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Moraga's annual pear harvest nets recording-breaking donation to Food Bank

By Vera Kochan



Kiwanis Club member Steve Woehleke harvests pears for the Food Bank.
Photo Peggy Woehleke

As it turns out, the very wet winter was a boon to Moraga's remaining pear trees and the bumper crop it produced.

This year's pear harvest, held Aug. 3-4, was jointly sponsored by the Moraga Park Foundation and Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley. According to Kiwanian coordinator Karen Reed, "We had a record harvest this year of 14,731 pounds of Bartlett pears from the 100-year-old orchards in Moraga Valley. The 180 volunteer harvesters included members of the National Charity League, Boys Team Charity, Kiwanis Club and local residents. Pears were harvested from orchards owned by the Moraga School District, St. Monica's Church and the Bruzzone family."

Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Executive Director Larry Sly was the guest speaker at the Aug. 15 Kiwanis Club meeting. He spoke about the facility that he helped form in the mid-1970s. "When we first started, we found out that there were food resources going to waste. There are so many ways that food is being wasted in our society. Things like day-old bread or fruit with

slight imperfections are often discarded yet perfectly edible."

Sly stated that the Food Bank gave away more than 13 million pounds of food last year, adding, "Our warehouse is full of food to provide for people in need. We work with over 180 nonprofits and our trucks deliver to 70 sites in Solano and Contra Costa Counties."

More than 50% of the food they give away is fresh produce. Being located in an agriculturally rich area, the Food Bank is able to distribute a wide variety of fresh fruit and vegetables.

Operating on an annual budget of \$12 million to provide food for the needy, the Food Bank depends on government grants, as well as corporate and private donations. As such, Moraga Valley Kiwanis donated funds for the Food Bank to purchase a much needed commercial refrigerator/freezer.

"It's heartwarming to see the relationship that you (the Kiwanis) have with the Food Bank," a grateful Sly said.

For more information or to donate visit: www.foodbankccs.org



From left, Kiwanis President Ian Cook, Food Bank Executive Director Larry Sly and Kiwanis member Ferenc Kovac. Photo Vera Kochan