

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"America is the richest country in the world. And yet tonight, thousands of your neighbors will go to bed hungry. It may be your child's schoolmate who is undernourished and has difficulty learning on an empty stomach. Or it could be a co-worker, a working mother whose low-wage job doesn't make ends meet. Perhaps it's an elderly neighbor who has to make a decision whether to delay filling a prescription or buying groceries. The faces of hunger are as broad as the faces of America."

--- David Nasby, General Mills

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU for your 2014 response to Minnesota FoodShare! Over \$100,000 dollars and 56,000 pounds of food was received during March 2014, enabling us to make it through the next six months. March is by far the most important month of the year for food shelves in Minnesota. Last year over \$8 million dollars and 4 million pounds of food was donated to food shelves statewide. We placed 8th among the 300 food shelves in the state for Minnesota FoodShare 2014 based on the amount of food, cash donations, and the number of people we serve. Because of the needs in our county and gifts given, we received an additional check of over \$10,000 from Minnesota corporations through Hunger Solutions. Thank you again.

More good news is that in 2014, because the Minnesota State Legislature set aside money in a fund, we were able to access milk at a reduced price. With our cost of a half-gallon of milk at 37 cents, we were able to give milk to everyone who came to the food shelf. This fund has recently run out and we have had to reduce the amount of milk we distribute. Another program set up by the state is the Farm to Food Shelf Program, which gives Minnesota producers a small incentive to donate their surplus produce to food shelves. These two programs saved us \$2,000 per month just for milk and potatoes. We credit our 2014 increase in the



amount of food distributed (from 709,000 to 849,000 pounds) to the Farm to Food Shelf program and the garden produce from our garden and that shared by our local gardeners.

Finally, a special thanks to Mary Mitchell who continues to exceed our expectations and is able to translate more and more facts not only for our Board, but also the public about the reality of hunger insecurity here in this part of Minnesota. Thanks Mary! Also another shout out to the Garden Committee (now called the Farm Committee), for securing a grant for a tractor and implements as we work with the DAC and add more undeveloped land to our farm. Thanks to all the volunteers: the volunteer interviewers, the core volunteers, and the growing list of groups that come to serve our community here at the Food Shelf.

-- Bill Beyer, Pres. BCFS

"When you are hungry, you can't think about anything else" --- Juana "Janie" Mendez

HEALTHY CHOICE COOKBOOK



Bemidji Community Food Shelf **Healthy Choices** Recipes

The Food Shelf recently printed a cookbook with recipes targeting low-sugar and low-salt diets. The recipes were compiled by nutritionist Susanne Rabel. In 2014, Susanne contracted with BCFS through a Venture Grant from the United Way to demonstrate healthy cooking and share recipes with our clients. She also labeled the store shelves to highlight products that are low in salt and sugar. Many of the recipes in the book are ones that Susanne prepared in 2014.

It was only natural that kids from Schoolcraft Learning Community should design the colorful cookbook cover. They came to the Food Shelf last fall as part of an expedition on food, worked in the garden, and prepared a veggie pizza.

The recipes featured in the cookbook were chosen because they are healthful, have few ingredients, and do not require special equipment to prepare. Ingredients usually available at the Food Shelf are highlighted in bold type. In addition to the recipes, the book is sprinkled with cooking and dietary tips.

Four hundred of the cookbooks are being sold to recoup the cost of printing, and the remaining 600 are being distributed to Food Shelf clients. They are available for purchase at the Food Shelf for \$5 each.

COOKS NEEDED

Now that we have our own cookbook, we would like to use our kitchen more often. If you like to cook and visit with people, this could be the job for you. Use your creativity to prepare dishes using food from our shelves and give out samples and recipes to our participants. The cookbook is a ready resource for you, but you can also bring your own recipes. If this sounds fun, please call Mary at 444-6580 to get cooking.

MURAL

Artist Mary Therese has begun work on a mural in the Food Shelf store. The completed mural will be mounted on the exterior of the Food Shelf in the spring. There will be opportunities for clients and members of the community to contribute to the mural. This project is funded by a Region 2 Arts Council grant through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature, and the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment. Stop by and watch it progress!

USDA GRANT AND LOAN

BCFS is the recent recipient of a combination USDA grant and loan totaling \$30,000 to cover roof repair and parking lot resurfacing expenses. The warehouse roof repairs have already been done, and we are looking forward to a drip-free spring and summer. The parking lot resurfacing will be completed this summer. Now is your chance to say goodbye to the potholes.

CHUCK PRICHARD FIRE

Our warehouse worker, Charles (Chuck) Prichard, had a house fire and it was a complete loss. He had nothing but the clothes on his back and his pickup. His dog also perished in the fire. Chuck is hoping to rebuild on his lot. Please consider attending a spaghetti fundraiser at the Garden Grill and Pub, 111 Central Ave SE, Nymore, from 3-6 p.m. on Sunday, April 12. If you have silent auction gifts, please bring them to the Food Shelf. If you are unable to attend, checks made out to Charles can be brought to the Food Shelf or mailed to: BCFS, P.O. Box 3118, Bemidji, MN 56619.

THE FOOD SHELF FARM

Don't think that because the farm sleeps, the farmers do. During these months when winter seems interminable, there has been much thinking, learning, planning, meeting and working at our computers to prepare for the coming growing season.

Grant-writing takes a big chunk of our time. Lin and Jack are working doggedly on different grants to 1) hire a Farm Manager; 2) hire an intern from BSU to help us develop a business plan and sustainable approach; 3) build raised beds at the DAC to provide to food shelf clients so that, with accompanying education, they can grow their own vegetables, and 4) build compost bins.

We are very excited that our first efforts in this regard have resulted in Beltrami County granting us enough funds to purchase a small tractor, basic attachments, a leaf shredder and a seeder. To stretch those dollars, L&M Fleet Supply has given us hefty discounts on the farm equipment. Let your County Commissioner and the management at Fleet know that you appreciate what they have done for us.

Mary and Jack were successful in getting one AmeriCorps team at the beginning of the summer and hope to get a second team for July-September. Those Americorps members with their youthful energy and enthusiasm will be able to accomplish so much.

Candy and Jack have attended workshops and conferences put on by the Sustainable Farming Association to expand their knowledge base and build networks with other growers and suppliers. The Midwest Soil Health Summit was especially informational and inspirational. Can we incorporate any of the things we learned in the Food Shelf FARM? Stay tuned.

Besides building raised beds for our clients, the DAC folks are partnering with us to build sturdy, nice-looking table-height beds that we will sell. Think how civilized it would be to garden in a standing position. It would make you get up and out the door to plant, tend and harvest with a smile wouldn't it?

Candy has laid out a plan on grid paper for the potatoes, carrots, cabbage, broccoli, tomatoes, peppers, squash, pumpkins and cover crop that we are going to grow this summer.

She has also drawn a plan for planting native, fruiting trees and shrubs on a corner of the DAC property.

With all of this indoor planning accomplished during the frigid days of Mother Nature's somnolence, we should be ready to hit the ground running when she finally warms the earth to set in motion the kaleidoscope of burgeoning Spring.

BCFS ANNUAL MEETING

About 100 folks attended BCFS's 28th Annual Meeting Thursday, February 12th at Bethel Lutheran Church in Bemidji. It was a time to come together to celebrate our accomplishments and look forward to the year ahead. We celebrated our new programs, including the Nutrition Assistance Program for Seniors (NAPS), Farm to Foodshelf, the Lueken's Community Meat Program, and our partnerships with BSU through both the Sustainability Program and the Food Service. We also celebrated coming in about \$30,000 under budget for food purchases while dramatically increasing our selection of healthy food. We bid goodbye to our paid interviewers, June Roxstrom, Patty Gabriel, and Kathy Paulson; and to our Secretary Terri Toenyan, who recently resigned. Thanks to all who provided the excellent soups, bread and bars and/or helped with set up and clean up.

CHAMBERS AFTER HOURS

It was a dark and stormy night on February 10th when BCFS hosted its first Chamber After Hours open house. The purpose of the event, which is coordinated through the Bemidji Chamber of Commerce, is to spotlight the host business or organization. It was a great opportunity for us to show off our great facility and do some education about the importance of our role in the community. The food was wonderful and a good time was had by all who braved the snow and wind to attend. A special thanks goes out to the Lincoln School 5th graders who made the beautiful snowflake decorations, which we are still enjoying.

FOOD RESCUER NEEDED!

The Food Shelf has a need for a temporary gleaner for six months on Friday mornings starting March 20. The job consists of driving to several stores to pick up food that would otherwise be discarded. You will start about 8:30 a.m. and be done about 11:30 a.m. and should have a reliable pickup truck. You should also have the ability to lift up to 40 pounds. This is a great job for couples! If you are interested and/or want more information, please call Mary at 444-6580. Good luck to our Friday regulars, Kent and Betsy Hering, who are heading off on a cross-nation bicycle adventure to raise funds for clean water.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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**Bemidji Community Food Shelf (BCFS)
 Newsletter/March 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 March 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!