



A Quarterly Publication from the  
Food Bank of Northwest  
Louisiana

# FOOD FOR

# Thought

Spring 2022 Newsletter



## Levi Walker's Story



Levi Walker found himself unable to work because car accidents left him disabled. He struggled to keep food on the table. He and his roommates, Stephanie and Kage were hungry. Levi could not settle for their situation, so he searched for a food pantry.

***“This helps us get back on our feet and stay on our feet.”***

One day, he visited the Pantry on Texas, run by the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana. At the food pantry he received a variety of foods like fruit, vegetables, meat and bread. It was enough

food that he could make it through the month. “It's very comforting to know that you have a place to go,” Levi said.

Levi and his roommates started taking the bus to the pantry every month. They feel welcomed and comfortable at the Pantry on Texas. “This helps us get back on our feet and stay on our feet,” he said. He began encouraging others that were food insecure to go to the pantry. The Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana gives help and hope to neighbors like Levi and thousands of others each month.



### ***Ribbon Cutting and 25th Anniversary Celebration***

On Thursday, April 28, Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana held its ribbon cutting for the new facility and 25th Anniversary of serving as the primary resource for fighting hunger in Northwest Louisiana!

The ribbon-cutting was held in the new warehouse followed by private tours of our facility. The staff and Board of Directors were greeters and directed tours to learn more about how the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana serves our food-insecure neighbors.



Food Bank of  
Northwest Louisiana

MEMBER OF  
FEEDING  
AMERICA

FOOD BANK OF  
NORTHWEST LOUISIANA  
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You can visit the  
Food Bank of  
Northwest Louisiana  
online anytime at:  
**[www.foodbanknla.org](http://www.foodbanknla.org)**

*Check out our website  
to learn more about events,  
volunteer opportunities, to make  
safe, secure online donations  
and to learn more about  
the Food Bank.*



Community  
Foundation  
of North Louisiana

# Letter

**FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



Dear Friends of the Food Bank,

It's inescapable. Everywhere you look, you read or hear about the state of the economy, rising food and fuel prices. Everyone is affected by today's economic forces. Although I feel a pinch in my wallet, I imagine the strain on our low income neighbors and their families. Fuel prices are higher than they've ever been and food inflation is at an all-time high. Many people's incomes cannot match the rising costs. For the families served by the Food Bank of NWLA, there's no place left to cut. More people are being forced to seek food assistance.

I think about those working poor – they may be working at two different jobs earning minimum wage or they might be single moms with children. I think about those children who need nutritious food. I think about the seniors who are living on fixed incomes and often find themselves choosing between basic food needs or prescription medicine. I know we can make a difference to these neighbors and we do, with your help.

We are blessed with compassionate donors in our community and we can get through these tough times together. Thank you for your support in the past and if you can, please continue to support us. You are the lifeblood of this organization – as donors, as volunteers, as advocates.

With gratitude,

*Martha Marak*

Martha Marak

## STAMP OUT HUNGER

*Saturday, May 14, 2022*

The National Association of Letter Carrier's Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is back! The NALC's Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is on Saturday, May 14th, 2022. You can donate by leaving non-perishable food items in a bag by your mailbox! Your mail carrier will handle the rest!



**USDA Nondiscrimination Statement  
Civil Rights Requirements**

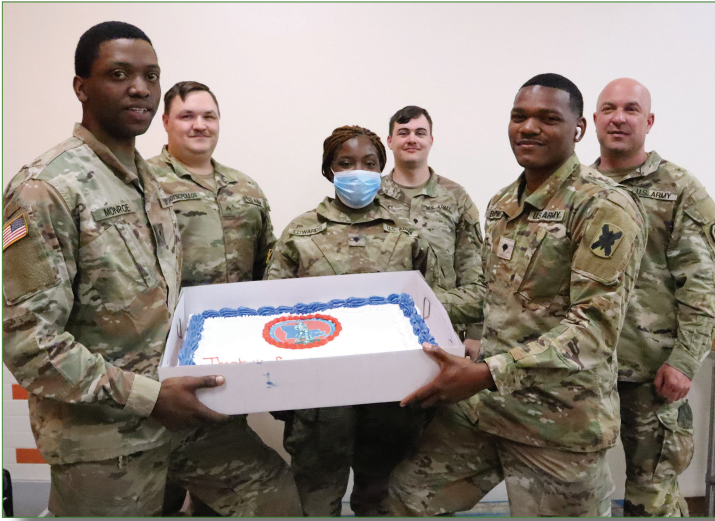
In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the **USDA Program Discrimination**

Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

# Louisiana Army National Guard Say Goodbye



The Louisiana Army National Guard is leaving our food bank family after two years. They worked side by side with our employees, clients, and volunteers day in and day out through the pandemic, Hurricane Ida, snowstorms, and other challenging times.

In 2020, Governor John Bel Edwards declared a state of emergency in the state of Louisiana and formed the COVID Task Force of the Louisiana Army National Guard. Guardsmen were sent across Louisiana to handle vaccines, help food banks, and compensate for the worker shortage. As of March 29th, all guardsmen were released from their Louisiana food bank duties, and they will return to their civilian duties.

Thank you to our Louisiana National Army Guardsmen for all of their work over the past two years. We could not have met the demands of our seven parishes without their hard work and dedication to our mission.

## *Fight Hunger Spark Change* *April 18-May 15, 2022*

You can help impact your community affected by food insecurity by participating in the Fight Hunger Spark Change in the following ways:

- By purchasing a participating item in-store or online at Walmart.com or SamsClub.com
- Donating at check-out in stores or clubs
- Donating at Feeding America's Fight Hunger. Spark Change. campaign donation site at either [www.FeedingAmerica.org/Walmart](http://www.FeedingAmerica.org/Walmart) or [www.FeedingAmerica.org/SamsClub](http://www.FeedingAmerica.org/SamsClub)



## GIVE *for* GOOD

powered by  
Community Foundation

### TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2022

Are you ready to Give for Good? Give for Good is 24 hours of online giving sponsored by the Community Foundation of Northwest Louisiana. For every \$10 donated, the Food Bank will provide \$100 in food to our food-insecure neighbors.

**DONATE AT:**

<https://www.giveforgoodnla.org/food>.

## RED NOSE DAY

*Coming together  
to end  
child poverty  
one nose  
at a time!*

### THURSDAY, MAY 26, 2022

Support the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana through Red Nose Day, a mission to end child poverty.

Through the power of entertainment, Red Nose Day raises awareness and money to help kids who need us most, both at home and around the world.

FOOD BANK OF NORTHWEST LOUISIANA

# EMPTY BOWLS

*Want to Help Fight Hunger?*

## Here's how YOU can help:

Empty Bowls Hunger Awareness Event is the Food Bank's annual fundraising Diner and Silent Auction. The event is Thursday, September 22nd at Bally's (previously El Dorado). Attendees enjoy a dinner featuring soups, bread, dessert, and a beverage. At the end of the event, attendees will choose a ceramic bowl (crafted by artists and the community) to keep to remind us of all the empty bowls in our community that do not get filled each day.



## Join our Empty Bowls Committee

We are looking for dedicated people to join our Empty Bowls Committee. The committee duties include planning and implementing the various parts of our Empty Bowl event such as silent auction, wine pull, and table decorations.



## Host A Bowl Painting Party

The Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana invites the community to host their own Empty Bowl painting party to raise hunger awareness in Northwest Louisiana. The Food Bank provides the bowls and painting supplies for the party. A \$20 donation is requested per bowl.



## Become a Sponsor

Event proceeds allow us to provide food for our programs. Our goal for 2022 is to raise enough funds for 500,000 meals for the less fortunate neighbors that struggle with hunger. Sponsorships range between \$2,500 and \$10,000. I hope we can count on your support!

**For more information on joining the committee, hosting a bowl painting party or sponsorships, call us at (318) 675-2400 ext. 111 or email [marketing@foodbanknla.org](mailto:marketing@foodbanknla.org).**

## *Food Bank Facts*

As a hunger-relief organization, the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana acquires, stores, and distributes food and other essential items to low income children and individuals through 150 community non-profit and faith-based organizations within Caddo, Bossier, Webster, Bienville, Claiborne, Red River and DeSoto Parishes. These organizations consist of homeless shelters, soup kitchens, residential centers, churches, pantry programs, and schools. We save these agencies millions each year by providing free and low cost food and products.

## OUR PROGRAMS:

### Food and Emergency Distribution:

In the 2020-2021 fiscal year, we distributed 15 million pounds of food with a value of \$18,880,000 to more than 75,000 children, women, men, seniors, veterans, homeless, disabled, unemployed and underemployed individuals living below the federal poverty level in the seven parishes of northwest Louisiana.

### Disaster Relief:

As a disaster responder we provide immediate assistance to our partner organizations, sister food banks and individuals. We distributed \$250,000 of water and food during the 2015 and 2016 spring flood disaster victims. In 2017 - 2020 we provided over \$400,000 in food and water to the Food Banks in Beaumont Texas, Puerto Rico, South Carolina and South Louisiana for hurricane victims.

### Senior Box Program:

Each month we deliver a box of pantry staple foods to over 1,000 low income seniors throughout our seven parishes.

### Mobile Pantry:

Perishable and non-perishable food are distributed to rural clients on a monthly basis.

### Kids Cafe® After School Meals:

The Food Banks provides meals for the Volunteers of America's Lighthouse Program, Caddo Parish Libraries, FDDOC Winner's Circle, Youth Enrichment Program, and David Raines Health Center for hungry children in after-school programs.

### BackPack™ Program:

Chronically hungry children are provided with a weekly backpack of food to take home for the weekend and holidays. Each 7-10 pound bag includes items such as cereal, milk, fruit juice, and pop-top canned food.

### Summer Food Service Program:

Nutritional breakfasts and lunches are provided for hungry children during the summer months. Food is provided at summer programs such as Boys and Girls Clubs and faith-based summer programs.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

*Pack food boxes for Senior Program  
Help administration with clerical duties  
Organize a food drive or virtual food drive  
Deliver senior food boxes monthly*

Contact us for information on volunteering with the Food Bank, 318-675-2400 or visit our website at [www.foodbanknla.org](http://www.foodbanknla.org)