

Gathering Change, Inc.

*"Neighbors helping neighbors"*

# ANNUAL REPORT

SEPT. 2008 – SEPT. 2009

## *Letter from the President*

I am happy to report that Gathering Change, Inc., had a successful and memorable first year. The simple idea of asking friends and neighbors to come over for a get together and bring their spare change, the simple idea of asking school children to donate their spare change or bring in non perishable food items, the simple idea of replacing one's birthday gifts with small bags of change, the simple idea of a store owner leaving a container where a patron can leave their change, the simple idea of giving what you already have is simply the easiest way to make a difference. All of these ideas played a part in our success and helped friends and neighbors in our communities who are struggling to put food on the table.

We don't know where this economy is going and therefore we have to be able to ask, again and again. Asking people for money is not something I had been very good at until I saw the faces of those that wait in line at the food pantry. I could not help but think they could be me and my family. What makes Gathering Change, Inc. different is that we are asking for what you already have and have probably forgotten about — *your spare change*. These small amounts of change are just sitting in our cars, on our dryers, at the bottom of our pocketbooks, in the pockets of our pants, under our cushions, and have now been turned into something that sustains life and brings hope to those that need it most. For every \$1 in spare change most food pantries can purchase \$4 worth of food from the food bank. In any economy that is a great return on your investment.

This past year has been about meeting the goals set forth in our mission statement, defining our board, writing for grants to help with our operating costs, receiving IRS acknowledgement as an official 501(c)3 charitable organization, following all the guidelines and laws set forth for a charity in the state of Massachusetts, working with Cheryl Webb Scott on a cable television program, creating our website at [www.gatheringchangeinc.org](http://www.gatheringchangeinc.org) and blog at <http://gatheringchangeinc.blogspot.com>, refining our publicity items, educating the public about the needs that exist in our communities, building relationships with the food pantries we are supporting, discovering the joy in helping others, and the pain in knowing it is never enough. We have come far and accomplished much in 12 months. I am humbled to report that 20 communities have been helped by Gathering Change Inc., and as we look ahead it is important that all board positions are filled so that as our organization grows, as opportunities of raising funds arise, as businesses, schools, civic organizations and houses of worship come on board we are prepared to handle every challenge. This past year we have discovered that as a board we can only do so much, and our volunteers are the cornerstone of our success. We cannot do this without all of you.

Let me just take a moment to say thank you to our board members. The board members of Gathering Change, Inc. come from different backgrounds and interests, but I have never met a kinder, harder working, intelligent, creative and fun group of individuals who have not shied away from all that was asked of them. If anything, Gathering Change, Inc., has a face and it is not mine or yours

## *Letter from the President (continued)*

it is ours. We are all inclusive, we are all energized by each other's enthusiasm and we all respect the process.

We have many ideas and promising leads for raising funds this coming year. We hope to expand within and beyond the communities we are now serving in Massachusetts. We are looking into being part of the 50/50 Red Sox Raffle, sponsoring a road race, sponsoring a golf tournament, wine/chocolate tastings, local supermarket programs that support hunger, we are being added to many charitable giving websites, including the Boston Globe, Channel 5, Legacy.com and targeting many businesses. We hope to have a Donate Now button up and running shortly. In addition, we are planning a monthly newsletter to keep you all informed of what is going on. We're calling it "Speaking of Change."

I realize there are no easy answers or quick fixes to the hunger issue, but Gathering Change, Inc. believes that doing nothing is not an option. I hope you will join us again as we continue to sustain our neighbors with their basic needs and in doing so redefine the meaning of community for ourselves, our families and our neighbors. We are not just a charity, we are a reminder of what is possible when we all come together for the greater good. We are Gathering Change, Inc.

*Respectfully submitted by Dorothy Goodwin, President*

## *Secretary's Report*

The Secretary for Gathering Change, Inc. is a member of the Board and the Executive Committee. Requirements for this position include attendance at monthly board meetings and periodic Executive Committee meetings. Since Gathering Change, Inc.'s inception in 2008, two Executive Committee meetings have been held.

The role of secretary continues to evolve. Primary responsibilities include preparing meeting agendas with input from board members; transcribing, editing, issuing and filing meeting minutes; composing thank-you letters for fundraisers, gifts, etc.; and writing general correspondence, as appropriate.

Currently, the board secretary is working on the creation of a monthly email newsletter that will be issued during a timeframe to be established called "Speaking of Change."

The secretary keeps the "In Memorial Of" and "In Honor Of" books, and assists with fundraisers throughout the year.

*Respectfully submitted by Jean Santosuosso, Secretary*

## *Donation Committee*

Over the past year Gathering Change, Inc., has established relationships with various food pantries in order to better facilitate our response to their needs. Our mission is to enhance communication between the food pantries and the services provided by Gathering Change, Inc.

Due to the downturn in our economy, many food pantries have seen the numbers of clients served increase dramatically, across all communities. Most are families and seniors. The pantries offer a once a week or once a month shopping day, with clients allowed an amount by household size.

Many of the food pantries utilize food banks, which allow them to purchase food at 16 cents a pound, but some do not due to the nature of an all volunteer staff (driving and lifting concerns). When a food pantry is a member of a food bank, each dollar donated purchases four dollars of food (it was \$5 until recently). There is always a need for donations of paper goods, cleaning supplies and toiletries.

We have made several donations to many food pantries including: Haven from Hunger, Peabody, Interfaith Food Pantry, Wakefield, God's Helping Hand and Adventist Community Center, Stoneham, and A Servant's Heart, Melrose. Other communities have received single donations (see list below). Gathering Change, Inc., has made donations in the form of cash, food vouchers for supermarkets and actual food. The food vouchers in the amounts of \$10 (single) and \$25 (family) were used in holiday baskets at several pantries.

We have also begun to investigate other social service organizations — St. Vincent de Paul, the Salvation Army which offers a Good Neighbor Energy Fund and Citizens Energy Oil Heat Program. We have not as yet contributed to any of these or any other programs. Our focus this past year has been to support food pantries.

Currently, information is being gathered from the various towns and is being assembled into a book. This will provide easy reference for Gathering Change members so that we will be able to better serve the needs of the community.

The donation committee is seeking members to continue with outreach to charitable organizations who serve our community.

## *Donation Committee (continued)*

### COMMUNITIES RECEIVING DONATIONS 2008–2009:

Beverly Bootstraps Food Pantry  
Burlington Food Pantry  
Cambridge Food Pantry  
Bread of Life Food Pantry, Malden  
St. Vincent De Paul, Nahant  
The People's Pantry, North Andover  
Servant's Heart Food Pantry, Melrose  
First Baptist Church Food Pantry, Melrose  
Christian Community Service Food Pantry, North Reading  
Haven from Hunger, Lynnfield/Peabody  
The Cupboard of Kindness, Norton  
Reading Food Pantry  
St. Joseph's Food Pantry, Salem  
Saugus United Parish Food Pantry  
God's Helping Hand Food Pantry, Stoneham  
Adventist Community Center Food Pantry, Stoneham  
Wakefield Interfaith Food Pantry  
Westborough Food Pantry  
Westfield Food Pantry  
Council of Social Concern Food Pantry, Woburn  
(serves the Winchester Community)

*Respectfully submitted by Mary Taggart, Donation Committee Chair*

## *Nomination Committee*

The Nomination Committee was formed to identify and recruit strong, intelligent, enthusiastic potential candidates who are interested and available to fulfill a seat on our board and fulfill the requirements of a board member.

*Those requirements are as follows:*

- Board members must be committed to a minimum of 8 volunteer hours per month or project completion within a designated timeframe.
- Board members must chair or co-chair a subcommittee of volunteers unless they are board officers (President, VP, Treasurer and Secretary) or the board Lawyer.
- Board members are required to organize or assist with fundraisers.
- Board members are required to attend all monthly board meetings unless extenuating circumstances arise.
- Board members will pay yearly dues. This amount covers the cost of our monthly meeting space.

To date, I have called several people inquiring as to their interest on being on our board, have asked for referrals for board membership, and have identified potential board members.

### MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Dorothy Goodwin	<i>President, Grant Writing Chair, Website/Blog Chair</i>
Marianne Snow	<i>Vice President, Nominating Committee and Volunteer Committee Chair</i>
Jean Santosuosso	<i>Secretary</i>
Susie Cleary	<i>Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair</i>
Mary Taggart	<i>Donation Committee Chair</i>
Judy Bousquin	<i>Publicity Committee Co-Chair</i>
Yvonne Blacker	<i>Publicity Committee Co-Chair</i>
Marianne Supino	<i>School Outreach Committee Chair</i>

*Respectfully submitted by Marianne Snow, Vice President*

## *Publicity/Media Committee*

The Publicity/Media Committee oversees and is responsible for writing and editing quality newspaper and media articles; producing quality graphic outreach and promotional materials; initiating contact and developing relationships with all community media including TV, cable, radio and print media organizations; and maintaining the website and blog until a chairperson can be found for that committee.

Up until recently, July 2009, various jobs that fall under this committee were performed by a number of different individuals on the board. Due to the growth of Gathering Change, Inc., and the interest in it as an important and helpful member of our local communities, GCI's publicity needs have grown and have warranted a committee of leaders and assistant volunteers to manage the duties needed to ensure that GCI is promoted in a thorough and accurate manner.

We are happy to welcome the following board members onto the Publicity/Media Committee: Yvonne Blacker, Co-Chair (and Creative Director) and Judy Bousquin, Co-chair. We are also in the process of recruiting individuals interested in assisting the Publicity Committee in achieving its goals.

Since GCI's inception, Yvonne has designed our logo, our website and blog, our stationery, thank you and invitation postcards, bookmarks, thank you notes, our brochures and collecting jar labels (for a complete list of all our printed publicity materials, please see next page). Maura Quinn has designed and created GCI's Condolence/In Honor Of card package, has created our guesstimate receipts and has consolidated our volunteer information and created an email list to enable us to communicate with friends of Gathering Change via Evites and informational notices. Yvonne and Maura have been instrumental in advising the board on how to reach out to communities in a clear, effective manner while communicating and acting out Gathering Change, Inc.'s mission.

Over the past year, articles have been published in local papers (Wakefield, Lynnfield and Stoneham) written by Marianne Snow and Marianne Supino. There has been strong community support for GCI including editorial commentary from Peter Rossi, editor of the Wakefield Daily Item. Dorothy Goodwin and Marianne Snow (our president and vice president) were interviewed on a local cable show (*Total Woman*). Cheryl Webb Scott, producer and host of *Total Woman*, has offered to create public service announcements (PSAs) for GCI which would be a series of simple publicity blurbs lasting anywhere from 15 seconds to 3 minutes. Gathering Change, Inc. will take this opportunity to illustrate who we are, what we have accomplished and how we have positively effected our local communities. WJIB will continue to read our mission statement each morning at 7:40 am.

## *Publicity/Media Committee (continued)*

WBUR ran a GCI ad to advertise our website. We are also in the process of inviting funeral homes to offer GCI as an option for donation when a loved one has passed.

Gathering Change, Inc. has a presence online. GCI has a beautifully designed, user-friendly website which has information about GCI and its board; previous, current and future GCI happenings; links to those organizations we serve and much, much more. It is regularly updated and expanded. Roy Goodwin continues to maintain and update our website. We also have a blog which is fairly new but visitation is continually growing as GCI becomes more known within our communities. President Dorothy Goodwin is delighted to announce GCI's forthcoming newsletter: "Speaking of Change." This newsletter will be directly mailed out to friends of Gathering Change to keep all apprised on GCI activity.

As we move on to our second year of collecting and outreach, we look forward to continuing to offer the opportunity for neighbors to help their neighbors.

### LIST OF GCI PRINTED PUBLICITY MATERIALS

- 2 vinyl banners with Gathering Change Inc.'s logo (6' x 2')
- postcards: who we are; host invite; thank you card; where donations go
- GCI informational brochure
- thank you notes
- flyers targeted toward specific groups (brownies, preschools, Food 4 Everyone drive)
- provided stickers and certificates of appreciation to children who collected change
- bake sale promotional poster
- book marks
- jar labels and tags (for collection jars)
- "How to Host a Party" informational packet
- "How to get Involved" informational packet
- business cards

### ONLINE PUBLICITY

Gathering Change website: [www.gatheringchangeinc.org](http://www.gatheringchangeinc.org)  
GCI blog: <http://gatheringchangeinc.blogspot.com>  
Soon to come: "Speaking of Change" our online newsletter

*Respectfully submitted by Judy Bousquin, Co-chair Publicity/Media Committee*

## *Website Committee*

Our website [www.gatheringchangenc.org](http://www.gatheringchangenc.org) is mentioned in every conversation, on every piece of publicity and correspondence. It is a way to get to know us, see what we have done, hear what others have said about us and see what we are planning in the future. Our website is the beating heart of Gathering Change, Inc. When we cannot speak in person, our website speaks for us.

The role of the website committee is to continue to keep it user friendly for adults as well as children. In this age of limited time, we hope to keep the reader's attention for more than a minute to two. Our pages need to be updated frequently to include photographs, news articles, upcoming events and testimonials.

My job this year, along with my husband Roy, has been to keep our website updated. In the coming weeks we will have an online In Honor Of and In Memory Of book. In addition, our Donate Now button will be activated through Network for Good as funding becomes available. This Donate Now Button will allow donors to make credit card donations. Right now they can only submit checks to the Saugus Bank. We will have video of the Cheryl Webb Scott interview, and there will be an interactive page where everyone can leave a message of hope and inspiration.

## *Blog Committee*

Our blog, [gatheringchangeinc.blogspot.com](http://gatheringchangeinc.blogspot.com) is another way in which we are spreading our message with storytelling by all board members. The Blog Committee is made up of all board members. It is a more personal view into our lives and how we are all affected by what is going on in our communities and in our world.

In order to get more traffic we are working on submitting healthy meal ideas that are inexpensive and will be posted on a weekly basis. We welcome recipes, photos and comments.

My job has been to get this up and running with the help of publicity co-chair, Yvonne Blacker. I also want to thank all the board members who have submitted articles to date. Every voice is unique and this adds to our blog personality.

*Respectfully submitted by Dorothy Goodwin,  
President and Chair of Website and Blog Committee*

## *School Outreach Committee*

The focus of the School Outreach Committee is to increase awareness within local schools of the need to help others in our communities. The objective is to work in conjunction with the respective school administrators, the PTO, the student council, the school committees and the students. The target demographic includes students from local and private schools in pre-school/family day care through grade 12. The potential projects include coin collections, food drives, sports events, craft sales, direct assistance in volunteering at food pantries, and additional school sponsored events based on the specifications of each school's curriculum and communities requirements.

Over the past year, Gathering Change began to engage local Lynnfield, Wakefield, Stoneham, and Nahant students directly in helping their neighbors in need by unique student driven events. In March 2009, students at the Lynnfield Middle School launched their first annual food drive called "Food 4 Everyone." The LMS students donated non-perishable food items to Haven from Hunger, a food pantry located in Peabody, Massachusetts serving clients in the local areas of Peabody, Lynnfield, and Salem. The collection ran for four weeks with students from grade 5-8 donating over two thousand food items. This was a well coordinated effort between the LMS PTO, the LMS community outreach teacher representative, the LMS PTO, the LMS school Principal and Librarian, the student council, the students, Gathering Change representatives, and Haven from Hunger. The food drive will be repeated at the Lynnfield Middle School in March 2010.

In honor of St. Patrick's Day, St. Joseph's School of Wakefield organized a festive collection in March for Gathering Change. By strategically placing several "pots of gold" throughout the school for a week the students collected over \$500. Tall Spire Nursery of Wakefield also collected change for charity. In March the children decorated containers, took them home and added their spare change. The school's total of \$1,300 exceeded everyone's expectations. This past fall, the charitable donations coordinator at the Woodville School in Wakefield purchased a special robot bank for the cafeteria. The children enjoyed adding money to the bank at a special time each day.

Two thirteen year old Wakefield students decided to create community awareness among their peers. In January, Sarah Boland invited her friends to a party and asked them to bring whatever change they could. By thinking about others first, Sarah and her friends contributed \$300 to Gathering Change.

When it came time for her birthday party, Megan McLean realized that helping others was the best gift of all. So she asked her guests to

## *School Outreach Committee (continued)*

leave the gifts at the store and instead to bring their spare change. Megan's community awareness raised a whopping \$900!

Even the smallest of children are helping. Parents of Tots in Wakefield also collected change. They created and decorated containers, carried them home and returned them full of change. Their efforts were inspired by a similar event held at Pat McDonald's family day care. She also encouraged another family day care person, Jean Davidson, to collect change with her young ones. Through these experiences the youngsters become very aware of how much they can help others.

This past 2008-2009 school year, the seniors in Stoneham High School's community service class participated in several community volunteer activities. The two main fundraisers were specifically earmarked for two local charities including Gathering Change. In December the students sold holiday candy canes and last spring held a contest at school. In total these civic minded students donated approximately \$1,500 to Gathering Change.

In December 2008, encouraged by their teacher, the second grade students at the Johnson School, believed they too could make a difference. For several weeks using decorated boxes they collected spare change. The students proudly donated over \$600. The money was distributed via food vouchers directly back to Nahant families in need.

Children in other towns have rallied as well. Brownie, Daisy and Girl Scout troops, Middle Schools, individual classrooms and individual children have all heard the message of Gathering Change and have felt deeply moved to help. We acknowledge their efforts and their importance in our organization.

We are humbled by the power, the creativity and the resourcefulness of the students we have met this first year. We have only touched the surface. This upcoming year the School Outreach committee will grow to include new members, new school systems and many more students. We are grateful for the ability to educate children on the importance of giving back in the simplest of ways. And by giving back the students learn how their actions can impact and improve the lives of their neighbors and friends. We are looking forward to a very challenging and productive year as we expand awareness among local school systems.

*Respectfully submitted by Marianne Supino, School Outreach Committee Chair*

## *Volunteer Committee*

The volunteer committee was formed for the purpose of interacting with potential volunteers who have shown an interest in Gathering Change, Inc. We felt it was not enough to have these volunteers just sign a sheet at our events. We believe it is important to go one step further and interview these volunteers to see where their talents and interest lie and then match them with the appropriate position. Our volunteers are the base of our organization as well as the essential ingredient for our future growth. No one will be turned away.

We need volunteers in many capacities such as our newly formed subcommittees, fundraising, hosting Gathering Change, Inc., parties, grant writing, publicity, school, business and civic outreach, houses of worship, as well as potential board members.

As this is a new subcommittee, I have consolidated the many lists of names we have collected this past year. I have contacted several individuals who have been matched with an appropriate subcommittee in addition to current and potential board members. I will continue to work with these and future lists so that our organization can continue to meet its objectives as outlined in our mission statement.

*Respectfully submitted by Marianne Snow,  
Vice President and Volunteer Committee Chair*

## *Grant Writing Committee*

The Grant Writing Committee is responsible for investigating, writing and submitting grants to organizations that offer funds that coincide with the goals set forth in our mission statement. It is also the responsibility of the committee to develop a relationship with the organizations offering the grants, understanding the time frame and criteria spelled out in the grant, as well as keeping updated on the most effective grant writing techniques.

This past year we have submitted grants to the TSB Charitable Foundation (we were denied), but have been asked to resubmit this coming year now that we are an official 501(c)3. The Lenny Zakim Grant is pending, and I am currently submitting a grant to Eastern Bank for operating costs. The more we receive funds for our basic operating costs the less of a percentage we need to take from our donations. No salaries are taken at this time, but in the future we hope to receive grant funding.

Salem Five Bank's Charitable Foundation sent us \$2,000 last year for Gathering Change, Inc. to help food pantries in Salem and Reading where they had branch locations.

Marianne Snow has assisted me on this committee and we are looking for others to join us.

*Respectfully submitted by Dorothy Goodwin,  
President and Grant Writing Chair*

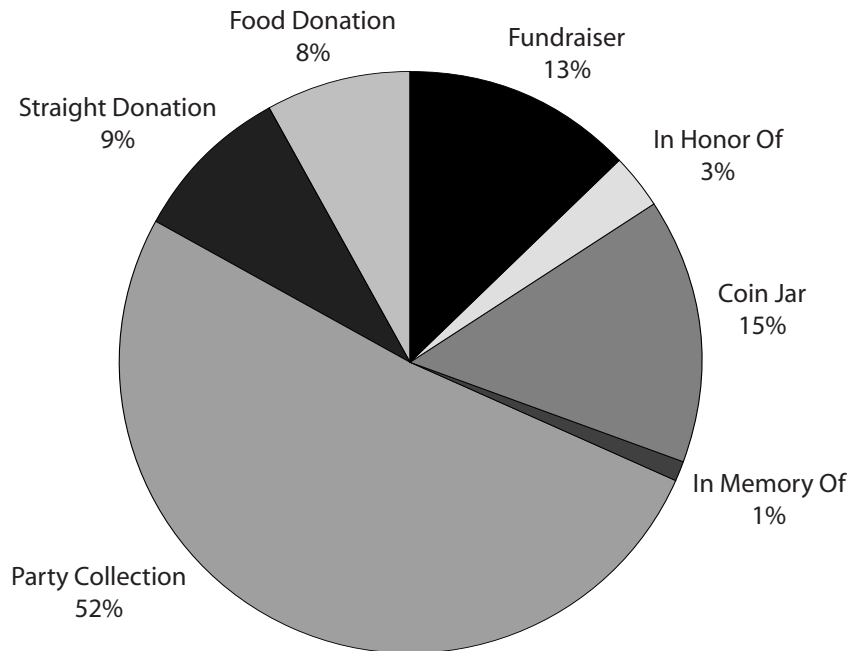
# Treasurer's Report

Statement of Financial Position		Statement of Activities			
Year Ended September 30, 2009		Year Ended September 30, 2009			
<b>ASSETS</b>		<b>SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>			
Cash	\$3,940	<b>Public and Private Support</b>	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
		Food Donations	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
<b>Liabilities</b>	\$0	Individual Contributions	\$22,619	\$0	\$22,619
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$3,940	Institutional/Grant Income	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$3,940</b>	<b>Total Support and Revenue</b>	<b>\$26,619</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$26,619</b>
		<b>EXPENSES</b>			
		<b>Program Services</b>			
		Food Distribution	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
		Donations	\$17,528	\$0	\$17,528
		<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>\$19,528</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$19,528</b>
		<b>Support Services</b>			
		Development Expenses	\$1,318	\$0	\$1,318
		Fundraising	\$632	\$0	\$632
		Publicity/Marketing	\$362	\$0	\$362
		Rent	\$180	\$0	\$180
		Supplies/Materials	\$659	\$0	\$659
		<b>Total Support Services</b>	<b>\$3,151</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$3,151</b>
		<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$22,679</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$22,679</b>
		<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$3,940</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$3,940</b>

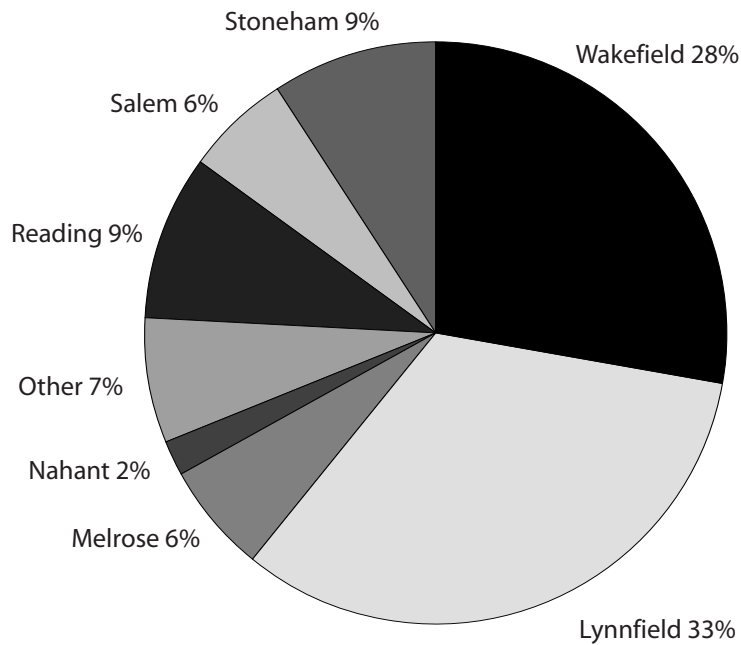
Gathering Change Inc		
Program by Town		
As of September 15, 2009		
	Sum of Amount Collected	Sum of Donations
Beverly	\$100.00	(\$90.00)
Burlington	\$311.05	(\$280.00)
Cambridge	\$486.34	(\$483.34)
Lynn	\$58.28	
Lynnfield	\$8,561.91	(\$5,000.00)
Malden	\$50.00	(\$50.00)
Melrose	\$1,578.26	(\$1,300.00)
N. Reading	\$102.33	
Nahant	\$643.31	(\$575.00)
North Andover	\$151.39	(\$50.00)
Norton	\$58.33	(\$50.00)
Reading	\$2,478.32	(\$2,000.00)
Salem	\$1,500.00	(\$1,200.00)
Saugus	\$82.05	
Somerville	\$30.47	
Stoneham	\$2,329.56	(\$1,950.00)
Wakefield	\$7,573.25	(\$6,210.00)
Westborough	\$429.19	(\$290.00)
Westfield	\$10.00	
Winchester	\$64.66	
(blank)	\$20.00	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$26,618.70</b>	<b>(\$19,528.34)</b>

Respectfully submitted by Susie Cleary, Treasurer

# Donations Received (Submitted by Susie Cleary, Treasurer)

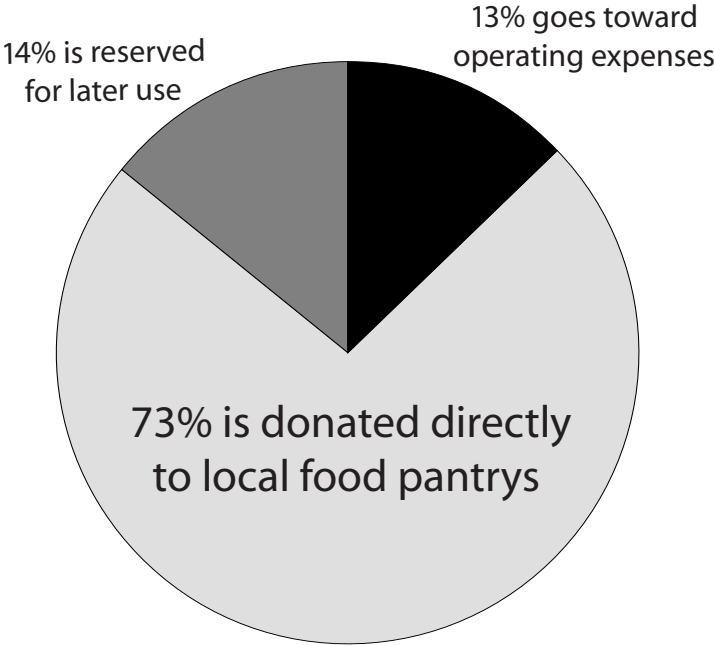


*How donations are received*

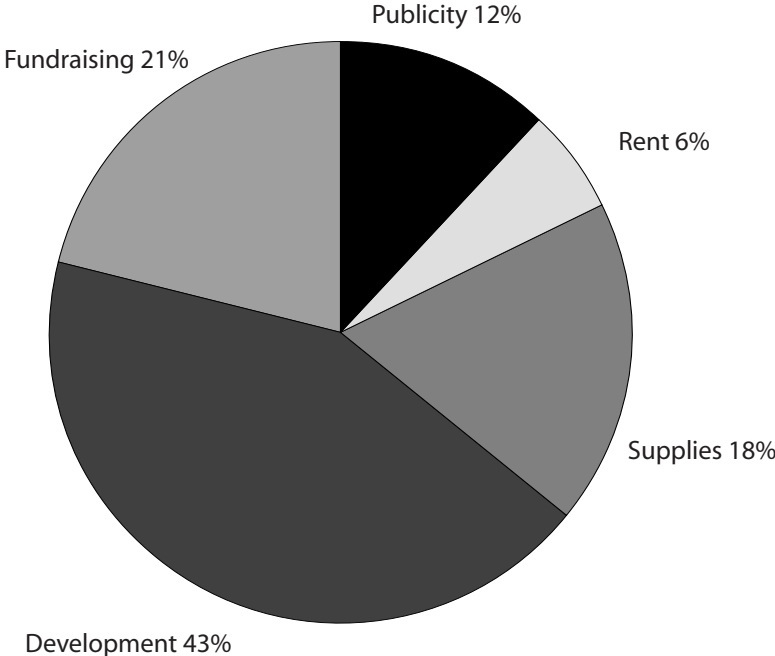


*Towns who have collected donations*

*Fund Distribution* (Submitted by Susie Cleary, Treasurer)



*Where donation dollars go*



*Breakdown of operating expenses*