



NEWS RELEASE

From Mayor Dean DePiero

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PARMA CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS IN JULY

(PARMA) – Parma Mayor Dean DePiero is once again organizing a major food drive to benefit the Parma Hunger Center. The community effort will officially end with a special Christmas “sleigh” collection in Parma’s July 4th parade. Residents are being encouraged to bring non-perishable canned and boxed food items to the parade that can be handed to one of Santa’s helpers.

“It’s a credit to all of us who help the Parma Hunger Center during the Christmas holidays,” said Mayor DePiero. “The sad reality is that thousands of people are desperate and need our help year-round. We’re reminding folks all across northeast Ohio that hunger never takes a vacation.”

Beginning June 20, food collection boxes donated by Allied Waste Services will be placed at Parmatown Mall, Parma/Parma Heights County Library Buildings, Parma fire stations, Parma City Hall, the Parma Justice Center, the Parma Senior Center, Parma Community General Hospital, the Parma YMCA on Ridge Road and the western campus of Cuyahoga Community College. A portion of food collected at Tri-C and the Parma Heights Library will be donated to the Parma Heights Food Pantry.

Residents can also drop-off non-perishable boxed or canned food items at the Parma Hunger Center, 5280 Broadview Road. It is operated by an all-volunteer staff at Parma Lutheran Church, serving residents in Parma, Parma Heights, Brooklyn Heights and Seven Hills.

Food distributed by the Parma Hunger Center is obtained through cash and food donations and the Cleveland Foodbank. Foodbank Executive Director Anne Goodman says the demand at more than 450 regional hunger centers continues to outweigh the supply in its six county coverage area.

“The demand is unprecedented,” said Goodman. “Last year, the Foodbank distributed more than 20 million pounds of food. Thanks to Parma residents and other northeast Ohio donors, we had enough food to serve more than 15 million meals to hungry individuals in our community. That is great, but the need becomes greater from one day to the next.”

(more)

“This food drive by the city is a fantastic idea, and it comes at a time when we can really use the help,” said Parma Hunger Center co-director Arch Stevenson. “Our donations always drop during the summer months, but our need never goes away – it’s astounding! We sincerely appreciate all the help we can get.”

Organizers say The Parma Hunger Center’s total distribution has been overwhelming, increasing by about 40 percent over last year. At the present rate, 35-hundred families are being served, representing more than 12,000 individuals.

“What we’re doing is pulling together as a community to lend a hand,” said Mayor DePiero. “It’s the least we can do for our neighbors in need.”

The Parma Hunger Center has been serving the area for nearly forty years. Food is distributed on Tuesday afternoon and Friday morning. For more information on assistance criteria, call the Parma Hunger Center at 216-351-6376.

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