

# Rotary, Kiwanis each give \$10,000 to Aurora Interfaith Food Pantry

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AURORA — They asked, and the community gave.

The Aurora Rotary Club and Aurora Kiwanis Club have donated \$10,000 each to the Aurora Area Interfaith Food Pantry.

Rotary President Charlie Zine presented pantry Executive Director Marilyn Weisner with a check for \$10,001 at a Rotary meeting on Monday at America's Historic Roundhouse.

"I want to thank you all so much for this important donation," Weisner said.

The service organization donations are part of a larger push to fund a new pantry distribution center. If the pantry can raise \$425,000 by June 30, the Dunham Fund will match the amount, Weisner said.

The pantry is within 5 percent of the fundraising goal, according to Weisner.

Weisner said local service organizations, funds and individuals have been instrumental in helping the pantry reach its goal of moving to a new location.

A new center has been needed since before Weisner came on staff, she said. The food pantry, which feeds about

8,000 people per month, is operating out of a 2,500-square-foot space next to the Hessed House homeless shelter on South River Street. Shelves of food line the hallways of the center.

A dock, an overhead door, larger freezers and more storage space are needed. Now, large donations of frozen meat have to be turned away, as the pantry's 6- by 6-foot freezer is not large enough to store it, Weisner said.

The donation is a large chunk of the \$36,000 the Rotary Club will give to non-profits this year, Zine said.

The pantry is hosting a se-

ries of other fundraisers this summer. On Sunday, it had the Second to None 5K run, hosted with Communities in Schools.

Weisner said the total hasn't been tallied yet for the run, but it was a big success with about 170 runners participating.

"We had a beautiful day and the weather was perfect," Weisner said. "We were really pleased."

Weisner said that the pantry raised enough money from the 5K to cover the cost of the Food for Thought summer program, which provides food for 800 children who are at risk of having inadequate access to

food during the summer.

More than 13,000 children in Aurora schools are eligible

for free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch during the school year.