

Chatham OutReach Alliance, Inc.

CORA is a member agency of Chatham County United Way

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Chatham PORCH Programs a Boon to CORA

By Jim Farrington

It started as a simple concept developed by three women in Chapel Hill in 2009: Ask neighbors to put donations of food in grocery bags on their porch on an assigned day per month and the bags would be collected, then to get that food to the food insecure. That idea has blossomed nationally into a network of over 100 PORCH programs.

Chatham County's entry into PORCH in 2011 was accomplished by Roz Darling and a core group from Fearrington Village who decided to use CORA as the viaduct to get Fearrington neighbors' donations to Chatham folks who need assistance to put food on their tables. Starting with a couple hundred pounds of donated food in their first collection, Fearrington PORCH has developed into a massive program over the years that in November delivered 3,305 pounds of food. (That load included 82 frozen turkey breasts that would grace the Thanksgiving tables of 82 Chatham families unable to afford what is for them a food luxury.)

Working inside Fearrington PORCH are 25 neighborhood coordinators to keep manageable the huge pick-ups and delivery to CORA. They also got an assist from Pittsboro Ford with a loan of a truck or van each month on pick-up day. It still takes two large vehicles in

addition to the truck to complete the mission.

Ms. Darling has used what she has learned over the years to assist other neighborhoods who wanted to create their own porch drives. Recently, she spent time with people from Westfall and Briar Chapel helping them set up their own PORCH programs.

Linda Coerr, lead coordinator of Briar Chapel PORCH, pointed out, "While Briar Chapel is a very large neighborhood, you don't have to be big to start a program. Every donation of one, two or three cans makes a difference to the family that receives it." Although the program began in March of 2016, they already routinely bring in over a half-ton of food every month. Word of the program spread quickly. Ms. Coerr recalls the surprise they had on their second pick up, "We had twice the food as we had the first month. My car was loaded to the ceiling. We added drivers after that." Briar Chapel has formed a subgroup that will provide CORA clients with four recipes each month based on ingredients found on pantry shelves.

Pantry Manager Lyndie Bracey explained what PORCH means to CORA. "They have had a very positive effect on food costs. At present we are at \$0.73/lb. down from \$0.83/lb. at the

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Fearrington
PORCH November
2015



Linda Coerr (l) &
Briar Chapel
PORCH Members



Peter Baroff, Woods
Charter Student, started
Redbud PORCH in 2013.

CORA By the Numbers

2016 Fiscal Year

- **5,949** families served
(**19,035** Individuals)
- **227** tons of food distributed (220 previous year)
- Enough food for
399,735 Meals
- **1,013** Children received food for weekday meals in the summer **SNACK! Program.**
- **11** Backpack Programs received monetary and technical support.

Become a CORA Sustainer

Help Us Meet Our Goal of 150 Sustainers — We need 58 more !

You sign up only once with your (secure) credit/debit card information, and you are done! You donate the same amount each month for as many months as you choose. We will automatically charge your card on the tenth of every month until you tell us to stop. It's an easy, convenient way to help CORA provide emergency food to those in need year-round. You can fill out and mail the **enclosed donation form** (also available on the website at www.corafoodpantry.org/donate) or call **919-545-3030**. Every \$10 you give each month feeds one person for an entire week.

PORCH Programs (continued from page 1)

end of our fiscal year 2015-2016. Also, PORCH donors are very generous in donating items such as toiletries and paper products that we normally don't purchase." One of the most popular features of the pantry is the Birthday Closet. PORCH programs keep it stocked with cake mix and icing to

assure that every child who visits and has an upcoming birthday will at the very least have a birthday cake.

A major by-product of PORCH is that it has created a sense of involvement from all who participate, according to Ms. Bracey. Coordinators get regular updates on needs which they pass on to

their constituents. She added, "I have heard from various PORCH 'neighbors' that these updates allow them to have a glimpse into what is going on at CORA. And by donating what we need, they feel that they are making a real difference." Indeed they are.

In addition to the three

PORCH programs mentioned on page 1, they now operate in the following neighborhoods: Bynum, Governor's Club, Highland Forest, Miles Branch, Powell Place, The Preserve at Jordan Lake and Rosebud.

Jim Farrington, retired newspaper executive, is a CORA volunteer, board secretary and Jack-of-All-Trades. He was named a Chatham County Outstanding Volunteer in 2016.

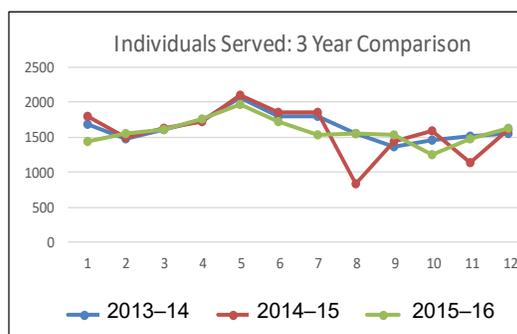
Updates

SNACK! 2016

From mid-June to Mid-August 2016 SNACK! provided 1013 children with food to replace the federal meals they would have had if they were in school. All 14 distribution sites were client choice, allowing children and caregivers to choose from a variety of choices in most food cate-

gories, better serving both Latino (77% of children) and non-Latino families. Six servings of fresh produce per week were the most appreciated items. Details on the SNACK! Program can be found at www.corafoodpantry.org. Sustainers may designate their donations for SNACK!

Facility Update: We are working with the county's assistant manager and an architect to design an addition to our building that meets our needs and the county's budget. It's a slow process but we are persistent and determined to better serve Chatham County families that are food insecure with healthy foods of their choice.



From July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016 CORA distributed food for 19,035 people, only 33 people less than the previous year.



Like us on Facebook.
Follow us on Twitter.

88 cents of every dollar you give goes directly to CORA food programs.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Volunteer. CORA is a volunteer-based organization with more than 200 volunteers who sort food drive contributions, transport food, stock our shelves, directly serve our clients, and provide administrative and fundraising support. To attend an orientation: call 919-542-5020 or email volunteer@corafoodpantry.org

Donate. CORA is a private nonprofit organization recognized under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Your gift is tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. For your convenience, a donation form is included with this newsletter.

Contribute Food. Have a Food Drive.

Our most needed foods are listed on our Web site "Donate" page. Follow the link under "Foods We Need Now" to access a downloadable packet with information on holding a food drive. You can also request a packet mailed to you by sending a request to: datamgr@corafoodpantry.org.

Donations can also be made at www.corafoodpantry.org by clicking the yellow "Donate" button on any page.