



Taking the Pledge to End Senior Hunger

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ALTON—Senior Services Plus, Inc., a non-profit organization located in Alton, Illinois, is asking the area to take the pledge so that “No Senior Goes Hungry”. The organization is combating the issue of senior hunger by delivering 600 meals each day to homebound seniors in Madison & St. Clair counties. Each meal that is delivered fulfills one-third of a senior’s daily nutritional requirements.

In an effort to gain national momentum, the Meals On Wheels Association of America (MOWAA) launched the “Pledge to End Senior Hunger by 2020” campaign in 2009. According to the MOWAA, there are 8.3 million seniors in the United States facing the threat of hunger.

SSP’s volunteers supply meals directly to the doors of friends, families, and neighbors. In 2012, they supplied over 130,000 meals in 22 townships. Meals are available Monday through Friday, and despite the suggested donation of \$3.50, a recipient is never denied a meal regardless of the individual’s ability to pay. While private donations are always appreciated, the organization still has to seek other forms of revenue for the Meals On Wheels Program. For more information on volunteering in the Meals On Wheels, contact our AltonCenter at 618-465-3298 or visit seniorservicesplus.org.

SSP’s Executive Director, John Becker, said that “senior hunger has become even more of a threat due to the state of the economy. Those who are in need should never be denied, especially the seniors who have worked in and have become a part of our community.” He added, “Raising awareness is the key to the Meals On Wheels Program’s success. Though the program has been in place for over 40 years, many do not know that the need for the program continues to grow at an alarming pace.”

During “March for Meals”, Senior Services Plus invites local Mayors and other elected officials to join them for an informational breakfast. Participants for 2013 are: Mayor Michael McCormick of Godfrey, Mayor Gail Mitchell of FairviewHeights, Mayor Felix Floyd of Roxana, Kenny Beasley of South Roxana, and Mayor Fred Ufert of

WoodRiver. On March 20, each local official will enjoy breakfast from the same café that prepares the home-delivered meals. After enjoying breakfast and hearing about how the area has been affected by senior hunger, the Mayors will show their support by taking home-delivered meals to seniors in their own communities.

In June, SSP invites the community to give back by attending their 4th Annual “Feed the Need” Concert. The event provides a chance to enjoy a summertime concert at the Alton Riverfront Amphitheatre, while helping to provide the next meal for area seniors. This year’s concert will be held on Saturday, June 8, from 5-10pm, with entertainment provided by a Bluegrass line-up: Marty Stuart and His Fabulous Superlatives, Marty Raybon, The Expedition Band, with hosts, The Harmans. In 2012, the concert was attended by over 1,500 people, and attendance is expected to grow. Various vendors will be on site selling food, drinks, and merchandise. Pets are not allowed on the amphitheatre property, and it is suggested that attendees bring their own lawn chairs or blankets. Tickets for the concert are available at their Alton location (2603 North Rodgers Ave.), or may be purchased on their website, seniorservicesplus.org.

There are many ways to make a contribution to the cause: Volunteer for a local Meals On Wheels program, generate awareness about the problem of senior hunger in America, make a monetary donation, support Meals On Wheels programs in their fundraising efforts, or share your thoughts on how to end senior hunger by the year 2020. For more information on the Meals On Wheels Program, visit mowaa.org. Or to find out more about volunteering with Senior Services Plus, call 618-465-3298 or visit the volunteer link at seniorservicesplus.org.