

September 2009

BUIST COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE CENTER

From the Director...

A group of believers, followers of Jesus, working together, serving a meal, making new friends, and building relationships. That is what is happening at the Community Suppers. The suppers are held on one Thursday evening each month at the ROCK. This is not just a Buist Community Assistance Center event. We provide the planning and food, 1st Reformed Church provides the building and volunteers come from the community and beyond. It takes many hands to make this happen. We have individuals, families and groups from area churches who volunteer. It's about getting to know our neighbors, listening to each other, encouraging one another, loving as Jesus loves, and serving joyfully.

Let me share with you just one story from our July supper. A man had come to the BCAC for food and mistakenly came on a Thursday when our pantry was closed. I invited him to return on Saturday morning but also gave him a flyer for the supper that evening. His wife came home from work that afternoon and not knowing what to cook, he told her about the supper. I had a chance to sit with them and find out what was going on in their lives. He's been out of work for quite some time which is causing financial hardships and that means no going out for supper. Every dollar is spent on keeping up with bills.

In our conversation, I learned that they had a family gathering on the weekend and they were struggling with what food to bring, so we were able to load them up with leftovers from the supper. They both were so pleased with the food and fellowship. They said that they would be back every month. Sure enough they were back in August and shared about the great time they had at the family gathering, sharing the food they had received. What a joyful experience for all!

Isaiah 55:1a says, "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters..." Just as God invites us to draw near to Him, we invite you to come, eat, fellowship, grow relationships, pray together, and share God's abundance and love.

Blessings to you.....

Shirley TenHarmse

What's new at BCAC:

Our new sign is working! Our sign was installed in July and we immediately advertised for homegrown produce. The produce we have received is wonderful! Everything that comes in goes out just as quickly with our clients.

Thank you for partnering with us!

Pantry Hours:

Monday 2:00pm-6:30pm
Wednesday 9:00am-2:00pm
Saturday 9:00am-11:30am

Office Hours:

Monday 10:00am-2:00pm
Tuesday 10:00am-2:00pm
Thursday 10:00am-2:00pm



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Volunteer Stories...

Thursday, August 27th, was a busy day at the BCAC. A group of employees from Blue Cross Blue Shield/Blue Care Network of Michigan came to volunteer for the afternoon. These employees continually donate items to the Center. We had many jobs available for them like sorting clothing, sorting food and stocking shelves. Thank you for serving with us! Here are a few comments from those that were here:

"The experience for me was phenomenal. It gives you a feeling of reward in your heart."

"It was very humbling to go there and see the basic necessities that I sometimes take for granted, some people just can't afford. Buist does a wonderful thing helping the community and I was very glad to help out."

"It was so nice to see where our donations have been going to. This experience was a good way to open our eyes to what Buist has done and is doing for the needy and unemployed in our area. I think it helped us to be more grateful for our jobs and what we have. It was also a fun way to work and to get to know our fellow employees. Many hands make small work."



We had fun desserts at our August community supper! Our volunteers were dishing up watermelon pie, orange sherbet and many bowls of Rocky Road and Cookies & Cream ice cream. Over 200 friends and neighbors enjoyed a wonderful pasta supper.

A volunteer sent us this email:

"Thank you for the opportunity to serve! How nice it was to be a part of something that brings a community together to share in the bounty of Christ's gifts. He has truly blessed me and I think serving the community is a great way to thank Him for these blessings...I look forward to serving again!"

Our community suppers are held at The ROCK, 8425 Byron Center Ave., and are served from 5:30-7:00pm. The upcoming dates are Thursday, September 24, October 15, November 26 (Thanksgiving Day 12pm-2pm), and December 17.

Every Tuesday this summer, we had a volunteer time for kids to come in and help at the center. Kristie Baker volunteered her time to assist the kids. They would come in for 1 1/2 hours and work on jobs like sorting, bagging, and stuffing personal care bags. It was amazing how much work that they could accomplish in such a short time! It was also a great opportunity for the kids to use their time to help others in need. One young volunteer said, "It's a good way for us to help in the community and it was fun!" Thank you Kristie and kids for all of the help you gave us this summer!

