

Food drive

(continued from page 1)

mentary School and Dallas High School Student Council are also conducting Thanksgiving drives for the Back Mountain Food Pantry.

The Back Mountain Food Pantry is sponsored by the Back Mountain Ministerium, an ecumenical group of church pastors and ministers.

"All of the 27 churches in the Back Mountain, which is comprised of the Dallas and Lake-Lehman school districts, are invited to become involved in this ecumenical group," said Hazel-tine. "They meet monthly and the Rev. Janet Clark of Shavertown United Methodist Church is the current convener. They are very supportive of the food pantry. In fact, the collection at the ecumenical service on Thanksgiving Eve at St. Therese's Church is being donated to the food pantry."

The Back Mountain Food Pantry is one of 13 such food banks in Luzerne County. The pantries use their cash donations to purchase needed food items from the Weinberg Food Bank, which is part of the Luzerne County Commission on Economic Opportunity. Food banks, like the one in Wilkes-Barre, serve pantries in several counties. They can purchase food items directly from government agencies at greatly reduced prices and then sell to the pantries at nominal rates. They also have refrigeration available.

"We are hoping to have refrigeration when we move into our new facility," said Hazel-tine, who has been busy writing grants to help make that move possible. "Trucksville United Methodist

Church has set aside 620 square feet of space for the food pantry in their new construction. We have to raise \$62,000 to cover the estimated cost. We are about 70 percent of the way there."

Only monetary donations specifically earmarked go toward that construction project. The new facility will be a huge improvement over the current location, which is in the basement of the old Trucksville municipal office building. There, volunteers have to carry all donations down a narrow wooden staircase, sort them onto shelves, and separate the orders in the dimly lit room before the clients can haul them back upstairs.

"We are hoping, hoping, hoping to be in by June," said Hazel-tine.

The food pantry is seeking donations of canned vegetables like red beets, carrots, and potatoes. "We get a lot of green beans and corn but very few people think to donate fruit. We can really use any kind of canned fruit and juices and applesauce, even boxes of scalloped potatoes. We prefer cans and plastic to glass containers. We also need canned beef and chicken stew but we have an awful lot of tuna fish right now," said Hazel-tine.

Also on the list of needed items are jelly, pudding, cake mixes, instant coffee, tea, powdered and canned milk and two pound boxes of sugar. Donations are being accepted at many local businesses.

"We can always use other groups to sponsor drives. One novel idea is to do a drive dedicated to something like breakfast foods," said Hazel-tine.



Back Mountain Food Pantry volunteers, shown in the existing store room. From left: Bill Ostrum, St. Paul's Lutheran; George Gallord, Trucksville United Methodist; Bill Long, Trucksville United Methodist; Bill Palmer, Trucksville United Methodist; Wally Gosart, St. Paul's Lutheran.

Food bank drop points

Several Back Mountain merchants are helping the collection by providing locations for the food to be dropped off. Non-perishable items may be dropped off at any of the locations listed below from November 7 through December 18. Cash donations, which will provide turkeys and fresh fruits and vegetables, may be sent to the Back Mountain Food Pantry, c/o Trucksville United Methodist Church, 40 Knob Hill, Trucksville, PA 18708. For more information, please call

the church office at 696-3897.

Pickett's Charge Restaurant, 64 E. Center Hill Rd., Dallas

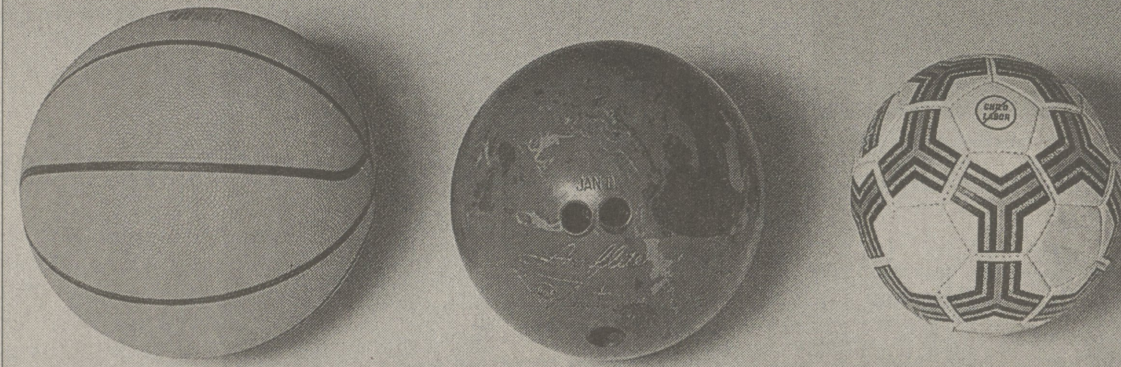
Century 21/Ruth K. Smith Real Estate, Inc., 358 S. Memorial Hwy., Shavertown

The Dallas Post, 607 Main Rd., Dallas

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Rt. 118, Dallas

Shavertown United Methodist Church, 163 N. Pioneer Ave., Shavertown

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