



St. Augustine
Wellston Center

Serving the wellston community since 1993



February Updates for the Wellston Center Supporters



Sweet Valentines Packed with Soup

Have you ever heard that chicken soup is good for the soul? For Valentine's Day this year, we helped to spread some love and warmth through goodie bags for our clients. Each bag was filled with soup (pop tops, only!), candy, and hand sanitizer. We hoped it made them feel as special as they make us feel!



FEBRUARY FOOD PANTRY NUMBERS

TOTAL # OF FAMILIES HELPED
209

TOTAL # OF CLIENTS HELPED
556

**TOTAL # OF PEOPLE HELPED
NOT IN OUR SERVICE AREA***
107

TOTAL # OF NEW CLIENTS
17

**TOTAL UTILITY ASSISTANCE
GRANTED**
\$5,275.00

*We will continue to help those not in our service area as long as we still have food.



FEBRUARY FEATURES

Birthdays in Wellston

Besides providing benefits of socializing and staving off senior isolation, support groups can help seniors cope with the changing world and bring people in their sphere who have been experiencing what they have been. Our support group has curated a unique collection of seniors from Wellston who now view each other as integral parts of their lives. While our Senior Support Group typically discuss community issues, grief, or health questions, they love to celebrate each other's birthdays when they come around. One of our members, Gladys, celebrated her birthday in February and we surprised her with a party!

- Our Lady of Lourdes School held a "Soup-er Bowl" food drive for our pantry!
- Wagner Bros Lawn Care helped us keep our lots clear during the most unprecented snowy weather.
- A local **Girl Scout** troop came to complete service hours by sorting through our thrift store donations.
- Incarnare Word Foundation gifted us a **\$750 grant** to support our food pantry!
- We were invited to speak at the **Florissant Rotary Board** meeting to spread awareness of our services.



Snow Days Aren't All Fun

By Haley Calabro, Director

Do you remember what snow days used to mean? No school, no work - just a God given day for rest and joy. However, beauty is only in the eye of the beholder. You might not be aware of how snow days impact low-income families. A few days off of school can disrupt a family's tight budget, especially if the children rely on free or reduced lunches. In Missouri, there are **912, 247 students** eligible for free or reduced lunch - about 50% of all students. To be eligible for the National School Lunch Program, families must have an annual household income under the established guidelines.,

For example, a family of 3 can make a maximum of \$40,626 to qualify. According to the Missouri Family Wage Calculator, a family of 3 in St. Louis must make at least \$45,000 to make ends meet. Thus, a family who is barely surviving check to check would immediately feel the impact of a snow day and the loss of free meals.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the way in which snow days are experienced. Many schools enforced virtual learning, another struggle experienced by low-income families. More than one in six people in poverty have no internet access, also causing students to fall behind academically. These multifaceted issues are often on the forefront of our programming, guiding the



Wellston Center to be more intentional with distributing food. Not only do we want to provide families with nutritious options in their food boxes, we also want to provide them with food that lasts in case of an emergency. While you might look forward to a snow day, it is not the reality for everyone. That is why community support and food pantries are crucial to a thriving society.

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