

Sharing the Harvest

Great Plains Food Bank • Summer 2011

Hunger Doesn't Take a Summer Vacation

Learn How Our Volunteers Are
Meeting the Needs of Hungry Children



what's
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JAN - MAY 2011 WAREHOUSE WEIGH-INS

3.7
MILLION
pounds of food distributed

\$5.7
MILLION
worth of food recovered

48.4
THOUSAND
people served

102
THOUSAND
food baskets provided
through partner agencies

1.3
MILLION
hot meals served by
partner agencies

Many of us at the Great Plains Food Bank think we have the best job in the world because we get to see amazing acts of generosity and compassion every day. And each of these acts allows us to touch the lives of those struggling with hunger in a very direct and meaningful way. In this and every issue of *Sharing the Harvest* you will read about some of the wonderful things you, our supporters, do to help us fight hunger and feed hope.

director's DESK by Steve Sellent

One day it might be a donation of several semi-loads of much needed food from an industry partner. Another day it's a child dropping off canned items that he asked for in lieu of birthday presents, or gardeners bringing in extra produce they grew.

Many days it's an organization or company dropping off items collected at a food drive or proceeds from a fundraising event. Sometimes it's notice of a large grant we've been awarded, a big stack of mail in response to an appeal, or a small gift with a note from someone who once received help and is now able to give back.

At other times it might be a group of kids volunteering to fill backpacks



with food so their fellow students don't go hungry, a company donating a load of new children's clothing for our K.I.D.S. program, or one of our partner feeding programs reaching out to their community in an exciting new way. The list goes on and on.

It's all these things together...every food item donated, dollar contributed and hour volunteered ...that make our work possible. So thank you, for not only feeding the hungry, but for inspiring and invigorating us each and every day with your caring and thoughtful support. Together we are creating hunger-free communities.



Lutheran
Social Services
of North Dakota

Disastrous spring floods have hit several areas across North Dakota. High water is the first half of these disasters. The second half is the devastation left behind. Lutheran Disaster Response, a second program of Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota, is now recruiting clean-up and rebuild teams to help restore communities and homes.

To register your family or congregation, contact Bonnie Turner, ND Director of Lutheran Disaster Response at 800-950-2901 or btturner@lssnd.org.



The 5 Star Certified Pantry and Meal Site Program is an initiative that gives recognition to our partner agencies that offer exceptional service

to their community. Those interested in becoming a 5 Star Program use an evaluation tool that looks at their operations and practices. Once certified, these agencies join an elite group of hunger relief programs, receiving the highest honor a food pantry or meal program in North Dakota and Clay County, MN can receive. To learn more about gaining this certification for your program, contact Melissa Sobolik at msobolik@lssnd.org.

Nourishing Our Next Generation

BackPack Program Expands to Meet Needs

We believe that when a child is fed, they are equipped to learn, grow and dream of a future filled with opportunities. We also believe that for parents living on tightly stretched budgets, knowing that their children are fed and healthy means the world to them.

The Backpack Program tackles childhood hunger head on. In conjunction with schools and community partners statewide, the Great Plains Food Bank distributes backpacks filled with food for up to six meals plus snacks to children on Fridays before they head into the weekend when other resources such as the school breakfast and lunch programs may not be available.

One mother's story and gratitude

Nancy and her family are just one of hundreds touched by the Backpack program. "Every Friday afternoon is such a special treat for my child – almost like Christmas," says Nancy. "He looks forward to receiving his bag of food and can't wait to see what's inside." Although Nancy and her husband are very fortunate to have jobs, winter was an extremely difficult time for them, as their pay was minimal. Their son is an elementary student in the Fargo district and has been participating in the Backpack Program just shy of 4 months.

"We have nothing but good things to say about our experience. It's been such a lifesaver. It shows us that people do care. I'd like to extend my family's thanks to the Great Plains Food Bank and to everyone in our community who supports this wonderful program."


Looking back, moving forward

Prior to last school year ending, we surveyed the students participating in the Backpack Program, their parents, and the teachers and school officials who help us carry out this important work. The results are incredible! Generous gifts from our supporters statewide allow us to expand the program even further.

Childhood hunger doesn't take a summer vacation. With no school lunch programs to count on, parents often struggle during

the summer months to provide the proper nutrition their children need to grow. During these long and often hungry months, we are offering the program for the first time to 200 students in Fargo, Moorhead and West Fargo. This fall we will be expanding into new schools to serve children in 14 different locations. Regionally, we continue to support Backpack programming efforts in Grand Forks, LaMoure and rural Clay counties. Together, we are nourishing the bodies and minds of children.

Thank You!



Survey shows
program has
positive results

81%
of parents saw an
increase in their child's
academic performance

78%
of parents saw
improvements in
their child's behavior

64%
of teachers saw improved
concentration among
participants

62%
of teachers reported better
academic performance

93%
of students share the food with
members of their family

Ways you can help

- 1 Conduct a food drive and collect child-friendly foods such as fruit cups, cereal, juice boxes, breakfast bars, crackers or microwavable meals.
- 2 Sponsor a child. It costs just \$4.25 to fill a backpack with food for six meals plus snacks. Support a child for the entire school year for \$162.
- 3 Each week, volunteers of all ages are needed to assemble the food packs at the Great Plains Food Bank.

To learn more, contact Cierra Anderson at (701) 232-6219.

OUR VOLUNTEERS: Passion in Motion



With the commitment of more than 3,500 passionate volunteers who so generously give 10,000 hours of service, we are able to feed more than 66,000 hungry children, seniors and working families who seek food assistance at our partner network of feeding programs each year. It's because of their steadfast dedication in the fight to end hunger and feed hope that allows us to be effective and efficient with the food resources entrusted to us to distribute.

Out of our statewide distribution center in Fargo, or in communities across the state, volunteers of all ages help us get food into the hands of our hungry neighbors in need. Whether it's sorting food drive items, preparing food baskets for our Mobile Food Pantry, labeling products for redistribution, repacking bulk items, assisting with special events and office projects, or filling backpacks with food for children, our volunteers are instrumental in our day-to-day operations.

We often say that volunteers are the heart of our organization. We couldn't do our important work each and every day without them. If you, your family, or a group from your church, civic organization or business is interested in joining us for an hour or for the day, contact our Volunteer Department at (701) 232-6219, or visit us online to learn more.

"The Backpack Project is a great, age appropriate way to teach our children to give back to our community."

- Becky & Nick Dorsher



"It feels good to help people."

"We get to help people from our planet."

"It makes us more community centered."

- What 2nd grade students said when asked, "Why do you like to volunteer at the Great Plains Food Bank?"

Page 4 left: Becky and Nick Dorsher along with their children Jack, age 10 (not pictured); Grace, age 8; Peter, age 6; and William, age 4 assemble backpacks full of food for children to have over the weekend when other resources may not be available.

Page 4 right: Salem Evangelical Free Church's Local Missions Trip Youth Group repack potatoes and pasta destined for food pantries and soup kitchens statewide. Salem has been volunteering with the Great Plains Food Bank since 1993.

Page 5 bottom: Volunteers from the high school, local businesses and churches came out to load food baskets into vehicles for people in need at a Mobile Food Pantry distribution event in Barnesville, MN.

Page 5 top: Volunteers from Melissa Voecks' 2nd grade class at S.G. Reinertsen Elementary in Moorhead come to the Great Plains Food Bank every month to label cans and repack food for statewide distribution.

"Volunteering helps students, who may struggle in the classroom, shine in a service learning setting."

- Melissa Voecks, teacher at S.G. Reinertson Elementary, Moorhead, MN



Mobile Food Pantry Rolls into Clay County

In May, the Great Plains Food Bank added three more communities to our Mobile Food Pantry route when we teamed up with Lakes & Prairies Community Action to bring this service to Clay County, MN. Low income residents of Ulen, Glyndon and Barnesville received a week's worth of food helping them stretch their food budgets even further. With the assistance of dozens of community volunteers, 286 adults, 218 children and 107 seniors received support. When asked what this food means, one Mobile Food Pantry recipient replied, "Oh, the world. It means I get to eat today AND tomorrow. You are so special. Thank you."



Because fighting hunger is a year-round issue

We invite you to become a Feeding Hope Partner. Even a small monthly commitment can make a huge difference in the daily fight against hunger. As a Feeding Hope Partner you join a group of our most committed supporters.

Visit us online or sign-up by calling our Donor Relations Department at (701) 232-6219.



Get updates on volunteer opportunities. Become a fan of the Great Plains Food Bank.



A

A. Bayer CropScience donated \$5 for each farmer who pledged to increase yields and improve crop quality through the Farm to Feed the World initiative. More than \$2,500 was collected, providing 12,800 nutritious meals to children, seniors and working families struggling with hunger statewide.

B. On Saturday, May 14, the National Association of Letter Carriers delivered more than mail, they collected and delivered 57,000 pounds of food to the Great Plains Food Bank as part of their annual Stamp Out Hunger food drive.



thanks to our partners



C

C. Father and son team Amon and Jareb Baer from J & A Farms stopped by with their annual donation of 36,000 eggs, providing nutritious protein to the families served by Great Plains Food Bank. The duo has been donating since 2008 for a grand total of 176,000 eggs.

D. Trinity Lutheran Church chose the Backpack Program to receive the proceeds from their Salad & Pie Luncheon. A grand total of \$4,800 was raised which will provide 1,130 backpacks to Moorhead, MN children. Pictured are Great Plains Food Bank "celebrity servers" Steve Sellent and Cierra Anderson.



D

E. The Great Plains Food Bank and ND Agriculture Commissioner, Doug Goehring, are asking gardeners and farmers to plant an extra row or acre in support of the Hunger Free Gardens Project. Our goal is to collect 500,000 pounds of produce for food pantries and soup kitchens across the state. To learn more, call (701) 232-6219.



F. One in 10 Minnesotans runs out of resources before the end of every month, missing an average of 10 meals every 30 days. That's 100 million meals missed every year, with devastating effects.

Initiated by a coalition of partners, including the Great Plains Food Bank, Hunger-Free Minnesota has a strategic, three-year action plan to close the gap in missing meals. As the food bank serving Clay County, MN we invite you to show your support and join the movement at www.hungerfreemn.org because hunger hurts us all.





2010 Hunger Relief Champions Honored

This spring we presented Earl Pomeroy, Byron Dorgan, Jenni Monson and Walmart with our 2010 Hunger Relief Champion awards because of their extraordinary contributions and commitment to end hunger. Others honored for making a difference included our food industry partners J.R. Simplot, Hornbacher's, Hugh's Gardens, Philadelphia Macaroni Company and Sam's Club. Volunteer awards were given to Cargill, Concordia College, Fraser Day Care / Pre-K, Salem Evangelical Free Church, Marion Miller and Jan Erbstoesser.

Our visionary financial supporters included Bank of America / Merrill Lynch, Corwin Wilson LLC, David B. McNair Family Fund, Microsoft and the Otto Bremer Foundation. The Belfield-Medora Food Pantry was named our first ever Agency of the Year recipient, bestowing the highest honor we offer one of our 273 hunger relief partner agencies. Their dedicated volunteers run a top-notch operation. They increased their capacity, and expanded their service - ensuring no one in their community goes hungry.

Congratulations!



Faith in Action

The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Moorhead, MN is a shining example of putting faith into action. This past school year, they raised nearly \$16,000 and served 100 students through the Backpack Program and are excited to support 80 more children this summer. Going above and beyond, the congregation is committed to sponsoring a second school next fall and challenges other churches to do the same. Youth leaders also do their part by packing the backpacks each and every month ensuring children have access to nutritious meals and snacks over the weekend.



K.I.D.S. Delivers Smiles

K.I.D.S. (Kids in Distressed Situations) takes the lead in orchestrating donations of children's items with a unique group of retailers and manufacturers nationwide. As the North Dakota affiliate, the Great Plains Food Bank provides tens of thousands of new items such as clothing, toys and winter apparel secured from corporations such as Toys R Us, American Girl, Gymboree and Disney. Last year these items were valued at more than \$1.4 million dollars, but the smiles they put on children's faces were priceless.



CHS Doubles Goal

The Great Plains Food Bank was the recipient of this year's CHS Harvest for Hunger food and funds drive. Leaders presented Steve Sellent, director of the Great Plains Food Bank, with a check for \$70,084. The campaign was coordinated by the Country Operations division of CHS, Inc., a leading energy, grains and foods company. They set a goal of securing one million meals for hungry families throughout the region. CHS team members not only met their goal, but went above and beyond and nearly doubled it. Great job!



Lutheran Social Services of ND
1720 3rd Ave N • Fargo, ND 58102
(701) 232-6219

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Lutheran
Social Services
of North Dakota



The Great Plains Food Bank strives for a hunger-free North Dakota and western Minnesota by recovering and distributing surplus food, engaging in community partnerships and advocating for social change.

SAVE THE DATE

Chefs'
Gala & Auction

Wednesday, October 12

Ramada Plaza Suites
Crystal Ballroom
Fargo, ND

Sip, Sample, Savor

The Chefs' Gala & Auction, supporting our Daily Bread perishable food recovery program has quickly become one of the region's most anticipated evenings of the year with chefs from 25 restaurants tempting guests with their award winning dishes. At a cost of just 10 cents a meal, Daily Bread can recover and distribute 10 meals making it one of the most cost effective hunger-relief programs in the country. Join us as we fight hunger and feed hope for our neighbors in need.



BECOME A FAN

Get updates about this year's FM Chefs Gala on Facebook.

Calendar

JUN 2011

June 1-30: Bremer Banks Taking Action Against Hunger

Bremer Banks in ND, MN & WI are challenging their customers and employees to Take Action Against Hunger by donating to their local Food Banks. Throughout the month of June, Bremer will match dollar-for-dollar your gifts up to \$50,000. Donate now at www.bremer.com

JUL 2011

July 1-31: Check Out Hunger at Fargo-Moorhead Hornbacher's Stores

Shoppers are invited to join us in ending the solvable problem of hunger in our community. The campaign is simple and easy. At time of check-out, shoppers are invited to add a \$1, \$3 or \$5 donation to their grocery bill in support of the Daily Bread perishable food recovery program.

July 19: Mobile Food Pantry - Garrison, Center and McClusky

July 26: Mobile Food Pantry - Grassy Butte, Watford City and Killdeer

AUG 2011

August 1: Chefs' Gala & Auction tickets go on sale

August 16: Mobile Food Pantry - Edmore, Osnabrock, Langdon and Cavalier

SEP 2011

Sept. 1-30: Hunger Action Month

To learn how you can take action to end hunger in your community during this month long campaign, visit Issnd.org/GreatPlainsFoodBank/HAM.

Sept. 13: Mobile Food Pantry - Devils Lake, Sheyenne, New Rockford, Carrington

Sept. 15: Mobile Food Pantry - Bisbee and Dunseith

Sept. 19: Taking Action to End Hunger Celebration - Fargo Theatre, 7:00pm
An evening for the entire family. Free admission with a canned food item.

Sept. 20-21: Taking Action to End Hunger Summit - Doublewood Inn, Fargo
Call (701) 232-6219 for registration information.