

***CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO END
HUNGER***

Make a bigger impact on hunger this July by accepting the 2015 Food Shelf Challenge from Open Your Heart to the Hungry and Homeless and the Bemidji Community Food Shelf.

Up here in the north, we all anticipate the arrival of summer, with its lush green hues, balmy temps, and long days. At the Food Shelf, summer brings special challenges. Usage of the Food Shelf spikes in the summer and it is not unusual for us to serve 100 families on days we are open. With children home from school and relatives here for the season, families' food dollars are stretched.

To help offset the higher summer usage, the folks at Open Your Heart have created a special campaign for the month of July, in which money raised for food during the month receives a partial match. If we have enough community support, the campaign could contribute as much as \$5000 to help us buy food. We can purchase food from our food bank for pennies on the pound.

Please consider giving a donation to the Food Shelf during July!

COUNTY FAIR

The Food Shelf will again have a presence at the Beltrami County Fair, July 29th-August 2nd. Watch for us near the entrance and stop by to say hello. We are looking forward to seeing you!



THANK YOU, CEDAR 4!

Our AmeriCorps NCCC team, Cedar 4, is gone now, but they left us with a lot of jobs well done and many good memories. The Headwaters Science Center (HSC) was their primary host agency. This was their second round of work, and from here they go to Indiana for their third round where they will be working on an invasive species mitigation project. We wish them all the best!

***A WORD FROM THE
NEW DIRECTOR***

In June, history was made at the Food Shelf when I accepted the first full-time position in the life of the Food Shelf. I want to thank the Board of Directors for their faith and trust in me. I love the mission of the Food Shelf, our volunteers and the Bemidji community, and feel so blessed to be able to put even more time and effort into strengthening our mission and services.

--Mary Mitchell

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In our day to day operations, every day that we are open is unique and full of new challenges, routines, mysteries and wonderful surprises. For example, when I arrived one Friday morning, the warehouse table was literally full of fresh produce from our generous food stores in town. But looking around, I wondered, "Where are our volunteers?" The good news is that 15 minutes later, our faithful volunteers who come most every day that we are open, arrived to help. They continue to come because they believe that this work is an example of what it means to be a caring community - a God given purpose that is daily played out here at the food shelf. Thanks be to God for that core of volunteers who come making a difference here at the Food Shelf. From the interviewers to the warehouse crew to those who have been coming for years, we need each and every one of you to continue to pray, volunteer, and grow together as a family of God here in this place. It is truly amazing to be a part of God's work here at the Food Shelf.

There are many opportunities to serve here in our community. I am proud of the fact that many organizations, schools, clubs, and businesses have stepped up to partner with the Food Shelf. Our faith is not simply a private affair, or something that we practice once a week. But as Philip Yancy wrote in his book, Vanishing Grace, "...faith should have a contagious effect on the broader world Jesus used these images to illustrate His Kingdom; a sprinkle of yeast causing the whole loaf to rise, a pinch of salt preserving a slab of meat, and the smallest seed in the garden growing into a great tree in which birds of the air come to nest." We pray and seek to truly be a place not only with food but also a place to find hope.

Our farm has grown since last year. Our partnership with the Development Achievement Center (DAC) has enabled us to expand the farm and its clients are producing beautiful raised bed boxes. By the time you read this, we will be hosting our second AmeriCorps NCCC Team, Maple 2, and looking forward to the arrival of Maple 4 in August. The teams will be here for a total of ten weeks. They will be working in the farm and in the Food Shelf store, and also next door with the DAC clients. We are truly grateful for the partnership we have with the DAC.

We live in an age that focuses more on hatred, darkness, hopelessness and greed. Our painting by M. Lemon titled "Finding Hope" reminds us that we seek to be a place where mercy, grace and hope are the most important crops we are called to raise. To that end we ask most importantly for your prayers, your hands and feet as volunteers, and of course your special donation for the Open Your Heart Challenge during the month of July.

Bill Beyer, President, BCFS

SUMMER NEEDS AT THE FOOD SHELF

Egg Cartons: Due to the impacts of the bird flu, we are again ordering eggs in bulk and can use your used egg cartons.

Garden Produce: We would also love your surplus garden produce! Please bring it by on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Miscellaneous Food: We are out of items for the "miscellaneous shelf". These items come in as donations from the community and provide much-appreciated variety for our users. Foods that typically go on this shelf include condiments, spices, tea and coffee, broths, etc. Please consider donating some of these items.

Volunteers: If you enjoy people and want to do something to feel good, please consider volunteering at the Food Shelf. You do not have to be a member of a local church to volunteer. Our volunteers will tell you that this is a special place and being here is an enjoyable experience. In return for your volunteer hours, you will receive the following benefits: smiles, new friendships, a happy heart, and coffee and donuts. If you are over 55 and are interested in the possibility of mileage reimbursement, please visit with Jane Furuseth in the RSVP office at the Food Shelf. You can call Jane at 218-766-9494.

THE FOOD SHELF FARM – SUMMER IS BUSTIN’ OUT ALL OVER!

The hope of spring has become the fecundity of early summer, outstripping even our wild-eyed plans. The big news is *lots* of potatoes. With the help of AmeriCorps, we had planned and planted a bit more than last year – about 450 pounds of donated seed potatoes. Then, in response to a request from the Board, we planted another whole field of potatoes where we had expected to grow buckwheat.

Our new carrot seeder works great and a goodly patch of carrots are emerging. Onions planted from sets are coming along aplenty. More tomato and pepper plants than we had envisioned were donated and are finding places in the field. Winter squash and even pumpkins will be vining all over as they kick into gear. Cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower are planted to harvest in succession.

The raised and table beds behind the warehouse are being planted with peas, lettuce, spinach, kohlrabi, herbs and flowers.

Besides all these vegetables, we are looking to the future and enhancing our eco-niche by planting fruiting native trees and shrubs at the DAC next door. These were donated to us by the, Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

We are staying ahead of the weeds better than we did last year, but need help to keep the field clean and productive. Can you join us for some satisfying time getting down and dirty? July is grand in the garden.

WELCOME NEW FARM STAFF

Thanks to the fine efforts of Lin James and Jack Judkins, the Food Shelf Farm has received several grants this spring and more are forthcoming. All of the money is designated for specific projects, wages, and/or supplies for the farm. Grant monies are funding three new part-time positions; the Farm Manager, the Raised Bed Coordinator, and a Business Intern.

Chris Tower is our new Farm Manager and starts July 1st. He and his wife are relocating to Bemidji. Chris has a background in teaching and school gardens. He will bring new energy and another skill set to the project. Lin James, who has been working with us for a year through Experience Works, is the Raised Bed Coordinator. In addition to working with the DAC on the construction of the raised beds, she is marketing and selling some of them. Other raised beds have gone to housing units where Lin is teaching residents how to use the beds to grow some of their own food. Last but not least, our Business Intern, Shayna Seopa, comes to us from Bemidji State University where she will complete her degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Marketing this fall. Shayna is preparing a business plan for the farm, exploring ways to make the farm self-sustaining in the years to come.

NAPS FARMERS MARKET COUPONS

About 77 seniors pick up commodity boxes from BCFS each month through the Nutrition Assistance Program for Seniors (NAPS). Starting soon, these elders will also be able to get coupons for fresh produce sold at Farmer’s Markets through a USDA program called the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP). These will be distributed when the NAPS boxes are picked up on the third Monday of each month.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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Bemidji Community Food Shelf (BCFS) Newsletter/JULY 2015

1260 Industrial Park Drive SE, Bemidji, MN 56601

(218) 444-6580

bcfs@paulbunyan.net

www.bemidjifoodshelf.org

Hours of Operation:

MWF 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and

10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Every Third Monday

is ok or enter quote or tagline here.

Bemidji Community Food Shelf Contribution Form July 2015

Mail completed form and your tax-deductible contribution to:
BCFS, P.O. Box 3118, Bemidji, MN 56619-3118

www.website.com

INSERT TEXT OR LOGO HERE

Here is my tax-deductible gift of \$ _____ to support the work of the Bemidji Community Food Shelf. (Please make check payable to: BCFS)

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ I am interested in volunteering.

_____ I am interested in becoming a monthly (sustaining) supporter.

(See www.bemidjifoodshelf.org, and click on an amount; then click on "Donate Now".)

_____ I am interested in supporting the garden project.

_____ Please contact me with information about making a Legacy Gift to the BCFS.

_____ I wish to receive future newsletters via email.

Telephone/Cell: _____

Email Address: _____

Thank you for your support!