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Location: 310 4th 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



Donation Receipt Changes in 2009

There will be some changes in how we record and report to individuals and groups on their donations. Due to the high cost of postage we will only send out one receipt per year. We will keep a running account of your donations throughout 2009 and send you a total for tax purposes at the end of the year. In the past we tried to acknowledge your generous gifts with a thank you more often during a fiscal year, but we have realized you would certainly understand that the money



spent on postage would be better spent on purchasing food to give to our increasing client list. We appreciate those of you who give on a regular basis

throughout the whole year to help us keep our doors open, but it is costing too much to spend money on stamps. If you drop off your donations at the food shelf in person, you will receive a receipt at that time, but those sent in the mail will be recorded and then acknowledged at the end of the year. We do depend on the monies we receive in the mail and hope this will not discourage any of our donors.

Thanks for a Successful 2008

In 2008 there was indeed a huge concern about the increase in need for services at the food shelf. However, to our relief, the residents of Beltrami County in true holiday enthusiasm responded to our pleas for help. Donations poured in from various organizations, clubs, churches, businesses and individuals. We are fortunate to live and work in a community where neighbors take care of each other in such a generous way. There

was seldom a time when we had to fill a box with less than the usual choices of food. Whenever we started to run short of any particular item it seemed as though it would show up on our doorstep or a cash donation would arrive in time to order the needed item. This year there were such creative ideas on raising funds or collecting foods that sparked some interesting food drives. We want to thank those who took time to organize those events at such a

busy time of the year! We do appreciate those folks who take the initiative to plan such an event, see it through to completion and deliver the much needed items that they have collected directly to the food shelf. You can't imagine how helpful that is to those of us who are busy just keeping the day to day operations going.

Thank you all for your help!
More data about yearly totals can be found on page 3.

Goodbye President Gary



"We are determined not to let go of our dreams"

In February Rev. Gary Danielson will step down and Rev. H. William Beyer will take office as the new BCFS President. Gary has been an inspiration to those of us involved in the food shelf since he became the head of the executive board in 2006. He was an excellent representative of the BCFS to our community and was passionate about seeing that the mission of the food shelf was fulfilled. Gary shared a dream with many of us that we will some day be able to provide services to our clients more than just four times a year. In order to

see that happen he worked hard to promote fundraising and food drives throughout the entire year. He gave encouragement to the board to constantly think of ways to keep the image of BCFS positive and in the public eye. Because of his efforts many groups and organizations held their own events and donated generously to our cause. After visiting other facilities in the area he stated that we are envious of their programs but, "We are determined not to let go of our dreams." One such dream is to have a place where the poor can

receive multiple services in one building rather than traveling all over the community to get the help they need. We will miss Gary's presence at the food shelf but know that he will continue to support us after his term of office is completed. It has truly been an honor to work with Gary, and we will miss his great smile and cheerful demeanor at BCFS. We wish him well knowing he will continue to stop in and check on us occasionally and will always support our efforts to feed the hungry in our community.

Thanks Gary!

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



Looking back in 2008

We were very concerned this year that we would not be able to sustain services to the increasing number of clients who needed our help due to the state of the economy. We certainly were "those of little faith." Our supporters came through with flying colors and the donations went up in proportion to the need. Our fall food drives and fundraisers exceeding our hopes and new events took place to help keep the shelves full. Truly this is a wonderful community in which to live and work. Neighbors helping neighbors is the Bemidji way! Here are some of the statistics that may be of interest to you. Hunger is a reality, but together we do make a difference.

2008 Statistics

Total Families Served	5,562
Ages 0-17	10,103
Ages 18-65	9,156
Age over 65	384
Total Individuals	19,643

(This is an increase over 2007 of about 1,300 individuals. These statistics are a cumulative total. Numbers indicate families that made more than one visit. However nearly half of our clients use only one or two visits per year when they encounter some type of an emergency.)

Food Distributed 331,434 pounds
 (This is an increase over 2007 of about 30,000 pounds)



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

March Food Share Month

Before the next newsletter is printed March will be upon us. This is a reminder that during the month of March our Food Shelf works with Minnesota Food Share to collect additional funds. We not only keep all of the donations of money and food right here in Bemidji, but the amount we receive also determines the grants we will receive during the next year from Minnesota Food Share. The more money and food we collect during the month of March, the more we will receive next year in grants. This "incentive allocation" gives us free monies that we can spend at the North Country Food

Bank where our dollars go much farther than we can spend in local stores. North Country Food Bank purchases its food from large corporations or has it donated and passes the savings on to food shelves in their region. Some of the products are TEFAP or The Emergency Food Assistance Programs USDA Commodities which we get for .04 cents per pound.

Any support of food or money during the month of March is greatly appreciated. You could plan your own food drives, get together with friends and neighbors to collect cash or food, attend one

of our fundraisers mentioned in this newsletter or drop off donations right at the Food Shelf.....310 4th St. (Right across from city hall) We are open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. All donations meant for March Food Share month must come to us between March 1st and March 31st to qualify.

For ideas on how you can help drop us an e-mail at bcfs@paulbunyan.net or write to us at PO Box 3118. This is a great time to invite one of us to speak at your club, church or organization.

Carolyn Hegland

Before March Food Share month is a great time to invite one of us to speak at your club, church or organization!

“On the third Monday of each month we are open until 7 PM for your convenience.”

Extended Hours

The Bemidji Food Shelf is now open until 7:00 PM on the third Monday of each month for your convenience. Many folks who donate food or who may need our services cannot get to the food shelf by our regular closing time at 3:30 because of their work schedules. Last year we decided to add some additional

volunteers to provide one day a month when we can help clients later in the day. The change seems to be working to we will continue throughout 2009. These are the dates we can serve you until seven for the next few months:



Monday, January 19
 Monday, February 16
 Monday, March 16
 Monday, April 20
 Monday, May 18
 Monday, June 15

“Souper” Bowl Sunday

We are raising funds in many of our local churches on “Souper Bowl” Sunday by having the youth groups at the doors with soup kettles to collect donations. As we go home to enjoy all of our snacks and treats while we watch the real Super Bowl game, February 1, we need to think of those who find it difficult to even provide

regular meals in their homes. If you would like to help with this project you could check out the Souper Bowl of Caring on the web to see how your church can participate, or you could simply mail your donation to BCFS, PO Box 3118, Bemidji.

Herbergers Community Day Sale

The food shelf will be selling \$5.00 coupon books for the Community Day Sale at Herbergers. The booklet includes a \$10.00 off coupon and several other % off coupons to be used on Community Day. The food shelf will sell these booklets until March, and use the proceeds earned from selling the coupons booklets for the

Minnestoa Food Share campaign. You can pick those up at the food shelf or from one of our board members.



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

A Message from Our New President

I was born in Moline, Illinois and moved to Minnesota in 1959. On August 17, 1963, I married Almina Lomness from Fosston, MN. We met at the Lutheran Bible Institute in Minneapolis. We have two sons, Tim of Bemidji who has two sons, Lake and Parker. Our other son Paul and his wife Jennifer have one daughter, McKenna who lives in Fargo, ND. We have the potential of three more grandchildren, Tailer, Hailey and Dalton, children of our oldest son's finance, Jeanna.

After finishing studies at the University of Minnesota, I graduated from Luther-Northwestern Theological Seminary in St. Paul, in 1970, From then until 2006 I served in four locations: at Augustana Lutheran Church, downtown Minneapolis; Bernadotte Lutheran Church, Lafayette, MN; First Lutheran, International Falls, MN and Bethany of Loman. Finally we ended up with the Gary-Rindal Lutheran Parish in the Fertile, Gary Minnesota area.

Besides the regular work in the congregation, I have served on the Hunger and Justice Committee, the Church and Society Board and the Multicultural Committees of the NE and NW Minnesota Synods of the ELCA. I have served on the Minnesota Council of Churches for several years, and was a member of the Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministries for over 18 years, sponsoring the Native American Elder's Spirituality Conferences over those years. I worked for five years on the Anti-Racism Workshops for the Minnesota Council of Churches. My focus has always been upon Jesus summary of the law, from Matt. 22:37 ff "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

I have been retired since August 31, 2006. We moved to Bemidji because that is where our older son and his family live, and we like the lakes and north woods. I feel honored to be able to work with the Bemidji Community Food Shelf Board and will lean on their experience and acknowledged excellence.

Together in God's Service,
Rev. H. William Beyer



By: Rev. H. William Beyer

*"You shall love your
neighbor as yourself"*

• Applebee's Pancake Breakfast



310 Fourth Street
PO Box 3118
Bemidji, MN 56619

PHONE:
(218-444-6580)

E-MAIL:
bcfs@paulbunyan.net

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

We're on the Web!

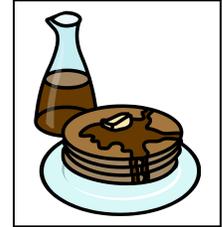
See us at:

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

We will be having another fundraiser at Applebee's this year. On Saturday and Sunday February 28th and March 1st from 8 until 10 AM you may enjoy a pancake breakfast for only a \$5.00 donation to the Bemidji Community Food Shelf. We are allowed to keep the funds we raise which we will use towards

our Minnesota Food Share Campaign. We want to thank the staff at the restaurant for all they do to help us with this project. The food and their time are donated for such fundraisers. Tickets can be purchased in advance at the food shelf or at the door. If you can not attend consider buying

a ticket that we can give to someone who may need a good meal. You could help someone in need and the food shelf at the same time by simply purchasing extra tickets.



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

Need a speaker?

If your organization or club needs a speaker and would like to hear more about the BCFS we would be glad to attend a meeting and share information with your group.

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