



*Joan Groves, left, is presented a citation from the General Assembly for her nearly 20-year commitment to the Corner Food Pantry in the Lakeville section of Salisbury by pantry volunteer Sylvia Durning. A reception in her honor was held Saturday. Groves is moving to be closer to her family.*

PHOTO BY RUTH EPSTEIN REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

**SALISBURY** — There is no doubt that Joan Groves was an integral part of the Country Food Pantry. That much was echoed all during a gathering Saturday in her honor.

Groves is moving from Salisbury to be closer to her family, and with her departure goes nearly 20 years of service to the pantry, formerly called OWL's Kitchen.

"She practically ran the operation single-handedly," said Sarah Polhemus, one of the more than 20 people who came to bid Groves farewell.

In leading the brief ceremony along with Sylvia Durning, Rosemary Farnsworth spoke of her pleasure at having the opportunity to work with Groves. "She is responsible, reliable, efficient and has a lot of common sense." And then with a smile, Farnsworth added, "Joan has the unique ability to make a molehill out of mountain. Thank you Joan. You made my presidency easier."

Groves was then presented a citation from the Connecticut General Assembly, which was introduced by state Rep. Roberta B. Willis, D-Salisbury. The document spoke of her unwavering commitment to the pantry. "Your tenacious effort to do the best for those in need has resulted in the improved nourishment of those in your community. Equally important is that your compassion and sense of humor have lifted their spirits during difficult times. Your caring for the whole person has immeasurably benefited the lives of countless people."

Groves told of how she'd miss having to worry

about securing toilet paper and cheese (popular items at the pantry), but mostly she'll miss all the people she's met over the years. "This is a wonderful community to live in." Barbara Pogue also presented her with several gifts having an owl motif.

The pantry is open every Saturday from 9 to 11 a.m. and every other Friday from 5 to 6 p.m. A totally volunteer initiative, it serves individuals and families in the tristate region, providing ingredients for nearly 10,000 meals each month. On average during 2014, the pantry provided food items to 57 households per week, an increase of 10 percent over the previous year. Households are based on four members. They are given enough food for three meals a week for each household member.

Carole Dmytryshak, who maintains the books for the organization, said funds come from an annual appeal, as well as donations of food and money from community members throughout the year. School classes and local churches make contributions, as do children who request that food or money be given to the pantry instead of bringing gifts to birthday parties. Containers to place food donations are at certain sites around town. With some of the money raised, school supplies are provided to local children.

Food is ordered and delivered by LaBonne's Market. Purchases are also made from the Connecticut Food Bank. The pantry is at 80 Sharon Road in Lakeville.

For information call, 860-435-9886 or visit [www.TheCornerFoodPantry.org](http://www.TheCornerFoodPantry.org).