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Pine Island — A 15-year-old member of Girl Scout Troop 407 has started a community kitchen in the former Pine Island Elementary School as her Girl Scout Gold Award Project.

The first dinner - spaghetti, meatballs and salad - will be Friday, Nov. 18, with a continuous seating from 6 to 8 p.m. The school is located at 20 Schoolhouse Road in Pine Island. Everyone attending the dinner will receive a bagged lunch for the next day.

On the kitchen's Web site (www.warwickcommunitykitchen.weebly.com), Victoria Garloch explains her project:

"I decided to pursue this project after I volunteered with other members and volunteers of the Warwick Ecumenical Council at the Midnight Run in New York City in November 2010. At first I was very nervous and didn't want to get out of the car because I was uncomfortable.

"Then, at the last stop I saw a homeless man in a wheel-chair with an amputated leg. I was even more afraid then before. While I was handing out soup the man in the wheel-chair came up to me and said, 'Can I have some soup please?'

"At that moment I realized I was no longer afraid and decided I wanted to do more in my community for the less fortunate.

"I believe that the Warwick Community Kitchen is needed and can be successful in our community because of the 250 families that benefit from the Warwick Food Pantry every month, the 100 children in the Warwick School District that go home every Friday with a back-pack filled with food to feed them over the weekend as part of the Back-Pack Snack Attack Program, and the large migrant population as a result of the farms in the Black Dirt Region of Pine Island, Florida and Goshen."

Volunteers and donations are welcome.

Victoria can be reached through the Web site or by calling 845-469-8416.

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