

**Alfred, ME** Operators of food pantries throughout Maine observe the growing need for food as underemployment, high fuel and medical costs affect certain segments of society, especially the elderly who feel the financial pinch.

York County Shelter Programs (YCSP) food pantry continues to see a marked increase in the need for food to help feed the hungry of York County.

Serving all towns, the food pantry, located in the former Shaker Barn owned by the Brothers of Christian Instruction on the Notre Dame campus, is opened Monday through Friday 1-4 p.m. and for emergencies seven days a week, 24 hours a day by calling 207-324-1137.

The food pantry distributed 13,221 boxes of food in fiscal year 2006, to 39,643 people (units of service). Fiscal year 2007, which concludes June 30, 2007, expects to see an increase in 2006 figures.

YSCP food pantry currently

## York County Shelters Food Pantry Helps Growing Food Need in Maine

receives USDA government surplus food every month, but the Federal government has decreased the funding for surplus foods over the last few years, which has created a shortage just when the demand has gone up. YCSP also receives donations from schools, churches, scout troops, supermarkets, businesses and individuals.

The University of Maine Extension's "Plant a Row" for the hungry and the "Hunters for the Hungry" programs donate produce and game meat respectively.

The Bakery at Notre Dame, open to the public as a retail and wholesale bakery from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. every day is home to YCSP food services. Proceeds from the bakery sales of breads, rolls, muffins, squares and turnovers and the weekly Friday

night, April to October, public Mama Mia's pasta and pizza suppers help support programs including the food pantry and Free Meals Kitchens.

Food services prepare 1,200 meals per month for shelter residents living on Shaker Hill, besides the 15,243 meals prepared and delivered to its Free Meal Kitchens in Sanford and Springvale on designated days.

Part of the food services mission is to be a vocational training site for shelter residents. While learning valuable job skills, shelter residents have an opportunity to give back to the community.

YCSP is grateful to have a band of 25 volunteers to manage the food pantry and 25 to man the Free Meals Kitchen. Joan Sylvester, director of the program says, "There is always a need for more volunteers."



**Working in the Food Pantry at the Shaker Barn are volunteers Brother Albert Heinrich and Arline Horn filling the food boxes.**

**A happy recipient walks away with her box of canned goods and fruits.**

