

November 13, 2008  
Volume 1, Issue 2



## BCFS Newsletter

### Special Interest Articles:

- Stuff A Truck
- Hunger and Homelessness Awareness
- Feeding America

### Individual Highlights:

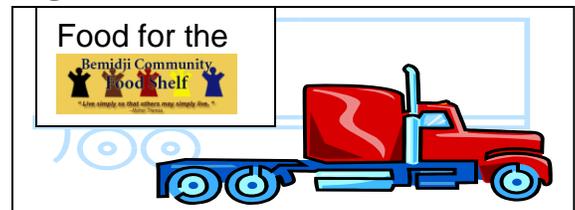
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*Location: 310 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Bemidji (across from City Hall)*  
*Mailing address: PO Box 3118, Bemidji, MN 56619*  
*Phone: 444-6580*  
*Open: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10:00-3:30 and the third Monday of each month until 7 PM*



## Let's Stuff a Truck Together!

The annual "Stuff a Truck" Campaign started in October thanks to Paul Bunyan Broadcasting, The Bemidji Pioneer and Marketplace Foods. Area schools received their boxes and have been collecting food to begin filling the truck. This community-wide effort will continue as the truck moves to Marketplace foods on November 21 and 22 where everyone is asked to Stuff it with much needed food for the Food Shelf before winter and the Holiday Season.



Many thanks to these sponsors and their employees for their help each year! Many of their hours are volunteered!



## History of "Stuff A Truck" Collections:

These campaigns started in 1992 and have steadily grown over the years. Our community can be very proud of the efforts made by the sponsors who work to organize and advertise the event, the students at all of the area schools who do public service announcements, and of course all the wonderful children and community members who bring food to fill the truck. At this rate we may have to start calling it "Stuff the trucks"

In 1992 3,000 pounds were collected. Donations of cash began in 1998 when the event took in 8,372 pounds plus \$77.89

In recent years collections have grown as follows:

- 2004 -14,300 lbs - \$ 300.00
- 2005 -13,342 lbs - \$ 827.00
- 2006 -15,700 lbs - \$3,080.00
- 2007 -16,112 lbs - \$1,802.74
- 2008 - Let's continue to grow!

Probably the reason many people are giving cash in addition to their truck items is because the food shelf is able to purchase food through Feeding America (formerly Second Harvest Food Bank) at a very low cost. Please refer to a later article in this issue for more information.

## Meet our President



Gary Danielson serves as the President of the Board for the Food Shelf. His duties include such things as presiding at the board meetings, assuring that the affairs of the Food Shelf are conducted in a manner that will fulfill its mission, goals and objectives, and to serve as the representative of the BCFS to the community.

Gary was born and raised in Wisconsin going on to Dana College in Blair Nebraska to earn a B.A. in Psychology. He

worked at the Illinois School for the Deaf in Jacksonville, but entered the US Marine Corps in 1961 serving as an infantry officer for 3 ½ years, including a tour in Vietnam. In 1965 Gary entered Luther Theological Seminary and served his internship at Grace Lutheran Church in Wenatchee, Washington.

In 1968 he was united in marriage to Marge Stansberry and they raised four daughters.

Following his ordination in June 1970, Pastor

Danielson served as a pastor in Lake Lillian, MN and as a part time chaplain at Willmar State Hospital. From 1975 to 1981 he served St. Paul's Lutheran in Stewart, MN and then Grace Lutheran in Luverne. In 1991 came to Bethel Lutheran Church in Bemidji where he served as senior pastor until 2002 when he accepted a call as associate pastor until retiring in 2004. He currently drives for Bemidji Transit and volunteers as the BCFS President.

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*"Millions of people are relying on our help! Do not ever think we are not involved in important work"*

## Feeding America: by Gary Danielson



Carolyn Hegland, Myrtle Smetak, and I were recently privileged to tour the "FEEDING AMERICA" North Country Food Bank in Crookston, Minnesota. Feeding America is the new name for what has been known as the Second Harvest Food Bank. It was their 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration.

In addition to the traditional cake and other goodies, tours of the facility, getting to meet with staff members, and an excellent video presentation of their history were all made available to us. It is truly an outstanding place with ample storage for the tons of food which is stored there. Tons of food which comes from large corporations, other smaller companies in Minnesota and from the Department of Agriculture can be found throughout the building.

When we realize that there are about 204 Food Banks like this across America designed to help feed hungry people, you begin to realize the important role Food Banks play. Half of all food shelf visitors are children and 20% of food shelf visitors are seniors. The other 30% fall in between those ages, victims of circumstances beyond their control. Millions of people are relying upon our help! Do not ever think we are not involved in important work.

Since we purchase a major portion of our food from the Food Bank in Crookston, it was great to meet their staff and know exactly where they are located, right downtown on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. With multiple unloading docks and heavy equipment to move pallets of food around, it serves our BC Food Shelf and others in excellent fashion.

## Share and Care: by Gary Danielson

In addition to visiting the Food Bank, we also toured the Crookston Share and Care facility. This is an operation that houses a Food Shelf, clothing Depot, Soup Kitchen, and Homeless Shelter all under one roof. It was just marvelous! It is directed by Carol Gregg and she also has a full-time social worker on her staff.

This is a facility which Bemidji has been dreaming about for 20 years. It happens to be an older Catholic elementary school which closed down and was refurbished to

include both dormitory sized and individual rooms for homeless persons.

The downstairs, or first floor, has an excellent stainless steel kitchen which opens into a large dining facility that can handle up to about 30 people at one sitting. It serves as a daily soup kitchen for those just needing a meal or two, and also is the dining area for all the homeless persons who may be sheltered there.

The second and third floors have stairs only, and house the homeless

people in various configurations, depending upon gender, family status, or whether they are single. In addition, the clothing depots were interestingly divided like a department store. Shoes could be found in one room, men's pants and shirts in another, and women's clothing in still another room.

It all just made us a little envious, but determined not to let go of our dreams. Carolyn is always reminding us of this. All in all it was an excellent day of touring and one I covet for all of you.



35% of clients report having to choose between buying food and paying rent.

## Gary's Reflections on Our Mutual Purpose

It has been a great privilege for me to be connected to the Bemidji Community Food Shelf during my 14 years of parish ministry in Bemidji and especially these past four years when I could serve as its president.

When I came to Bemidji in 1991, Father Mike Horn of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church was serving as the President of BCFS. With his encouragement, not only to me, but the entire Bemidji Ministerial Association, we all took a great interest in its ministry to hungry people.

At that time, our food shelf was raising in the

neighborhood of \$25,000 a year along with a like amount of food for distribution. Today we have grown into a \$130,000 to \$150,000 operation. Thanks to good volunteers and leadership from our food shelf coordinator, Carolyn Hegland, our paid staff of interviewers and an outstanding Executive Board, we're now evaluated as a Blue Ribbon Food Shelf for the State of Minnesota.

We are facing very perilous times and the demands upon our resources have never been greater. We're challenged every day to

do more for hurting people. I invite your heartfelt interest and support of our efforts to grow and change even more in the years ahead so that our essential mission will be accomplished. The Bemidji Community Food Shelf exists so that no person in Beltrami County will go hungry.

On behalf of those who are hungry and without food, I invite others to join me as a volunteer to keep the BCFS one of the very best in Minnesota.

*Gary Danielson*

*BCFS President*

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*"We're challenged every day to do more for hurting people"*

## Thrivent for Lutherans Helping Food Shelves

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*“Minnesota FoodShare and Thrivent for Lutherans celebrating our many blessings with thankful hearts.”*

Another holiday season is upon us and we have a great opportunity for all food shelves to raise dollars because Minnesota FoodShare has partnered with Thrivent for Lutherans. The 1,956 Lutheran congregations throughout the state have received packets of information encouraging them to do some sort of fundraiser during this upcoming Thanksgiving

season. For every three dollars that are raised in our community Thrivent will give another \$1.00. This year Thrivent for Lutherans is making \$80,000.00 available.

The details are very simple. Donations of cash to local Lutheran churches specifically designated to the Bemidji Community Food Shelf will be sent to the food shelf to keep.

The food shelf sends copies of the checks to MinnesotaFoodShare reporting the total by December 12. Thrivent will then donate \$1 back for every three raised!

Please support the fund-raising efforts of the Lutheran church of your choice and in turn help the food shelf earn extra dollars from Thrivent.

## National Hunger and homelessness Awareness

November 17-23 is National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. The Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Committee began meeting in the late 1990's with representatives from local service organizations who wanted to address these issues as they affect so many members of our community. Annual events have included a fundraising dinner/silent auction, proclamation by local government officials, educational

presentations in local schools and a quilt display in the library. HAHAW Members utilize the funds raised to provide quality direct services to those challenged by hunger and homelessness. If you are interested in joining the HAHAW committee, please call Beth at 218-751-8223. Concerned community members would be very welcome.

## Current HAHAW Members

- Bemidji Community Food Shelf (218-444-6580)
- Bi-County CAP (218-751-4631)
- Churches United (218-444-1380)
- Community Resource Connections (218-333-8260)
- Evergreen House (218-751-8223)
- Northwoods Habitat for Humanity (218-751-4649)
- Northwoods Coalition for Family Safety (218-444-1395)
- Bemidji School District (218-333-3190)

*Evergreen Community Services serves as the group's fiscal agent.*

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*“Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.”*  
 ~William James.

# HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS WEEK FUNDRAISER

Annual Chicken Dinner & Silent Auction

Tuesday, November 18

4:30 pm - 7:00 pm

United Methodist Church

9<sup>th</sup> and Beltrami

Take out available



Tickets:

Adults \$7.00 / Children \$4.00

Call 751-8223 for tickets

or at the Bemidji Community Food Shelf

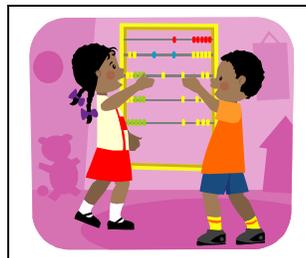
**(Tickets should be purchased ahead of time, only minimal tickets will be sold at the door.)**

Funds are supplemented by  
Beltrami Co. Thrivent

All proceeds go directly to help meet the needs of individuals in Bemidji who are hungry or homeless. Wilder Research tells us that due to inadequate resources, sheltering programs in Minnesota turn away about 1,000 homeless individuals each night. **You Can Help!**

**30% of all homeless adults are living in greater Minnesota\***

*\*Wilder Research - 2007*



*More than 140,000 Minnesotan Children are living in poverty; 62,000 of which are living in extreme poverty. ("Kids Count Data Book 2007", Children's Defense Fund MN)*



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*"Live simply, so  
that others may  
simply live"  
-Mother Theresa*



**We're on the Web!**

See us at:

[www.paulbunyan.net/bemidji](http://www.paulbunyan.net/bemidji)  
communityfoodshelf



## Venison Program Going Well

The **Bemidji Locker Plant** has already received over 25 deer to process for the Food Shelf this fall. They have met all of the new state requirements set forth by the Department of Agriculture by attending a day long training session and submitted the proper forms to qualify.

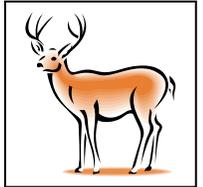
The food shelf greatly appreciates the efforts made by the locker plant during a very busy time for them.

Hunters are encouraged to donate one of their deer this fall to help those who are having problems feeding their families.

Drop off the field dressed

deer with its hide still on at the locker plant. There is no cost to the hunter and the meat is donated to the food shelf to be distributed to needy individuals or families.

Good Luck  
Hunters!



The Executive Board for the BCFS includes:

- President: Gary Danielson
- Vice-Pres: Nancy Streightiff
- Treasurer: Lori Brama
- Secretary: Deb Heineman
- Coordinator: Carolyn Hegland
- Manager: Myrtle Smetak
- Interviewers: Debra Hawthorne  
June Roxtrom

<b>DOWNTOWN HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE</b>	
<p>Watch for ads from your downtown merchants offering specials if you drop of donations for the food shelf....for example at MJB if you purchase any appliance for \$499 or more you can get a 10 year component warranty free when you bring in 3 canned items!</p>	

### ***About Our Organization..***

Many new faces are appearing at area food shelves. Children and senior citizens are among the growing number of needy being affected by high food and fuel prices, unemployment, rising medical and prescription expenses and a multitude of other factors. Minnesota Hunger Partners said one in 17 Minnesotans rely on a food shelf at least once during the course of a year. Together we can make a difference in our community. No one should suffer from hunger when we have the means to help. Please consider becoming a "Friend of the Food Shelf" Stop in and see us!

**BEMIDJI FOOD SHELF**  
PO Box 3118  
Bemidji, MN 55619

