



ELMHURST WALK-IN ASSISTANCE NETWORK

 connecting people in need to community resources

Summer 2025

Newsletter

New assistance category opens up work capacity as clients can get help with after school programs

One of the obstacles that can stand in the way of steady employment is the availability and expense of childcare.

Often the cost of childcare exceeds what someone making an hourly wage earns.

Elmhurst has two after school care programs that enable families to extend the work day and thus increase their earnings: the Rec Station through the Elmhurst Park District, and YMCA After School Care.

Both these programs provide scholarships to needy families; however, the family's portion can still be prohibitive. This is where EWAN is stepping in with a new assistance category that has the

potential to help individuals work longer days.

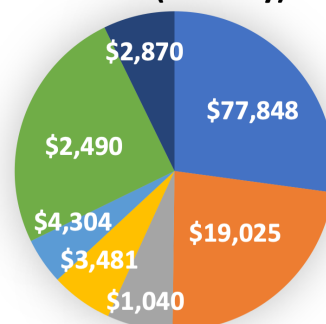
Families wanting to utilize this help must first fill out all the necessary financial assistance forms with either the YMCA or with Rec Station. Once they have been approved for assistance, they can then apply to EWAN for further funds.

This category of assistance takes EWAN a little away from the temporary assistance that has been its hallmark. However, the Client Program and Benefits Committee, which initiated the benefit, felt this is the sort of help that really has the potential to positively impact a family's long-term stability.

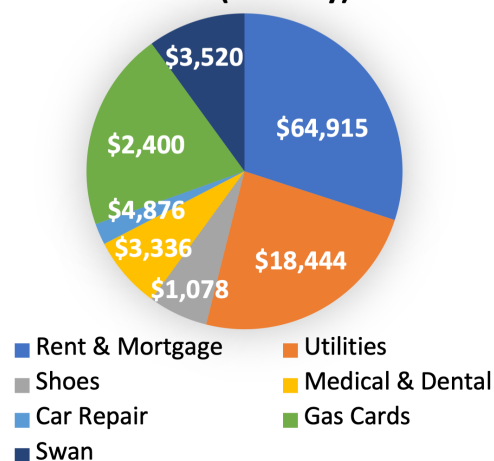
ELMHURST PARK DISTRICT
Rec Station
BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Client Services Provided

2024 (Jan-May)



2025 (Jan-May)



The EWAN Mission: The caring people of Elmhurst unite to provide compassionate assistance to people in need to our community.

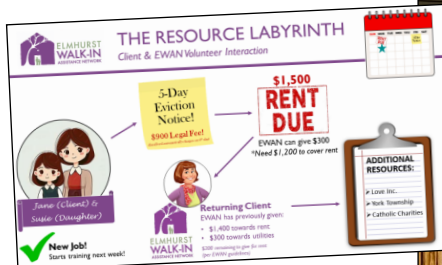
Annual Meeting takes attendees through the “resource labyrinth”

EWAN's Annual Meeting, held in January, brought together board members, volunteers, donors, pastors, city officials, social workers and other supporters of EWAN to learn about the past year and get a look at the year ahead.

After a simple lunch and updates from Board President Erin Radcliff and Executive Director Jackie Crnkovich, the featured program was presented. It was a deep dive into the “resource labyrinth.” Volunteers reenacted the hoops a client might have to jump through to receive the help he or she might need. It was an eye-opener for many of the attendees when all the steps to assistance were laid before them.

Each year the Annual Meeting provides an opportunity for EWAN supporters to come together to celebrate its work and learn more about all that transpired in the previous year.

Over 75 people attended the lunch and meeting this year, held in the gathering room at St. Peter's Church which graciously opens this space for this meeting each year.



Over 75 people gathered at St. Peter's UCC for the Annual Meeting in January. Lower right: Site volunteers Tara Renier and Heidi Moy took the audience through a reenactment of all a client might face in trying to navigate the network of agencies available to provide assistance.

“Moving Forward Steps” urge proactive action from clients

EWAN strives to be as frictionless as possible when providing help to people in already stressful situations. As was illustrated in the “resource labyrinth” described above, EWAN is aware there are a number of agencies that make receiving help a fairly onerous process, something EWAN tries not to do.

At the same time, EWAN wants to be sure clients use the tools available

to them that could help them lift themselves out of their financial straits.

It's in weighing these two positions that the Client Programs and Benefits Committee has enacted “Moving Forward Steps.” If clients are coming in for the first time for assistance, they will follow the same process as in the past. Clients returning for a *second* round of assistance, however, will be asked to demonstrate that they have taken one or more proactive steps towards improving their situation prior to receiving assistance.

Clients are told about the steps on their first visit. They are given a list of

possible actions they can take, as well as a list of resources in the area that might prove helpful.

Suggested steps include such actions as utilizing a food pantry regularly, taking a budgeting or money management class, signing up with an agency for job search resources, or reaching out to another agency for assistance.

The goal of this new requirement is not to make things harder for people seeking help. What EWAN hopes to demonstrate through the request is the breadth of resources available in the area that can help people make positive change in their lives.



EWAN earns major grant support to advance its mission

Good news abounded these last few weeks as several grant proposals were approved, unlocking \$53,000 in funding from the DuPage Foundation, DuPage County, and Elmhurst Rotary. These vital funds will serve as a lifeline for numerous households and give EWAN financial strength when needed most.

DuPage Foundation



On May 15, EWAN received word that its Community Impact Grant application through the DuPage Foundation had been approved for its full amount—\$18,000!

With the Community Impact grant program, DuPage Foundation supports programs and projects that raise the quality of life for DuPage County residents. The Spring grant cycle focuses on programs devoted to health and human services.

This year they awarded grants to 57 non-profits totaling \$964,295. EWAN's grant will be used to help pay for rent and utility assistance.

The mission of the foundation is to foster philanthropy, connect donors to area needs, and build community partnerships. As "champions of philanthropy," it manages more than \$105 million in assets and has awarded more than \$100 million in grants since its founding in 1986.

EWAN has benefitted from a number of DuPage Foundation grants and we are extremely grateful for the help in carrying out our own mission.



Board President Erin Radcliff and Executive Director Jackie Crnkovich were presented the grant check from a DuPage Foundation Trustee, Jule Curran, on June 4.

Rotary Club of Elmhurst



The Rotary Club of Elmhurst. Presented EWAN with a \$5,000 check in support of its work

The Rotary Club of Elmhurst is the local arm of the international service organization committed to doing good in the world through community and humanitarian service.

Each year, the Elmhurst group gives out over \$20,000 in grants to help the work of a number of service groups. The



Rotary president Marilyn Boria along with President Elect Greg St. Laurent present the grant check to Associate Director Kim Anculis.

grant is awarded to groups that provide access to services, food, or shelter; support education, literacy and/or scholarship; and focus on our local community or international humanitarian concerns.

DuPage County Small Agency Grant Program

While everyone was happy to see the major effects of the COVID epidemic in the rearview mirror, occasionally a good outcome endures. Utilizing investment earnings from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, DuPage County was able to offer a second round of grants totaling \$1,000,050 to help small agencies in the County fulfill their missions.

EWAN learned recently that its grant request for \$30,000 was accepted by the County.

Grants were awarded in five areas, including projects focused on economic development, education and mentoring, behavioral healthy, substance abuse disorder and treatment, and housing and shelter.

It was this last focus—housing and shelter—on which EWAN's grant is based. All funds will go to the rental assistance program.

Grants from \$5,000 to \$30,000, were rewarded to agencies with less than \$300,000 in revenue with a maximum of \$175,000 awarded to each of the county's six districts.

Checks will be given to all recipients at the County offices on June 24, when attendees will be able to meet with their District Representatives and view a brief presentations ceremony at the County board meeting.



Two new site volunteers join the EWAN ranks and reflect on start

Jessica Felice and Heidi Bowbin finished their volunteer training and have each taken a seat at the intake desk working with clients seeking assistance.

Both women are long-time residents of Elmhurst and were seeking a meaningful volunteer opportunity. "What drew me [to EWAN] was the genuine, hands-on approach it takes to helping people—offering not just resources, but also dignity and compassion," said Heidi. "I am impressed by how quickly the team responds to needs and how deeply they care about each individual who walks through the door."

Jessica said she wanted to volunteer at EWAN to help neighbors in need. "I knew EWAN did just this—but it wasn't until I started volunteering that I found out how many types of help we offer. I am honored to be volunteering with an organization that does so much for our community."

Both women are off to a good start and will clearly keep up the tradition of EWAN's warm and caring volunteers.



EWAN urges stretching dollars with regular food pantry use

Food Pantry Savings

Did you know a family of 4 could save **up to \$400** with each trip to the food pantry?

<u>Item</u>	<u>Grocery Store Cost</u>
Canned Goods (vegetables, stock, soup, tuna, tomato sauce, etc.)	Up to \$75
Dairy & Deli (milk, eggs, cheddar cheese, cream cheese, etc.)	Up to \$38
Dry Goods (bread, cereal, coffee, cookies, pasta, peanut butter, etc.)	Up to \$115
Frozen Foods (bacon, beef roast, chicken breast, pork chops, fish sticks, etc.)	Up to \$108
Fresh Produce (broccoli, salad greens, cantaloupe, potatoes, etc.)	Up to \$42
Household Items (toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, laundry detergent, etc.)	Up to \$41

Up to \$419!

With the increasing price of groceries, one piece of advice volunteers have been pushing on clients is to fully utilize the excellent local food pantries.

Many are heeding this advice, as evidenced in the high numbers both the Immaculate Conception Food Pantry and the Elmhurst Yorkfield Food Pantry (EYFP) have been experiencing.

The number of visits to the IC pantry were up each of the last three years. More than twice the number of people visited in 2024 (872) than in 2021 (431).

EYFP has also experienced a steady rise over the last several years. According to Board President Walter Salek, the number of households served increased 71% since 2022. In 2024, 1,500 households from 9 surrounding counties were served, and 9,100 grocery carts were filled.

That said, it's not uncommon for clients to resist using the food pantries. Whether it's a perceived stigma, a past bad experience, or a sense of getting by without them, not everyone is eager to use them. EWAN has been focusing on getting word out to clients about how much can be saved by making regular visits. Even if all the family's needs won't be met, every item picked up is one less than they would have to pay for at the grocery store.

Inaugural Dan Gibbons Twilight Trot supports EWAN / local charities

A bright summer evening greeted the almost 500 runners and walkers who laced up for the inaugural Twilight Trot on May 31, put on by the Dan Gibbons Turkey Trot Foundation.

Four Elmhurst organizations—EWAN, the Elmhurst-Yorkfield Food Pantry, Immaculate Conception Food Pantry, and the UCCA were beneficiaries of the evening.

The race followed the old Turkey Trot course, taking runners through South Elmhurst neighborhoods into Berkley and back down the Prairie Path to the Centennial Fountain at York Road.

The community spirit was high as participants came out to support the four groups that serve our local neighbors in need. The Dan Gibbons team initiated this run with the notion that hunger and basic human needs aren't seasonal, and they wanted the Elmhurst community to be aware of this fact. In fact, summer is one of the toughest times for low income families, as they don't have the benefit of school meals to help feed their children.

Both the male and female lead runners were from Elmhurst. Sean McNamara led the pack of men, coming in at 16 minutes and 46 seconds. Abby Benny won the among the women, coming in at 19 minutes and 4 seconds.



Racers ready to run in the inaugural Twilight Trot!



Right: Mayor Scott Levin and Dan Gibbons kicking off the inaugural Twilight Trot. Left: Christine Fogarty (DGTT Foundation employee) & Kelly Stetler (Kelly Stetler Team | Compass), an event sponsor.



Abby Benny's children are proud of their mom's first-place finish!



EWAN employees, volunteers and supporters enjoyed the amazing fundraising event and beautiful evening.



Summer 2025

Mark your calendars: The 'Cue is back for year 11!



There's no better way to celebrate Labor Day weekend than at **The 'Cue**—our beloved annual tradition that brings together friends, families, and neighbors for a festive day of food, music, and community spirit.

Join us for **live music, delicious food and drinks, raffles, silent auctions, a kid's zone**, and, of course, our friendly **backyard barbecue competition**. It's the perfect way to enjoy summer's final days—and support a meaningful cause while you're at it.

The 'Cue is EWAN's largest fundraiser of the year, and your involvement makes all the difference. Whether you'd like to **compete, sponsor, donate a raffle item, volunteer, or simply attend**, there's a place for everyone at the table.

Come be part of the fun—and help us continue providing compassionate support to our neighbors in need. We can't wait to see you there!

HUNGRY FOR MORE?

Scan the QR code or head to elmhurstwalkin.org/cue for all things 'Cue!



Make a lasting impact—sponsor The 'Cue!

Each year, **The 'Cue** brings together friends, families, and neighbors for a fun-filled day of live music, great food, and friendly barbecue competition—all in support of EWAN's mission to help those in need.

Whether you're a long-time supporter or new to EWAN, becoming a sponsor is a powerful way to show you care about the well-being of our community. With various sponsorship levels available, there's a place for everyone to get involved.

We're inviting local businesses, organizations, and individuals to **partner with us as sponsors**. Your sponsorship not only supports a meaningful cause—it also puts your name in front of a dedicated, community-minded audience.

Sponsorship Levels

	Full Boar	\$5,000
	Boss Hog	\$2,500
	Whole Hog	\$1,000
	Full Slab	\$500
	Half Slab	\$250
	Bacon	\$100



Thank you to our 2025 'Cue sponsors—Join this generous group!

Full Boar PLUS



Boss Hog



Whole Hog



Half Slab



Join this amazing list of sponsors & help us make this the biggest and best 'Cue yet—become a sponsor today!





**SUNDAY
AUGUST 31ST
NOON-7PM**

**City Lot at S. York
& Vallette Streets**

Think you've got the best BBQ in town? Prove it at The 'Cue!

Do you have a killer rib recipe or a secret sauce that's the envy of every backyard cookout? Now is your chance to show it off!

Join us for the 11th annual **EWAN's 'Cue for a Cause**—a fun, friendly cook-off that's the heart of our biggest fundraiser of the year. Whether you're a seasoned pit master or a weekend grill warrior, this is your time to shine.

Categories include ribs and chicken, and entry includes space to cook, access to event amenities, and the chance to earn bragging rights (and possibly a trophy!).

Spots are limited—sign up today and bring the heat!



*All proceeds benefit EWAN's mission to support neighbors in need.
Great food, great fun, and a great cause—what could be better?*



125 W. Church St.
Elmhurst, IL 60126

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
ELMHURST, IL 60126
PERMIT NO. 125

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED