

Lake Villa Review

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Open Arms Mission desperately needs donations

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The Open Arms Mission Food Pantry in Antioch has seen such an increase in families in need, the agency may run out of milk and basic food items by this week.

Organizers say they desperately need donations to continue serving families throughout Antioch, Lake Villa and Lindenhurst.

"We are seeing more working families every week coming in for help," said Rev. Scott Keenan, executive director. "All the bad economic news we hear about every day is hitting us in our own neighborhoods."

The food pantry is open three days a week and is staffed by volunteers. It serves about 250 families every week, and averages 20 new families coming into the pantry for the first time.

"We are seeing many people who are facing layoffs and seeking assistance for the first time in their lives, and we are seeing more homeowners who need assistance," Keenan said.

He added that the tough economic times are impacting donations.

"I know everyone is hurting financially right now, so I would not ask if the need were not critical," said Keenan. "Hunger in our community is real, and it touches everyone from little kids to our senior citizens."

Cash donations are down drastically at a time of the year when donations are historically low. "Donations are down but the need is increasing," Keenan said. "For the first time in several years we haven't been able to provide milk and other basic foods. By the end of the week we run out of those items."

While donations of non-perishable food items are welcome, a \$1 donation can buy 10 pounds of food from the Northern Illinois Food Bank and other low-cost sources.

Tax deductible donations may be made to Open Arms Mission, PO Box 79, Antioch IL 60002. For more information, call Open Arms Mission at (847) 395-0309.