

Help: Gifts, food will be distributed on Dec. 19

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Last year, the program served over 200 families. They expect to serve more this year.

Most of the food donations last year came from Lewis and Clark Elementary School, so this year Columbia Memorial asked Astoria Middle School and Astoria High School to participate in collecting food.

Lynn Jackson, the Astoria High School principal, said the food drive helps fill a temporal need for the student body and also provides an educational opportunity about the joy of service.

“Education is more than just math and reading and science. Especially in a society where at times we feel a sense of division, these types of activities bring a unifying sense of community back to our local sphere,” Jackson said.

“As an educational institution, we’re teaching that civic responsibility. Just looking out for your fellow community members is an important

aspect of not only feeling a sense of unity in our community, but also the joy of supporting others and forgetting yourself a little bit. The challenge is that we have many of our students that are actually in need, so we’re doing a food drive to benefit many of our own students.”

The gifts and food baskets will be distributed on Dec. 19 at the Clatsop County Fairgrounds.

Leading up to that day, Columbia Memorial employees will spend four days at the fairgrounds organizing and sorting the food. Each family will receive basic ingredients in their baskets like sugar, milk, flour, eggs and a turkey voucher.

Hospital employees are also putting together a recipe book with their families’ favorite holiday recipes. All the recipes can be made with the ingredients in the basket.

“It’s a good program. It helps a lot of the community and we need to pull together during this time of the year,” Cleveland said.



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

From left, Lewis and Clark Elementary School students Kemiry Moss, Gibson Allen and Rosemary Allen hold donated items for the food drive.

Census: ‘It’s so key and crucial and not just for our counties’



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Clatsop County is preparing for the 2020 census.

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The data will also help Clatsop County determine whether there needs to be modifications in the Board of Commissioners’ district boundaries, since the county charter requires the total population to be “allocated nearly equally” between the five districts.

“It’s so key and crucial and not just for our counties, but for nonprofits and funding ... to really know who is in the community,” said Jenny Pool Radway, the executive director at the

Lower Columbia Hispanic Council. “It’s a way for us to demonstrate that there is a need and that there is not enough of that service or there’s an underrepresentation of that market or what have you.”

For example, children under 5 are hard to count, but if there is an accurate count, then a case can be made for more child care for younger children, Pool Radway said.

Two Lower Columbia Hispanic Council staffers went to a census conference last month to prepare for

local outreach. Pool Radway also brings experience, having worked as a partnership specialist for the census bureau.

“Completing the census is a way to be civically engaged,” Pool Radway said. “And I would love for people to say, ‘Hey, do you want me to help you complete the census’ to someone who doesn’t speak English or someone who is afraid, and really encourage them and explain why it affects everyone, why it’s key and it’s OK and safe to do.”



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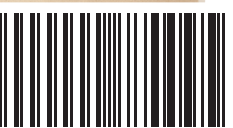
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