



The Navigator

The Exchange Club of Greater Newburyport

P.O. Box 31, Newburyport, MA 01950

Meetings 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 6 p.m.

Oct. 26, 2021

www.exchangeclubofgreaternewburyport.org

President-Steve Di Camillo, Secretary-Stuart Deane, Treasurer-Mary Sortal, President Elect-Open
Newsletter Editor-Stuart Deane

Guest speaker outlines story of local food bank

By Stuart Deane

The Oct. 4 meeting in the back yard of member Barbara Griffith was visited by Jane Merrow (right) of the First Parish Newbury Food Pantry.

The pantry serves from 250 to 300 people every Friday, providing fresh produce, meats, shelf-stable items, personal care items, household items and pet food.

The pantry welcomes all who need food and does not judge nor ask for identification or registration. Seniors comprise nearly half of the guests who are served. Ninety-five cents of each donated dollar goes toward buying food, with the other five going toward distribution costs.

More than 80 members of the community help their neighbors each week for more than 320 hours weekly. All are volunteers.

“We keep getting bigger and bigger,” said Jane. “We’re thrifty with other people’s money. More than fifty food banks closed during COVID. We’re proud that we stayed open. We’re more than just food. We’re a wellness center. Our volunteers call people. We have incredible people working with us. It’s very exciting. There are now places to eat every day in Newburyport and Amesbury.”

Having outgrown its original facilities at the church, the group is in the process of erecting a new building on church property.

Jane was presented with a check for \$250 by Treasurer Mary Sortal.



The Oct. 18 meeting, held at the Starboard Galley, was our first restaurant meeting in nearly a year and a half. The meeting was mostly social, but time was also devoted to meeting place options, committee assignments and Veterans Day projects.

The Oct. 25 Board of Directors meeting, from 6 to 7:30, will be held at the West Newbury Public Safety Complex. Details will follow on November meeting options.

