


NEWS RELEASE

South Central Indiana REMC

300 Morton Ave., Martinsville, IN 46151

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Food Pantry Receives Helping Hand

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Martinsville- Thanks to more than 20,000 members of South Central Indiana REMC over 260 additional households representing more than 1100 residents will receive a helping hand from the food pantry at the First Church of the Nazarene in Martinsville this winter. Through a recent Operation RoundUp grant the food pantry received a check for \$6,500 to supplement the cost of preparing and distributing food baskets to residents throughout all of Morgan County.

Melvin and Patty Clark co-directors of the pantry have been lending a helping hand for more than 25 years. They provide food assistance to those in need throughout all of Morgan County and into parts of Owen and Putnam counties as well.

“The pantry provides emergency food assistance to those in need due to extreme circumstances such as the recent floods we had in June,” stated Patty Clark. “In addition we prepare Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for those who may do without otherwise. Last year we fed approximately 4,000 people,” chimed in Melvin Clark.

Operating a food pantry is no easy task. All of the monies for food must come from donations.

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While the church contributes a donation each year, the bulk of the donations come from residents and business organizations around the county.

“This year is like no other,” said the Clarks. “Through August of 2008 the pantry has served 700 households representing 3,415 residents and we have yet to reach the busiest time of our year (November and December.)”

The Food Pantry is independent of the Nazarene Church however it is housed in their facility at 1609 John R. Wooden Drive in Martinsville. The food pantry expects to serve an estimated 1500 households this year. “Unfortunately as other food pantries close, those people are directed here,” stated the Clarks. “This increases our responsibilities to seek donations through fundraising efforts, raising awareness and building strong community relationships. The pantry is staffed by volunteers who provide an average of 104 man hours per week in support of the pantries mission to provide food assistance to those in need. Often those volunteers dig into their own pockets to help others.

“People who come here have exhausted all efforts and are generally without a job, a home and sometimes family support,” exclaimed Melvin Clark. The Clarks know first-hand what it is like to lose their home or be in need as their home was also damaged during the floods and their food supply was destroyed.

The assistance of the pantry is not limited to the poor, the sick, or the out of work. A good portion seeking assistance are the working class who simply don’t make enough money each week to make ends meet and without the aid of the pantry would have to make a choice between food or paying their utilities, or for medication or gas to get to work.

“SCI REMC members can be quite proud of the good work they do through Operation RoundUp,” stated Ron Bell a trustee for the SCI REMC grant foundation.

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"The way this program works is quite simple," said Greg McKelfresh, Senior VP of Business Technology for SCI REMC. "Each month the REMC "rounds up" the electric bills of participating consumers to the next highest dollar. For example, a bill for \$83.24 would be rounded to \$84.00 and \$.76 would be contributed to the program from this bill. This program is strictly voluntary."

All donations are placed in a trust fund and administered by the Board of Trustees of the SCI Membership Community Fund, Inc. Any administrative costs involved with this program are covered by SCI REMC. Funds are used to support not-for-profit organizations and individuals with critical needs. Funds are used only in counties served by South Central Indiana REMC.

The trustees approved several grant applications in November including; Brown County Habitat for Humanity \$4,680; Community Farmers Market of Owen County \$1,000; Madison Township Taxpayers Association \$5,000; Morgan County Center for Women's Ministries \$2,500; Long Term Recovery Center \$2,500; New Union Baptist Church and Cemetery \$1,500; Owen County Center for Women's Ministries \$1,270; and Owen County Community Foundation; \$2,500.

Over \$1.8 million dollars has been given back to the communities served by SCI REMC over the past 13 years. The following counties have received Operation RoundUp distributions in the form of grants as follows: Brown County \$435,582; Johnson County \$22,000; Monroe County \$167,224; Morgan County \$587,386; and Owen County \$447,678. This does not include the scholarships that have been awarded over the past four years or the monies that have been distributed that benefited multiple counties.

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For information on the Operation RoundUp Grants visit the REMC website at

www.sciremc.com.

If you would like to make a donation to the food pantry or have a need, the pantry is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

You can send your monetary donations to: The First Church of the Nazarene Food Pantry, 1609 John R. Wooden Drive, Martinsville, IN 46151. Your helping hand will be appreciated!

South Central Indiana REMC is the largest distribution cooperative in the state of Indiana serving more than 33,000 members in a seven county area including: Morgan, Monroe, Brown, Owen, and parts of Putnam, Clay and Johnson counties. For more information on the member-owned cooperative, visit www.sciremc.coop.

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