

Solano foundation hopes to raise \$1M in single day

By Todd R. Hansen | March 16, 2016

FAIRFIELD — Ron Pate will arrive at the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano warehouse about 6 a.m. May 3, open up the Courage Drive facility and begin preparing for what will be a typically busy Tuesday of pickups, deliveries and other food distribution.

Lauren Strouse will take up her station at 8 a.m. in the main office, answering phones and coordinating volunteer activities.

Then other staff members, warehouse workers and a plethora of volunteers will begin to arrive to bag food to help supply the many pantries, shelters, group homes and other agencies that depend on the Food Bank.

Sometime in the late morning, Clennie Brown, 77, will take his truck out on a variety of jobs, picking up distribution barrels and the like, while Will Gregory will wheel his large, white converted beverage truck filled with fresh produce to such places as Cleo Gordon Elementary School on Dover Avenue in Fairfield or the Kroc Center on East Wigeon Way in Suisun City.

That is what the Food Bank does every Tuesday, and some version of that on each of the other weekdays. But it all takes money.

The Solano Community Foundation is hoping to make this May 3 extra special for the Food Bank as well as 29 other charitable partners as part of the inaugural Give Local Solano 24-hour, online fundraiser.

It is fashioned after the Give Local America Day, which is in its third year. More than 100 community foundations are part of the program.

“So from midnight on May 3 until 11:59 p.m. there will be an intense period of giving,” said Connie Harris, chief executive officer of the foundation.

The foundation has a big number in mind.

“We would be happy if every one of our partners were to raise \$10,000. That would be \$300,000. But if we could raise \$1 million . . .,” Harris adds, letting the figure linger in the air.

She does not think it is an unreachable number, noting that if everyone in Solano County donated the minimum \$10, that would raise more than \$4 million.

A website has been set up to provide information about the event and donors on May 3 can go online and make a donation with their credit cards – choosing which charitable organization each wants to support.

“It is all about the nonprofits getting the word out. . . . And everyone should get something out of this,” Harris said.

Another part of the effort is to generate additional money from larger donors for what is termed an incentive fund, information about which can be found on the foundation’s website.

This is the first major project for the foundation at its new location at Empire and Webster streets, which really isn’t a new location.

The foundation was located at the site from 2000-05, before moving to Travis Boulevard and Pennsylvania Avenue. It then spent the past five years on Chadbourne Road.

The group opened for business Jan. 16 at its new second-floor, 3,267-square-foot office space. Among the amenities are a conference room and a training room that are available to businesses and other groups for a fee.

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How to get involved

- Solano Community Foundation: www.solanocf.org; 399-3846
- Give Local Solano: www.givelocalsolano.org