Thanksgiving brings out best in the Bronx

By David Cruz

For some, Thanksgiving day marked a time to gather around the dinner table, catch up with family, or just watch the football game.

But for the borough’s downtrodden, it was a holiday where they relied on local food pantries, churches and community centers for a helping hand.

From Mott Haven to Morris Park, Bronxites came out in droves, standing on long lines, hoping to take home some donated food.

The longtime outreach group BronxWorks hosted a three-day turkey giveaway at various community centers. Volunteers spent hours Nov. 21 handing fresh birds to poor families in the South Bronx, while once homeless Bronxites were served hot dinners at BronxWorks’ Living Room/Safe Haven drop-in center in Hunts Point-Longwood.

Two days before Thanksgiving, young members of the Police Athletic League’s New South Bronx Center enjoyed plates full of turkey and all the traditional fixings.

Elsewhere, families at St. Clare Church in Morris Park took home donated meals courtesy of the local Kiwanis Club on Saturday, Nov. 17.

Thanksgiving meal fixings including turkeys were doled out to nearly 200 people outside the Paulding Ave. church.

As in past years, the student council of the Greek American Institute hosted a food and clothing drive for The Love Kitchen/Closet at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church on Westchester Ave.

Students, organized by Angela Kinnaly, unloaded four SUVs full of food and clothing for hard pressed families. One anonymous group member donated two-dozen turkeys to several hard pressed families, according to volunteer Alexandra Lacas.

FreshDirect, the online grocer, spent days giving away turkeys throughout the Bronx, with Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. lending a hand.

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