

## Partner Profiles



United Way of the Tri-Valley Area

Lisa Park Laflin, Executive Director

*Editor's Note: This article, written collaboratively by Rev. Marcia Charles and Nancy Teel, is part of an ongoing series that demonstrates the community impact of the United Way of the Tri-Valley Area (UWTVA), its funded Partners, collaborators, and recipients of donor-designated funds. To learn more about how you can give, advocate, or volunteer in your community, or to view the article archive, visit [www.uwtva.org](http://www.uwtva.org). To contact staff, call (207) 778-5048 or e-mail [info@uwtva.org](mailto:info@uwtva.org).*

### **New Home for Clearwater Food Pantry?**

The United Way of the Tri-Valley Area's mission is to improve people's lives by focusing the caring capacity of our communities; this includes supporting our area food pantries by administering the Emergency Food and Shelter Program as well as advocating for their stability and growth.

As the local economy struggles to rebound and job opportunities are limited many food pantries, including the Clearwater Food Pantry (CFP), which serves the towns of Industry, New Sharon and Chesterville, continue to see a growing number of families and individuals signing up for food assistance. For the first quarter of 2010 the CFP provided food to 146 families, 173 adults, 79 seniors, 118 children. The vast majority of those utilizing the pantry are residents of Industry, however, the numbers from New Sharon and Chesterville are increasing. For many, this link to not only food, but other community resources, is crucial to the health and well-being of the families the Clearwater Food Pantry serves. The food pantry is located in the old Industry Fire Station, a tired building that, despite repairs over the last few years, is not worth investing any more time and money in. A highly motivated group of people is currently working on raising the necessary funds to replace the building that houses the food pantry.

In another fine example of how collaboration works so well in our community, The Board of Directors of the Clearwater Food Pantry, the Selectmen of the Town of Industry, and WMCA (Western Maine Community Action) have obtained professional assessments on the existing structure, designed an energy efficient building (to be placed next to the old building on the same property), selected a contractor through a proposal process, and made a list of in-kind matches possible to offset the cost of the entire project. **This is where community help and support are very much needed.** As a

requirement for receiving funding from Maine Community Action Agency (MCAA)\* which can make this project a reality, in-kind donations must match at least 50% of the cost. In-kind donations must be documented for submission with the final proposal, by the end of June. The project, if funded, will begin this summer and be completed by the end of September.

**Please consider helping to make this project come to fruition!** To volunteer, or to make an in-kind donation, contact: Nancy Teel, WMCA Flood Assistance Coordinator (207) 645-3764 ext. 5114.

*\*A brief history of the funding source:*

*Last summer a statewide program made money available for anyone living in any Maine county during the April 28<sup>th</sup>- May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008 weather event that was federally declared a disaster as a result of severe storms and flooding. These funds were made available on a first-come, first-serve basis, with priority being given to low income applicants and social service facilities statewide that were directly impacted by the weather. Although Aroostook and Penobscot Counties were hardest hit by this weather event, money has been made available to anyone in any county. The Maine Community Action Association has been administering these funds, with WMCA helping those throughout Franklin County.*

*To date, close to \$350,000 has been allocated in Franklin County to help homeowners and social service agencies make much needed repairs due to water damage. Though most of the money available through this statewide fund has been spent, WMCA is very hopeful three additional homes, as well as, the Clearwater Food Pantry will be funded.*