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MAR. 2023, ISSUE 1

# The PROP Post

*The PROP Food Shelf Monthly E-Newsletter*



## Empty Bowls Returns In-Person

Approximately 400 friends and neighbors enjoyed fellowship, food and fun at PROP's 2023 Empty Bowls fundraiser at St. Andrew Lutheran Church on February 21st. It was the first time the popular event has been held in-person since 2020. Eden Prairie Mayor Ron Case read a proclamation declaring February 21st as "Empty Bowls Day" in Eden Prairie, and took a shift as a celebrity soup ladler. Over 80 gallons of soup and 100 loaves of bread were donated by area restaurants.

The event was PROP's most successful fundraiser to date thanks to the generous support of sponsors from community businesses, organizations, faith groups and philanthropic individuals. A silent auction and wine pull helped raise an additional \$7000.

Area artists provided handmade bowls, a pottery making demonstration and fantastic musical entertainment. Over 100 volunteers served tirelessly to ensure attendees enjoyed this wonderful event to raise awareness of food, housing and economic insecurity in Eden Prairie and Chanhassen.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of Empty Bowls enabling PROP Food and Services to continue to support our neighbors in crisis.

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## Executive Director's Corner

Jenifer Loon



**Food facts:** Currently we provide about 600 household food orders per month, an increase of 100 orders per month since September 2022. PROP was just awarded grant funds to purchase more culturally significant foods in 2023 and 2024. We are excited to source more foods that are familiar to our diverse client population!

**Housing needs up:** Requests for rent and mortgage help have exceeded our estimate this year. Grants that PROP receives to help prevent homelessness in our community, such as the

**Announcement:** We are so pleased to announce the inaugural publication of the "PROP Post" providing our readers with the very latest news and happenings at PROP Food and Services. We hope you find The PROP Post informative and inspiring.

Just over a year into my role as the Executive Director, I can tell you there is never a quiet or slow time at PROP! In Fiscal Year 2022, we experienced a 25% increase in client need for food and "wrap around" services like mental health, career training and financial assistance.

CDBG grant from the city of Eden Prairie, were depleted approximately 8 months into our fiscal year. But thanks to the matching fund created by incredibly generous donors to "Keep Families in Their Homes for the Holidays and Beyond," our housing assistance program remains open for our clients. PROP is still accepting applications and providing vital assistance to families so they can get through times of economic crises.

It is so gratifying to know that when families in need come to PROP Food and Services, we can offer help and hope.

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## PROP's "Wrap-Around" Services Expand



It's been an eventful first quarter of 2023 for PROP Services. We have a new Case Manager, Rachel Koss, who comes to PROP with years of experience in housing case management.

As part of the Social Services team, Rachel and Case Manager Keosha Greenlaw provide care for PROP clients in need of support.



PROP Services is pleased to announce a new partnership with LSS Financial Counseling. In March we hosted our first financial workshop where clients learned about basic financial wellness strategies.

Each PROP client who lives in Eden Prairie or Chanhassen may receive 6 individual sessions with a Financial Counselor to address things such as budgeting, financial goal-setting, loan repayment, etc. PROP will be hosting additional workshops at the Eden Prairie Library that anyone in the community may attend.



PROP Services is thankful for our continued partnership with Relate Counseling to provide FREE therapy sessions for PROP clients who live in Eden Prairie or Chanhassen. Therapy sessions can be in-person or via telehealth.

We are excited to announce that we have recently added a second Mental Health Therapist, McKenzie Paddock. McKenzie will be at PROP on Tuesdays from 8 AM to noon. Therapist Joe Haselman will continue to serve PROP clients on Mondays from 8 AM to noon.

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## PROP Hosts CareerForce Workshop

PROP Employment Services supports jobseekers individually and through partnerships with local organizations like CareerForce. In March, PROP hosted a workshop, "Career Exploration," that offered tools and resources to explore a career based on interests and skills.

PROP, in partnership with CareerForce, will offer a walk-in Resume Clinic on Tuesday, April 4th from 9:30-11:30 AM. The event is open to everyone and no appointment is needed. Contact Jessica for more information at [jessicak@propfood.org](mailto:jessicak@propfood.org) or 952.767.2977.



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## Eden Prairie and Chanhassen Community Food Drives For PROP

With the increase in clients coming through PROP's doors in need of immediate food support, keeping our food shelves filled is an ongoing challenge. The gift of Community Food Drives makes it possible for PROP to consistently provide food for our clients. Two recent food drives are highlighted in articles below.

We are always impressed with the creativity of how these food drives are organized! Every food drive, large or small, makes a difference at PROP. If you would like to learn more about how you or your organization can help, contact Mary Brown at [maryb@propfood.org](mailto:maryb@propfood.org) or call 952 746-1890.

## St. Hubert's Catholic School Holds Competition Between Classes

During the month of March, students at St. Hubert's Catholic School in Chanhassen held a competition between classes to see who could bring in the most food items for PROP. Over 5,000 pounds of food were donated! Some students donated food items to their classroom bins, while other students shopped for PROP on a field trip to the grocery store. PROP enjoys working with local schools, and we are always available to brainstorm food drive ideas.



## Awesome Teamwork on Display at OPTUM

OPTUM employees in Eden Prairie took a different approach to their drive for PROP, focusing on personal care items of greatest need at PROP Food Mart. These items included soap and products for hair care, dental care and shaving. OPTUM funded the purchase of the items, and their employees held a packing event to create 400 personal care bags for our neighbors in need! The event was a wonderful example of a collaboration between PROP staff and a local business.



## March is MN FoodShare Month

The Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign (February 27 through April 9) brings together organizations, businesses, faith communities, and individuals to help keep 300 food shelves statewide stocked throughout the year. A portion of every food and financial donation given to PROP Food Shelf this month will be matched. Help your neighbors in need in our community by making your gift on-line at [www.propfood.org](http://www.propfood.org), or by mailing a check to PROP Food and Services, 14700 Martin Drive, Eden Prairie, MN 55344.



Holly Henslin Link, Editor of The PROP Post | [Contact Us](#)

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