

SPRING 2015

# BREAD CONNECTION

A Not Quite Quarterly publication of Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

## Your help continues to make a difference in the lives of seniors at risk of hunger

In 1979 the Food Bank (then called the Community Food Coalition) began its first direct distribution program. Brown Bag, now the Senior Food Program, provided 50 low-income seniors in Antioch with five or six food staples like bread and canned goods. Today the Senior Food Program serves over 8,000 seniors a month at 35 sites in Contra Costa and Solano counties with food staples and fresh produce. The program has long-served as a place for seniors to socialize and stay active while preparing bags of food. In fact, many of the volunteers are often recipients.

Seniors often find themselves having to choose between paying for necessities such as medication and food. In fact, 1 in 7 of all people 65 and over are living in poverty. That's 6.4 million of our parents and grandparents struggling daily to buy food, pay rent and afford the medical care they need. Their limited income, almost solely from Social Security, is not enough to make ends meet. For seniors like Robert (age 66) "the price of medicine keeps going up, but my check stays the same".

No senior should have to choose between food and essentials like medicine. With your help, we are able to continue to give seniors nutritionally balanced bags of food so they may not have to make those tough decisions. To learn more about how you can help end senior hunger, visit [www.foodbankccs.org/seniorhunger](http://www.foodbankccs.org/seniorhunger).



Brown Bag Program volunteers helped pioneer the Food Bank's first direct distribution making it a program largely for seniors by seniors.



### inside

- Timeline - Follow our 40-year journey
- Results from your holiday help
- Are you up to the \$40 for 40 challenge?



## Follow our 40-year journey



In 1975 the Food Bank started with two individuals trying to provide more food to emergency food pantries. Forty years later, through direct distribution and partner agencies like emergency food pantries, soup kitchens and other nonprofits,

the Food Bank provides over 16 million meals, the most food we have ever distributed.

As we have transitioned through the years from being a source of one-time emergency food to more of an ongoing safety-net service, our focus has transitioned from just providing calories to providing nutrition. In fact, every month the Food Bank gives out one million pounds of fresh produce.

With community support, the Food Bank has become an essential part of the support system for people in need. Join us as we move forward into the future of food assistance and making a difference in the lives of our neighbors in need.

Larry Sly  
Executive Director

## Your support of the Food Bank helps seniors, like Grace



Grace Robinson from Vacaville was married, owned a house, and worked until she retired at 62. She and her husband had always been able to meet their financial needs. Everything changed for Grace when her husband passed away in 1999. Now, at 73, her only income is her Social Security, which leaves her about \$400 after utilities, mortgage and homeowners association fees.

It was on a trip to a Food Bank partner agency, The Vacaville Storehouse, a year and a half ago when Grace discovered she could get groceries to help stretch her food budget. She now divides bread and meat she receives into portions to freeze. "I could never do as well as I do with proteins without being blessed by the Vacaville Storehouse."

## 40 years of nourishing our community

1975

Community Food Coalition Founded

Senior Food Program Begins

1979



1982

Food Coalition Joins Second Harvest Network (Now Feeding America)

Community Food Coalition changes name to Food Bank of Contra Costa

1991 1992 1993

Food For Children Program Begins

Food Bank acquires...



## You did it! By helping us exceed our holiday meal goal, we can make a difference all year

We want to thank everyone for the incredible community support during the holidays, helping us exceed our six million meal goal. You contributed to the grand total of over 600,000 pounds of food and enough funds to provide over 8,500,000 meals throughout the year! So many groups contributed, including shoppers at local grocery stores, banks, credit unions, Scouts, hot cocoa stands, Realtors, schools and county employees. Thank you all for supporting our mission to end hunger. Find holiday photos on Facebook - [www.fb.com/foodbankccs](http://www.fb.com/foodbankccs).



Families like Angel and Lisa have already benefited from your support. Lisa is on dialysis and needed help with groceries. They attended a distribution at a Food Bank partner agency where they received a turkey and groceries for the holidays. Thanks to you, Angel spent the holidays with family and "ate lots of food!"

## Senior Food Program expands reach

Since 2010, the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano has seen a 90% increase in the number of people we serve through the Senior Food Program. One of the ways we have been able to reach more seniors is by providing food at more low-income senior housing complexes.

Many low-income seniors who reside in senior housing are unable to travel to food distribution sites due to health issues and a lack of transportation. If a senior housing complex can provide someone to pick up the food at a Food Bank warehouse in either Concord or Fairfield, Food Bank staff will help them load their vehicle. The food is then taken back to the complex and volunteers, usually a few of the residents along with their service coordinator, bag it in the common room. This provides an opportunity for the seniors to enjoy some social time while they are working and doing something useful for their fellow residents. Those who are able can come down and get their groceries when the bags are ready, and for those who aren't, their bags are delivered to them. We are happy to provide this service twice a month to the many low-income seniors who are unable to travel to an open distribution site. Learn how you can help seniors at [www.foodbankccs.org/seniorhunger](http://www.foodbankccs.org/seniorhunger).

Bank of Contra Costa  
es Food Bank of Solano

Farm 2 Kids Program Begins

95

2001

2007

2012

2015

Food Bank Begins Food  
Stamp Outreach

Community Produce  
Program Begins

For more timeline highlights visit [www.foodbankccs.org/40th](http://www.foodbankccs.org/40th)



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## You're Invited



**March 1, 2015**

Join us at the new Levi's Stadium for this star-studded event. Mingle with some of our country's top athletes including Kristi Yamaguchi, Brett Hedican, Eric Wright and Keena Turner as well as other NFL, NHL, MLB and Olympic Champions. Entertainment provided by Grammy® winner Tony Lindsay of Santana, and emceed by local news personalities, Vern Glenn and Thuy Vu. Get your tickets before they sell out at [www.tasteofchampions.eventbrite.com](http://www.tasteofchampions.eventbrite.com).

## Save the Date

May 16, 2015

## Nourish

Annual Gala Benefitting  
Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

*Honoring 40 years of serving our community*



*Our 40th year is  
presented by Chevron*



## Upcoming Events

Find more events and details at  
[www.foodbankccs.org/events](http://www.foodbankccs.org/events)

**APRIL 20**

FORE! Break on Hunger Golf Tournament, Clayton

**MAY 9**

Letter Carriers Food Drive

**3RD SATURDAYS**

Family Food Sorting, Fairfield

## Are you up to the \$40 for 40 Challenge?

Your donation in honor of our 40th anniversary will be matched dollar-for-dollar by a generous supporter providing ~~80~~ **160** meals for every **\$40** you give!

[www.foodbankccs.org/40th](http://www.foodbankccs.org/40th)