



WHAT'S ON OUR PLATE *April 2026*

You can help feed neighbors experiencing hunger in Berks and Schuylkill counties. Please support our mission today.

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One Year of Making Meals at the Community Kitchen

In April, we celebrated an amazing milestone: one full year of making meals at the Helping Harvest Community Kitchen! We began moving in on April 20, 2025 and were producing meals by the end of that very month.

In its first year, the kitchen produced over 170,000 meals! Initial goals for the kitchen were to create around 75,000 meals made from donated product in the first year, building to a goal of 2,500 meals weekly by May 2026. We hoped to recruit seven or eight volunteers per day.

"I have never before been a part of a project that so completely exceeded our ambition," said President Jay Worrall. "We first completed 2,500 meals in a week in August 2025, nine months ahead of schedule. We surpassed 100,000 meals in just our tenth month. We regularly see more than 20 volunteers each day."

Some of the menus produced have included various soups, vegetarian and vegan meals, and



Celebrating Community & Hope In Schuylkill County

On April 30, we gathered with 170+ of our closest friends and supporters to celebrate community and hope in the mountains of Schuylkill County.

Our 3rd annual Celebration of Community and Hope - Schuylkill County raised funds in support of our mission.

Speakers included President Jay Worrall, Board Chairwoman Jeanne Boyer Porter, Executive Director of Servants to All Jeanette Triano Sinn, and Reverend Craig Zimmerman of Saint Paul's UCC Ringtown.

The program included messages on the impact of our Community Kitchen and a tribute to volunteers and staff.

Thank you to our sponsors including: AdviseMint Financial, Mountain Valley Golf Course, Mrs. T's Pierogies, Jack Rich,

breakfasts, as well as some typical dinner meals like shepherd's pie, lasagna and chicken fajitas.

“Our number one priority is balancing the quality and quantity of the meals we produce, so we can best serve as many neighbors as possible,” said Director of Culinary Operations Chef Melanie Galarza. “Secondary to that is utilizing donated products effectively in both congregate meals and repacking them into smaller portions to be distributed. Ultimately, we want to make sure all the food we produce is tasty, visually appealing and nutritionally balanced.”

We have a number of exciting opportunities in the pipeline for year two, always with an eye on how to best serve neighbors in the area experiencing food insecurity. Stay tuned!

[Read More](#)

Inc., AmeriHealth Caritas, and over 20 additional sponsors.

In the words of Jay (and how he closed his speech): Hunger is a solvable problem. It really is. Let's work to make sure no child, no parent, no senior - no one - goes hungry in our community. Together we can end hunger in Schuylkill County.

Thank you to all who joined us! Our next celebration event will be held in Berks County in October (see more details on that below).

[Learn More](#)



Volunteer of the Month: Chet

Over a decade ago, Chet retired and was looking for a way to stay active. He says, “I wanted to stay active in a way that would help the people of Berks County. Helping those who needed food seemed like the right thing to do.”

700 hours later, Chet has become a hard-working and devoted volunteer who we are so lucky to be able to rely on! His favorite activity is Mobile Markets, but before COVID, Chet also worked in the warehouse, accompanied drivers on deliveries, and enjoyed Healthy Sprouts opportunities. He is looking forward to checking out the Community Kitchen soon!

When Chet isn't volunteering, you can find him watching Penn State games, attending concerts, or traveling. Chet



Appreciating Our Volunteers All Month Long

April is National Volunteer Month and home to National Volunteer Week, so we spent some time honoring our volunteers (actually, come to think of it, that's not too different from EVERY month, week and day here)!

Volunteers that had shifts scheduled during Volunteer Appreciation Week (April 20-24) got to enjoy special treats thanks to some generous donations from around the area.

We say it every single day. We could not do what we do - serve neighbors in Berks & Schuylkill counties who are facing food insecurity - without our fabulous volunteers.

Whether they're sorting donated items at the warehouse, distributing food at a

has already enjoyed ocean cruises, multiple trips to the south and west U.S. and Europe! But he's looking forward to a trip to Hawaii, taking a railway trip through the Rockies, and a river cruise!

He says, "Volunteering here provides me with a means to fight hunger in our communities. It also allows me an opportunity to meet and work with people who also see a real value in working to fight hunger."

[Learn More](#)

Mobile Market, or preparing and packaging meals at the Community Kitchen, volunteers are the backbone of our organization.

So, whether you have spent 2 hours, 20 hours, 200 hours or 2000 hours with us, THANK YOU for joining us in the fight against hunger. Your support means more than you can know.

Today and every day, we celebrate YOU!

[Learn More](#)

Save the Date: 2026 Berks County Celebration of Community & Hope in October

With our 3rd Annual Schuylkill County Celebration of Community & Hope - Schuylkill County just behind us, it's time to mark your calendars for our next big event!

Our fall Celebration of Community & Hope – Berks County will be held on October 1, 2026.

Festivities start at 5pm at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Reading (701 Penn Street Reading, PA).

More information will be released soon...this is one you won't want to miss! Keep an eye on our [News & Events page](#).



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