

FALL 2010

BREAD CONNECTION

A Not Quite Quarterly publication of the Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano

Making A Holiday Splash

At the Food Bank, we begin testing the holiday water in the summer. We stick our toes in and raise funds to support Holiday Baskets at the Admiral's Garden event. Right after the 4th of July we begin to hear from our community partners about their holiday hopes and plans. We meet with corporations that want to organize a holiday food drive or boxing project to build staff morale. In addition, individuals, businesses, organizations and schools are signing up to do food drives. We make a shopping list that includes the food we hope to distribute and search for brokers and vendors who can provide 625 cases each of tuna, green beans and fruit cocktail. We review information from the previous year and determine where we need to make changes and adjustments. By August, knee deep in the water, we have sent out Holiday Assistance Plans to all of the programs that participated the previous year, asking them to complete forms for 2010 if they plan on distributing holiday baskets or cooking holiday meals for the community.

In September and October, we are splashing ourselves with drops of holiday information, preparing ourselves for

the big plunge in November and December. We assemble referral sheets that tell the community we serve where they can go to get food. We answer many questions from donors, program providers and clients about what they can do to participate. We counsel food pantries and other agencies about what it takes to serve fifteen, fifty or three hundred families during December.

By November and December, the Food Bank and community groups are swimming in the holiday pool, along with turkeys, gift cards, food drives, canned food, fresh produce and holiday good will. Volunteer groups are sorting food drive items and boxing them by category. Organizations have firmed up where they will be assembling and distributing the food. The warehouse is preparing orders for pick up at the Food Bank or other locations. Food providers are looking for donors to help them supplement what they get from the Food Bank. Every day brings new partners into the water.

It takes two counties of supporters to help us provide holiday cheer to more than 30,000 households. We could not do it without your support. Thank you.



Volunteers getting ready to distribute food to clients.



James from Food Bank member agency Loaves and Fishes preparing a meal in their central kitchen.

We "Survived"

An Afternoon in the Admiral's Garden 2010!

GUESTS arrived Sunday, June 27th to experience a tropical treat at the Food Bank's 10th annual summer fundraising event! Steel drum island music played as guests in tropical attire strolled through the mansions and gardens, visited Tasting Tents, bid on fabulous auction items, played games and dined on a delicious gourmet lunch outdoors.

Decorations included parrots perched on tree branches and other colorful island touches. The Singing Blue Stars of the USS Hornet took everyone back to the World War II era with their renditions of the "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" and other memorable songs.

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The need for Food Bank services is growing dramatically because of the current economic conditions.

Over the past year, we have had to add people to our staff and obtain new trucks so we could distribute millions of pounds of additional food each year. We have grown so much we had to “borrow” additional warehouse space last holiday season. Since we recognized that as the year went on we would be stretching the limits of our current warehouse, we decided it was time to use the generous financial support the community is

providing to lease a larger building in Fairfield.

We signed the lease on an 18,000 square foot building about a mile from our current Fairfield location and will be operating from the new building effective mid-September. This building gives us an additional 13,000 square feet of floor storage space, and will have a higher ceiling as well, meaning we gain additional vertical space. We will also have additional office space for staff members and volunteers, as well as a meeting room for us and our community partners.

We are lucky we have the financial support from the community to make this possible. While we are pleased at the progress we have made in distributing more food to people who need help in our community, we recognize that the problem is not going to get better soon. More people continue to come to our Food Assistance Program distribution sites, and we know we are going to increase the number of people we are serving through our Senior Food Program and our Farm 2 Kids program. We are taking important steps to meet these goals by expanding our food storage capacity. I would like to invite you to join us for an open house celebration at 2339 Courage Drive, Suite F in Fairfield on September 25 from 2 pm to 4 pm and see how the community makes a difference. For more information on our open house and other similar events, please visit www.foodbankccs.org.

Executive Director
Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

Volunteer Opportunities

VOLUNTEERS are essential to Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano operations, supporting the organization in numerous ways. With the help of hundreds of volunteers who generously donate their time and talents, the Food Bank is able to provide food to over 132,000 hungry people every month.

Join our online community of caring citizens interested in receiving periodic email communications from us and stay informed on how you can positively impact your neighbors in need. Visit www.foodbankccs.org and enter your email address into the “Join Us” section, then select the areas of interest for which you would like to receive occasional e-news and updates from us.



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COLOR PRINTING SPONSOR



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The Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano has been serving the community for 35 years. We provide food to more than 132,000 hungry people in need every month through direct service programs and a network of 180 charitable agencies, and we distributed 12.6 million pounds last year!

The Food Bank works to reduce food waste, feed hungry people, and raise public awareness of issues related to food and hunger. The work could not get done without the support of many generous financial donors or the help of the thousands of volunteers who donate their time to coordinate food drives, sort and pack the food, and help distribute it to their hungry neighbors.



Contra Costa Location

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Solano Location

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www.foodbankccs.org



Summer Lunch

WHILE providing lunch to kids over the summer may sound like a simple solution to the problem of rising hunger during the summer months, it actually takes a complex, collective effort to make it happen. Food, paid for by the United States Department of Agriculture, is prepared by a sponsor, who is most often the local School District. The lunches are handed out at various locations such as schools, community centers, churches, and parks on weekdays for 6-8 weeks during the summer. Local city governments, church members, school district staff, and volunteers provide the labor and organization necessary to make the program a success. Any individual under the age of 18 can get lunch at various sites throughout their community. However, the Summer Lunch Program continues to be underutilized. In Contra Costa 32% of eligible children participate in the Summer Lunch Program and only 19% in Solano. For this reason the Food Bank has taken on the responsibility of publicizing the program to our clients and the community. By passing out flyers, stickers,



Children enjoy a physical activity while learning about fruits and vegetables – some they had never heard of before!

and listing the locations on our website, we have been able to reach a significant number of people.

We also decided to hold two “Summer Lunch Celebrations” to raise awareness of the program itself. Along with the UC Cooperative Extension, the City of Fairfield, the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District Food Services, Antioch Unified School District Food Services and Delta Oaks Presbyterian Church, the Food Bank provided activities, games, and giveaways to promote healthy eating and active living in low-income neighborhoods. In Fairfield, children munched on peanut butter and jelly sandwiches,

celery sticks, raisins and animal crackers while they played fruit and vegetable bingo. Each child also took home a bag of crimson pears to share with their family. In Antioch, children played an active fruit and vegetable trivia game with a beach ball on the grass and snacked on fresh plums and apricots afterwards.

The legislation that funds this program and many other child nutrition programs is being reviewed by congress and expires at the end of September. For more information about engaging in advocacy efforts during Child Nutrition Reauthorization, please visit www.foodbankccs.org and click on the advocacy button.

Food Fight 2010!

IN 2004, Contra Costa County employees challenged Solano County employees to a competition to raise funds for the Food Bank. Employees of both counties felt this was an opportunity to show residents that they do indeed care about their community. But this is not your traditional Food Fight; instead of food, employees throw financial donations — seriously and copiously, to the tune of

over \$130,000 raised in the 2009 Food Fight. Since the inception of the Food Fight, county employees have raised over \$631,000 for the Food Bank!

How do they accomplish this, you ask? Mainly by using the Food Bank *Buy A Bag* Program (see page 8 for details). Employees solicit donations for these bags and stockings, but they also hold bake sales, serve lunches and create

numerous clever ways to raise dollars for the competition. Additionally, KGO Radio’s Gene Burns helps bring in substantial online donations from his listeners.

In exchange, county employees vie for bragging rights to the “Big Apple” trophy. The county raising the highest dollar amount per employee displays the Big Apple for the following year. Since the competition began, Contra Costa County has won three times, and Solano County has won three times. Although Solano County won in 2009, Contra Costa County vows to take the Big Apple back in 2010!

Support the county of your choice by donating to the Holiday Food Fight 2010. Let employees and Food Bank recipients of both counties know that you too care about your community!



2009 winners of the Big Apple trophy, Solano County.



Harvesters Circle

THE Food Bank recently celebrated its 35th anniversary with a special group of supporters – Harvesters Circle members. The Harvesters Circle is a group of generous individuals who provide financial support to the Food Bank totaling \$1,000 or more annually. Members toured the warehouse, met the Food Bank Board of Directors and listened to a presentation by Pastor Mike Brown of the First Baptist Church of Vallejo, one of our member agencies. For more information about the group, contact Marilu Boucher at mboucher@foodbankccs.org or (925) 676-7543.

Contra Costa County Bar Association Rallies to Raise Funds for the Food Bank

THIS year 43 local law offices with more than 800 employees donated over \$72,000 and collected 2,800 pounds of food during the 18th annual Food From The Bar fundraiser which took place in May. Since its inception participants have donated \$820,000 and 53 tons of food, making the Contra Costa County Bar Association one

of the Food Bank's largest supporters.

Congratulations to the 2010 winners: Lyon & Quintero (West County), Law Offices of Suzanne Boucher (1-10 employees), Bramson, Plutzik, Mahler & Birkhaeuser (11-20 employees), Morgan Miller Blair (21-50 employees), and Archer Norris (51+ employees)!

Letter Carrier Food Drive

ON Saturday May 8th, people across the country left bags of food by their mailboxes for their local letter carriers to take back to the local food banks. This year, the members of the National Association of Letter Carriers collected 77.1 million pounds of food to bring the 18 year cumulative total to over 1 billion pounds of food. This is the nation's largest one-day effort to combat hunger! Our local letter carriers collected over

210,000 pounds of food in our two counties. A HUGE thanks to everyone who donated food and a HUGE thanks to our amazing and fantastic letter carriers who worked extra hard that day picking up some very heavy bags of food to make sure our community does not go hungry. Next time you see your letter carrier, tell them THANK YOU for helping STAMP OUT HUNGER!

DONOR STORY

YOU!

IN every newsletter we provide a story about a person, group or business that is special to the Food Bank. At this time of year, the perfect person to recognize is YOU! We could not do what we do without your support. You might be the person who sends us money so we can buy peanut butter when we are running low or so we can buy fresh produce. Thank YOU! You are not only helping feed those in need, you are also providing meaningful volunteer opportunities as we need volunteers to help box the fresh produce for distributions and we need volunteers to help hand out bags of food at the distribution sites.

You might be the person who regularly places a bag of food in one of our barrels at over 75 locations throughout both counties. It may be the Walgreens in

El Cerrito or San Pablo, the CVS Store in Lafayette, the Travis Credit Union branches from Concord to Brentwood and Vallejo to Dixon, Whole Foods Market in Walnut Creek or San Ramon, the YMCA in Pleasant Hill, Starbucks in Moraga, Panama Red Coffee Company at the Ferry Terminal in Vallejo, Kaiser Hospital in Martinez or Antioch, Fairfield Smog Center, the post offices in Clayton and Moraga or the many other churches and businesses who are so kind to allow our barrel to take up a little space so we can help feed the hungry in our community. Thank YOU! When

our truck driver picks up the barrel with your bag of food inside, he brings the barrel back to the Fairfield or Concord warehouse where the food is weighed so that we can keep accurate records of donations but more importantly, so we can write thank you letters to the donation site to let them know how much we value their year-round partnership.

Hunger is a community cause. No one can address it alone but together we can make a difference in many people's lives. A big round of applause and a pat on the back to YOU, our special donors!

Hunger is a community cause. No one can address it alone but together we can make a difference...

Every Village Needs a Pantry

SOME food pantries have been around longer than the Food Bank. Richmond Emergency Food Pantry is one of the founding pantries that pre-existed the Food Bank in Contra Costa County. Started by an ambitious group of volunteers in 1971, the pantry continues to be 100% volunteer operated 39 years later. Way back when, the volunteers were stay-at-home moms, many of them teachers or social workers, who provided three day food baskets to people who were waiting for their food stamp applications to be approved. Fast forward to 2010, and the volunteers include retirees from all walks of life, community-minded individuals, low-income folk who appreciate the

service and want to give back, people who have employers that allow them to volunteer as part of their jobs, and other people who are inspired by the work they see happening at the pantry: “the Food Pantry,” they say, “is their community.”

The Richmond Emergency Food Pantry is open on Tuesdays and Fridays from 11 am-3 pm. They currently serve over 1,100 families a month, almost twice as many families as they were helping in 2007. People now self refer and can come once a month to pick up USDA commodities, staple food items and produce. They distributed over 571,000 pounds of food in fiscal year 2009-2010.

TEEN BOARD TAKES A BITE OUT OF HUNGER

THE other day, I (and several other teens) took shifts standing in front of the Countrywood Safeway in Walnut Creek asking their customers to purchase some extra non-perishable food to place in our barrels for families in need. We were pleasantly surprised at the 500 pounds of brand new food we received. We had many boxes of mac & cheese, jars of peanut butter, cans of tuna, cans of soup and cans of chili. It was wonderful to see that people do care and understand that hunger is a year-round issue. Next time you want something to do, ask a local grocery store if you can stand in front asking their customers to purchase a few extra items for hungry families. Explain to the store manager that the customers will appreciate seeing a teen volunteering, the store will be selling more food that day and together we will be helping to feed hungry families. Gather some friends, ask the Food Bank for a barrel and make a difference.

I regularly volunteer sorting food at the Food Bank. Sorting brand new food from a grocery store is fast and fun. So next time you are thinking of dropping off a bag of food in a Food Bank barrel, please donate food that is new or has not passed its expiration date. Sadly, I have seen food that is older than me and has to be thrown out. Many of the people who receive food from the Food Bank are seniors and children. We need to make sure they receive good, nutritious food. I live by this anonymous quote: “You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you”.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Celebrity Council

HUNGER in our community is a serious issue. In fact, one out of six people living in Contra Costa and Solano counties are currently struggling with hunger. The Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano provides enough food to feed 132,000 people every month – and yet, it is still not enough.

In an effort to increase awareness about the issue in our community, we are asking a select group of local celebrities, including musicians, actors, athletes, local media personalities and other community leaders, to join us in the fight against hunger. We are pleased to announce that we already have a commitment from three local celebrities: Yau-Man Chan, Survivor Fiji and Survivor Micronesia; Cecilia Mansilla,



Yau-Man Chan



Cecilia Mansilla



John Young

Survivor Cook Islands; and John Young, co-host of The KUIC Hometown Morning Show with John, Heather & Don.

Members of the Celebrity Council are asked to make a one-year commitment to the cause. During the one-year period, Council members have many options on how to be involved including attending events and appearing in Public Service Announcements (PSAs) on behalf of the Food Bank. We hope you have a chance to meet one of these celebrities soon!

We are honored by the support of our Celebrity Council members and appreciate their involvement with helping us strengthen the cause and bring greater attention to local hunger issues.

...continued from page 1

We "Survived" An Afternoon in the Admiral's Garden 2010...



Chad Crittenden, Survivor Vanuatu, helps serve drinks to guests at the event.



Michael Dunn, Chef/Partner at Yankee Pier in Lafayette with Chad Crittenden (Survivor Vanuatu), Sylvia Kwan (Survivor Fiji), Sonja Christopher (Survivor Borneo), Heather Holmes (KTVU Channel 2), and Yau-Man Chan (Survivor Fiji and Survivor Micronesia).

In addition to providing guests with a wonderful afternoon of entertainment, Survivor Mare Island raised over \$100,000 for the Food Bank. We have many people to thank for making our event special.

Bay area Survivor stars Yau-Man Chan, Sonja Christopher, Chad Crittenden, Sylvia Kwan and Cecilia Mansilla delighted guests and posed for pictures with fans. Bay area media personalities Ann Notarangelo CBS 5, Cheryl Hurd NBC Bay Area, Heather Holmes KTVU Channel 2, John Young and Don Potter KUIC, Mike Nico ABC7, and Tom Bennar KSFO, along with baseball great Vida Blue, poured wine, served Tasting Tent food, and mingled with guests. Master cake decorator and sugar artist Jan Loomis and her daughter Lisa demonstrated fabulous cake and cookie decorating. Tasting Tent vendors provided delicious appetizers, wine and desserts, and once again Derry Englund from Englund's Catering served an unforgettable buffet luncheon.

We especially thank our sponsors who stepped forward during tough economic

times to ensure our event would be a success: Presenting Sponsor Pacific Service Credit Union, PG&E, PG&E Employees, Chevron, Shell Oil Products U.S., Air Products, Tesoro Golden Eagle Refinery, California Pacific Federal Credit Union, AAA, Wells Fargo, Kaiser Permanente, Sutter Solano, The Conco Companies, ALZA Corporation, ConocoPhillips, Sartorius Stedim Biotech, Richardson Elite Financial Services, The Dow Chemical Company, Grace Davison, Maze & Associates, Tom Chowanec, Bay Area Development, Heffernan Insurance, Shartsis Friese, Howard S. Wright Construction, Travis Credit Union, Mechanics Bank and Systron Donner.

Finally, special thanks to our auction donors and many volunteers who made Survivor Mare Island a smashing success! Be sure to save the date, June 26, for the 2011 event of the summer!



One of our many delightful samples in the tasting tents.



Admiral's Mansion — Mare Island

Upcoming Events: Fall 2010

SEPTEMBER IS HUNGER ACTION MONTH

Give a Little, Feed a Lot. Events and activities all month long. Learn more at www.foodbankccs.org.

SEPTEMBER

Macy's Shop For A Cause. Join Macy's in support of Feeding America by purchasing Shop For A Cause savings passes which are available for \$5 during September and can be used on October 16. These passes can be purchased through the Food Bank (925-676-7543) or at any Macy's store during September; a portion of each pass sold benefits the Food Bank.

SEPTEMBER 19

Sing For Your Supper. Enjoy Meg Mackay & Billy Philadelphia, "Standards are a Girl's Best Friend", the songs of Gershwin, Porter, Sondheim & more, a Family Cabaret Concert benefiting the Food Bank at 2:15 pm, Leshar Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek. To purchase tickets, call 925-943-SHOW (7469) or visit www.lesherARTScenter.org.

SEPTEMBER 23-26

Walnut Festival. Join us at Heather Farm Park (500 N. San Carlos Drive) in Walnut Creek for the annual Walnut Festival. Carnival hours are Thursday 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Friday 5:00 pm to 11:00 pm, Saturday 11:00 am to 11:00 pm and Sunday 11:00 am to 8:00 pm. For more information, visit www.thewalnutfestival.org or call 925-935-6766. The Walnut Festival will work with the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano to collect canned food from attendees. Bring a can of food to receive \$1 off admission.

SEPTEMBER 25

Pleasant Hill's sixth annual **Community Service Day.** Volunteers can help at a variety of projects including a neighborhood food drive. Gather at Pleasant Hill Park at 7:30 am to receive a pancake breakfast and your free t-shirt. To sign up go to www.ci.pleasant-hill.ca.us and click on Community Service Day.

SEPTEMBER 25

Join us for our **Fairfield Open House** on Saturday, September 25, 2010 and help us celebrate our 35th Anniversary. Drop in between 2:00 and 4:00 pm at 2339 Courage Drive, Suite F, Fairfield, CA 94533 (Grand Opening of our new Fairfield location). Everyone is welcome – bring the family for an opportunity to volunteer and to see how the Food Bank works! To participate in the volunteer activity, children must be ages 5 and older and must be accompanied by an adult; provide one chaperone per child for children ages 5-10 and at least one chaperone for every 2 to 3 children ages 11 and up. Please call 925-676-7543 for more information.

SEPTEMBER 26

Join us for our **Concord Open House** on Sunday, September 26, 2010 and help us celebrate our 35th Anniversary. Drop in between 2:00 and 4:00 pm at 4010 Nelson Avenue, Concord, CA 94520. Everyone is welcome – bring the family for an opportunity to volunteer and to see how the Food Bank works! To participate in the volunteer activity, children must be ages 5 and older and must be accompanied by an adult; provide one chaperone per child for children ages 5-10 and at least one chaperone for every 2 to 3 children ages 11 and up. Please call 925-676-7543 for more information.

OCTOBER 9

Grand Opening of Grocery Outlet at 1840 Willow Pass Road in Concord. Stop by for the festivities. Grocery Outlet will be making a donation to the Food Bank.

OCTOBER 9-10

Contra Costa Coin Show. The Diablo Coin Club is supporting the Food Bank by donating a portion of the proceeds from its annual coin show. The show provides a safe, convenient venue for anyone wanting to buy, sell or trade coins and other collectibles. Especially beneficial for the general public is the availability of free appraisals from over 30 coin dealers. The show will be held at the Holiday Inn, 1050 Burnett Avenue, Concord starting at 10:00 am each day. More details are available at www.diablo-coinclub.org.

OCTOBER 17

Save The Date! For the Food Bank's Volunteer Recognition event at our Concord warehouse from 1:00 to 4:00 pm.

NOVEMBER 6

Gourmet East Bay. It's time to eat, drink, and dance the night away at Gourmet East Bay on Saturday, November 6 from 7:00 -10:00 pm at Broadway Plaza in Walnut Creek. For more information or to purchase tickets, please visit www.gourmeteastbay.com.

NOVEMBER 20

Scouting For Food. Be sure to put out a bag of nonperishable food for your local Scouts to collect during this huge, one-day food drive benefiting the Food Bank.



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Visit www.foodbankccs.org
Call 800-870-FOOD

You Can Help This Holiday Season

EVERY day there are new faces to the world of hunger. People who never imagined they would end up in a line waiting for a few bags of food to feed their families or even just themselves. It is more than the homeless or the working poor. It is also the educated, the retired, the disabled, the work injured, those owning homes, and those just trying to cover their expenses for the month. We as a community can help put a smile on the faces of those in line and those who have hunger knocking on their door. We as a community can help and we at the Food Bank want you to help make a difference this holiday season! Here is how:

FOOD DRIVE: Have a food drive at your business, your place of worship, your neighborhood, your favorite store or your children’s school. A Food Bank barrel can match the holiday décor just about anywhere you can think of and

we will be more than happy to make it happen. You call us, we deliver the barrels, we pick the barrels up and we send a thank you letter telling you how many pounds of food you collected. Look at our website www.foodbankccs.org, click on GIVE HELP and then TRADITIONAL FOOD DRIVE to learn more or contact Joan Tomasini at (925) 771-1315 or jtomasini@foodbankccs.org.

VIRTUAL FOOD DRIVE: Would you rather have us shop for you? Just go to the Virtual Food Drive on our website, tell us what to buy and how much you want to spend and your shopping is complete. We buy truck loads of food so if you want us to buy peanut butter we will do that. If you prefer rice, we will do that. You can select one item or all ten items and we will do the shopping. Look at our website www.foodbankccs.org and click on GIVE HELP and then VIRTUAL FOOD DRIVE to learn more.

BUY A BAG: Would you like to raise money for the Food Bank and have a holiday display of your donations? Introduce the Buy A Bag Program at your school, office or business or just about anywhere you would like. Buy A Bags are colorful (die-cut) paper bags and Christmas stockings. You collect donations for each bag or stocking – \$1, \$5, \$10, etc. – you choose your donation price and then you start decorating! It’s fun and easy! Every \$1 you collect and donate allows the Food Bank to provide three nutritious meals for our neighbors in need. Look at our website www.foodbankccs.org, click on GIVE HELP and then BUY A BAG to learn more or contact Kathy Gleason at (925) 771-1313 or kgleason@foodbankccs.org.

Together we can make smiles appear this holiday season for many, many people in our community!

WANTED!

Nutritious, non-perishable food items such as peanut butter, hearty soups, dried or canned beans, canned tuna and chicken, canned fruit in juice, 100% fruit juice, canned vegetables, canned tomato products, enriched rice or pasta, iron rich cereal and whole grain cereal.

REWARD!

Satisfaction of knowing you are helping feed over 132,000 people each month!