



Special Interest Articles:

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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



Postal Food Drive

The National Association of Letter Carriers held their 17th "Stamp out Hunger" food drive on May 9th. It is the largest one-day food drive in the nation and is held annually on the 2nd Saturday in May. On that day, letter carriers collected non-perishable donations from homes as they delivered mail along their postal routes. Locally Mitch Dokken coordinates the drive with support from our local mail carriers, the United Way office and the Bemidji Community Food Shelf. Over 125



million postcards, sponsored by the Campbell Soup Company and the US Postal Service's Priority Mail were delivered to postal customers to remind them of the drive ahead of time. Other co-sponsors of the drive are Feeding America, formally known as America's Second Harvest and the AFL-CIO. Our

Bemidji Carriers were very successful this year bringing in over 5,522 pounds of food generously put in mailboxes by their postal patrons. This food is greatly appreciated by the BCFS as it will help keep the shelves stocked during the summer months. Our next major food drive in the Bemidji areas is held in November.



Items we can always use!

We are often asked by donors what it is that we need the most. The following items are ones that we often run short on and can always use. Watch for them to go on sale.

Tuna, Saltine Crackers, Rice, Hot and Cold Cereal and Peanut Butter.

Food Shelf Farm



**Do you like gardening?
Exercise? Outdoors?
Being of service?
Fun? Work? Fresh Air?
Dirt? Growing things?**

Thanks to some willing volunteers the ground is ready, the potatoes, rhubarb and onions are planted and we expect to finish with the rest of the vegetables during the first week in June. Because of a grant from the Neilson Foundation we were able to rent a tractor to prepare about two acres for planting this year. It is an exciting project but we will continually need groups and individuals to volunteer to help with the 2009 “Get Growing” Garden Project all summer. This fall everything grown will be donated to our local food shelf. You may work as often or as little as you like. Youth under 18 should be part of an organized club or group with adult supervision. Everyone should be in good physical condition and able to enjoy garden work. The garden is 4-5 miles out of town on Cardinal Road, and participants would need to secure their own transportation. To sign up your group or as an individual, to be called upon as needed, please contact Marge Danielson at 759-9514 or send an e-mail to gdaniels@paulbunyan.net.

Scouts Help in More Ways than One!

The BCFS has been fortunate for two years to have the help of Troop 25 to sort and put away all of the “Stamp Out Hunger” donations collected by the Letter Carriers. They willingly gave up their Saturday to come in at 3 pm and work until all of the food was sorted, shelved or stored appropriately. Last year they were determined to “stay till the job was done.” We didn’t leave until close to 9 pm that night! This year the BCFS was a bit more



organized and had some additional help recruited so we were able to finish in about three hours! However, just helping with the food drive wasn’t enough for these ambitious young men and their able leaders. They had been to the Food Shelf Farm earlier that day and planted about an acre of potatoes and onions! Members of the troop who worked that day are Jay Burba-Venne, Nick Nyberg, Mat Stanton and brother Gary, Tanner Robare, Chris Shockley, Mark Lacey, Scoutmaster Ken Lacey, Ass’t Scoutmaster Robby Robinson and Parent Committee Chair, Colleen Mayer.

Congratulations on a job well done!

Yet Another way to Make Donating Easier for You!

You can now donate on-line and print your receipt immediately! Just go to the BCFS web-site and click on the donate button! Or if you have friends or relatives that live out of town, but have an interest in donating to a worthy cause, they can do so just by turning on their computer! Donations can be made in memory or honor of someone too!

Thanks to a wonderful volunteer we have a website that provides a great deal of information about the food shelf. There is an events page to keep you up to date on activities, the newsletter is attached, and there are links to several sites with data on hunger issues. Right now we have an interesting video about the Food Shelf Farm for you to view!

Just do a Goggle search for the Bemidji Community Food Shelf and then bookmark the site so that you and return periodically to see changes!

See us at:

<http://www.paulbunyan.net/bemidjicommunityfoodshelf/>



Another Way to Help!

Do you have items left over after a garage sale that you don't know what to do with?

Value Smart, a Bemidji Consignment store will accept items that you no longer want and the proceeds from those sales will go to the BCFS.

The store accepts all kinds of used items including dishes, furniture, toys, hardware, tools, and clothing. Please be sure it is clean and in good condition. You are allowed to drop off two bags or boxes from Wed – Sat from 9-4. Mark the boxes clearly with **#3250** and let them know it is for the food shelf.

Value Smart is located south of Bemidji on Highway 71, at 144 Peaceful Meadow Lane SE near Calvary Lutheran. Call them with any questions at 755-9200.

You can ask for a donation receipt for tax purposes. The food shelf will collect funds from Value Smart at the end of March to use for an increase in our incentive grant.

We want to thank Julie and Ray Ricci for providing this service for BCFS.

*Spread the word to others!
Many people don't realize that they can donate in this manner.*



Clean out your closets and help the food shelf at the same time!

North Country Food Bank, Inc.

Contact:

Susie Novak
 North Country Food Bank, Inc.
 424 North Broadway
 Crookston, MN 56716
 (218) 281-7356
 ncfbanksn@rrv.net

North Country Food Bank, Inc. is focused on fighting hunger throughout northwest Minnesota. From modest beginnings in 1983, North Country has grown to reach thousands of people in big cities, small towns and rural areas. North Country's reach in northwest Minnesota covers 21 counties, excluding Clay County, which is served by Great Plains Food Bank. North Country's service area extends from the Canadian border south to Browns Valley, from the North Dakota border east to Bemidji and Osakis, and everywhere in between. North Country has responded wherever the need to alleviate hunger exists.

"The demand for services is increasing rapidly, especially in these economic times," said North Country's executive director, Susie Novak. As a result of the increased demand, North Country aims to extend the reach of its services through existing and new, creative methods," Novak said. "We need to be able to provide food for the towns and cities in our service area, while still being able to reach even the smallest communities in the most rural areas. We can do this through our existing channels and by creating new methods and programs. This includes our mobile food pantries and BackPack programs," she said.

North Country relies on many successful partnerships with food wholesalers, retailers and others to supply food for distribution in its services area. Some of its partners are Feeding America (f/k/a America's Second Harvest) and United Way. Many people often have the wrong assumption about a food bank. It is not actually a place where people stop and load up with boxes of food. Instead, North Country is more like a wholesaler of donated surplus food. This surplus food would be wasted if not for North Country's services. Food and support come from major food manufacturers and distributors, churches, civic groups, businesses and private individuals. The operation started small 26 years ago, and today distributes food through approximately 155 charitable feeding programs.

Food is a targeted need. For example, North Country's primary target population is low-income, working poor, single parent families and people experiencing homelessness. Many of these people seek assistance from local food shelves, emergency shelters and soup kitchens. Other recipients include low-income individuals in need of supplemental assistance, group homes, senior programs, youth programs, addiction treatment centers and domestic abuse programs.

"Many people in northwest Minnesota do not openly talk about the issue of hunger. And if they are hungry, they tend to try to suffer through it – often believing other people need help more than them. But, North Country is working hard to carry the message that people in our very own communities need help. It is North Country's belief that nobody should have to go to bed hungry here in northwest Minnesota," Novak said.

Where there is a need for food assistance, North Country Food Bank has been there in the past, and will be there in the future. North Country's dedicated staff has worked hard to develop systems and networks designed to do one thing - get food out to where it is needed. In the 25 years the Food Bank has been collecting and distributing food, it has gone from distributing 250,000 pounds of food in 1983 to distributing more than 2 million pounds per year in 2008. North Country's food distribution so far in 2009 is on record breaking pace.

The need is clear. "Our "hunger-fighting" partners are depending upon us to help provide food to those in need. We are committed to making sure that every hungry neighbor has plenty to eat each and every day. But, we cannot do it without the support of the public and the communities we serve," Novak said.

"Over the years North Country has grown and changed, and will continue to do so to meet needs in the future. Our most exciting time is still ahead," Novak said. Hunger is an on-going problem that affects the well-being of our entire community, both today and in the future. To end it for good takes a collective community effort. And, there couldn't be a more meaningful time than now to take a stand against hunger. Please join North Country in the fight.

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FEEDING
AMERICA

Formerly Named
America's Second Harvest

*"Nobody should have
to go to bed hungry
here in northwest*

Minnesota"

S. Novak

Meet our Secretary: Deb Heineman

Deb Heineman is the Bemidji Community Food Shelf Executive Board secretary. She is married and has two adult children and one “almost” daughter-in-law. (The wedding is planned in October.)

Deb was born and raised in the Twin Cities. She was an honors student and graduated with honors from Henry Sibley High School in 1972. She was the recipient of the Elmer L. Anderson Foundation 4-year scholarship and received her Bachelor’s Degree from the University of Minnesota in 1976. She married her husband later that year. In 1979 she was awarded her Certified Paralegal/Certified Legal Assistant designation by the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA) and she and her husband moved to Bemidji. She is a nationally certified paralegal and litigation specialist and has worked for the same law firm in Bemidji for over 30 years. She specializes in litigation, probate, real estate and corporate law.



Deb has been affiliated with the Bemidji Community Food Shelf since 1984 when she incorporated the Food Shelf and helped obtain its tax exempt status. She was so impressed by the organization that she began working as a volunteer and as a contact person. In 1986 she became the Executive Board secretary and has served in that capacity ever since.

Deb’s commitment to the Food Shelf remains strong. When she was a child, her father’s construction business was failing during a recession and she remembers that there were no social programs in place to help people in their situation. There was no where to turn. She remembers vividly the feeling of hunger. Deb is committed to providing emergency food to anyone needing help in the Beltrami County area and she has acted on that commitment from the humble beginnings of the Food Shelf at St. Philips in 1982 to the present.

Deb attends Sacred Heart Church Wilton, is on the Parish Outreach committee and is the church bookkeeper. She sings in the choir, has taught religious education and confirmation and currently aids in the transportation of elderly members to church services on Sunday.

Deb owns a craft business, in addition to her other activities, and loves spending time at home with her family and her pets. She enjoys traveling, fishing, camping and reading, but she is really just biding her time until one of her children provides a grandchild to spoil. . . .

Donation Receipt Changes in 2009



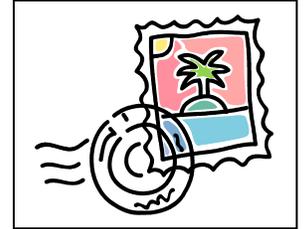
310 Fourth Street
PO Box 3118
Bemidji, MN 56619

PHONE:
(218-444-6580)

E-MAIL:
bcfs@paulbunyan.net

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 food for our clients.



The Executive Board for the BCFS includes:

- President: Bill Beyer
- 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.

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

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".

Yes, I would like to become a "Friend of the Food Shelf" and receive regular mailings or e-mails to keep me informed.

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail address _____

Please mail this form to the following mailing address or drop it off at the food shelf.

BEMIDJI FOOD SHELF
PO Box 3118
Bemidji, MN 56619