone out a certain amount of times, and you see them coming back and you think, ‘Well here they come for some more help,’ and they come in and put a donation check on my desk,” Whitaker said.