

The move to City Hall has been a game-changer for Everett Food Pantry

By Seth Daniel



Volunteer Terri O'Brien loaded carrots and potatoes into a bag recently for those attending the Everett Food Pantry in City Hall.

can wait inside on the distribution day. In the old location, they had to wait outside for their food, even in the winter."

Stelmack said that in 2015, the Everett Pantry made 3,789 visits/deliveries, served 1075 people and 376 households. That was a total of 76,249 meals.

The need is great, said lead volunteer Louis Barsotti, who noted that there are now more people coming since they relocated to City Hall.

"Every month, we get more and more people coming in and signing up for food," he said. "We are giving fresh food and fresh produce. Every month, it's more and more."

Added Stelmack, "The location has helped tremendously. We get elderly and disabled now. This location has great access. We needed to be in the Square. That was important to us. The Old High School was

Please see FOOD Page 7

ter renovations began, and a new plan had fallen through.

At one point, they were distributing in the parking lot of the old school.

"It got crazy," she said.

"We needed to find a space. We met with the mayor to see if we could find something. In June 2015, he offered us this space in City Hall and it's just been wonderful. The people

Food / CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

good, but the stairs were a killer."

Though hunger isn't a problem that is front and center these days, it exists in large numbers, volunteers said. They know that because the people coming in report to them that they don't have enough food.

Stelmack said that one in five children in the area suffer from food insecurity. Likewise, many elderly residents on fixed incomes also suffer from food insecurity.

"People com in and say, 'My heat got turned off' and I don't have money to buy food," she said. "They come in and say they don't want to come, but they have no choice. These are people who live close to the edge. They need to pay their bills and any food will help and they're very grateful. If they can get the free food twice a month, it can help them to be able to pay their other bills. A lot of people are living on the edge,

especially with food, and they count on this Pantry."

Added Barsotti, "It's a real eye opener when you actually see what's going on."

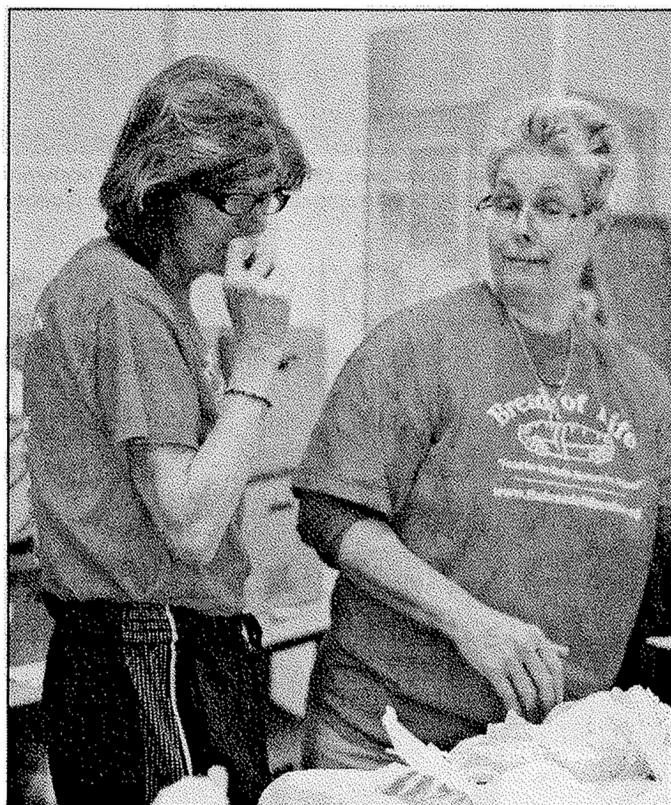
Volunteers like Teri Barchard said it's great to give back.

"I don't work, so I volunteer here," she said. "It's wonderful and great to be able to help. It's great to help other people out when you can."

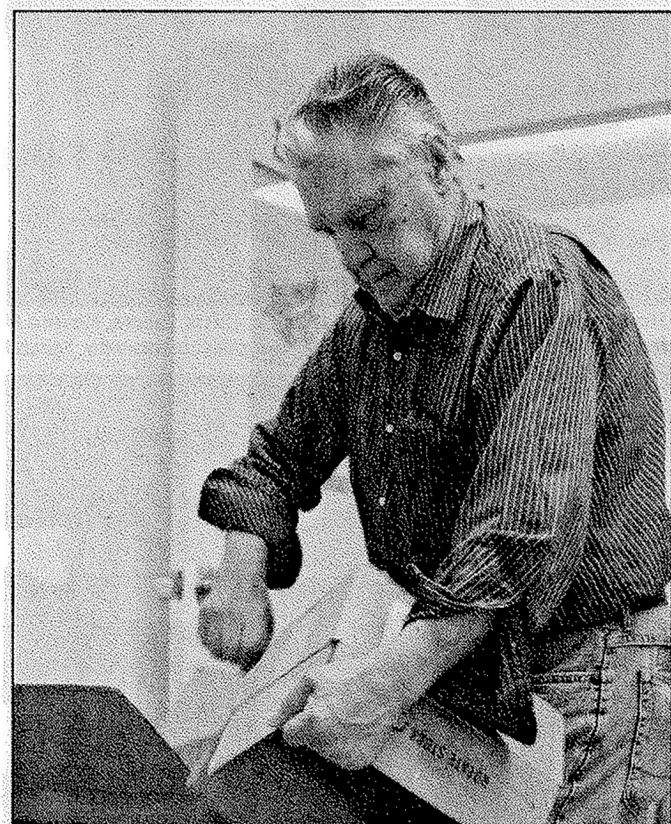
Carolyn Perry, a volunteer, said she and her friends have volunteered at the Everett Food Pantry for years.

"It's great to help the people who come and making sure they have something to eat," she said. "We all work well together and we've been doing this for years, so we're pretty efficient."

The Pantry offers a variety of fruit, produce, eggs and canned good two times a month on Thursdays. For more information, call (781) 397-0404.



Teri Barchard and Patty Rose take a moment to think about how they are going to fit everything into one bag.



Lead Volunteer Louis Barsotti gets rid of some boxes prior to folks arriving for the distribution.



Long-time Everett Food Pantry volunteers Dot Peters, Cindy Popovsky and Carolyn Perry.