



A Quarterly Publication from the
Food Bank of Northwest
Louisiana

FOOD FOR

Thought

Summer 2021 Newsletter



Better Nutrition Helps Son



Dee Ann would do anything for her 3-year-old son, Duncan including going hungry. “I put my son first above everything else,” she said. Which is why she moved out of current home – to get away from a difficult situation and give Duncan a better childhood. But what was supposed to be a fresh start for the family turned out to be anything but. Soon after Dee Ann moved to Northwest Louisiana, she noticed Duncan wasn’t acting like other kids his age. He wasn’t engaging with people and wasn’t talking much. She took him to the doctor and got a diagnosis she never expected: Duncan had autism. “It’s changed my life entirely,” she said. “Duncan is my full-time job now.”

Dee Ann had planned to find work after moving to Northwest Louisiana. But because of Duncan’s diagnosis and no budget for specialized daycare, she was forced to stay home and take care of him. And with no income, Dee Ann turned to the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana to help feed her son and herself. “I’d spent many days going to sleep with an empty

***Dee Ann struggles to feed her 3-year-old Duncan, who has autism.
“I don’t know what we’d have done without the food from the Food Bank.”***

stomach, making sure he had all the food in the house,” she recalls. “I don’t know what we’d have done without the food from the food bank.” The Food Bank’s partner food pantry provides the healthy food that Duncan needs as he grows. And, Dee Ann says, it has actually helped with Duncan’s autism symptoms. “The healthy food we receive has helped Duncan socially and with his speech,” she said. “I see this kid emerging that I never thought I’d see.” And now with a better diet of nutritious foods, Dee Ann sees hope for Duncan.

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Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana



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You can visit the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana online anytime at:

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.



Letter

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends of the Food Bank,

We might think that the summertime might allow us to slow down our pace at the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana. But in reality, we have been working a little extra. Summer is the “hungriest” time of year for school age children that normally receive free meals at school. One in five children in northwest Louisiana are at risk of hunger. When school is closed for the summer, parents are faced with the challenge of filling a huge meal gap.

How can a parent that already struggles to make ends meet during the school year keep up when children are home for two additional meals plus snacks, everyday? Thanks to your generous gifts, we are able to help many families. Our Summer Feeding Program provides breakfast and lunch meals for children. Children shouldn’t have to be hungry this summer and with your continued support, we are working to make sure children in Northwest Louisiana have the food they need.

With gratitude,

Martha Marak

GIVE for GOOD

powered by
Community Foundation

Thank you for participating in Give for Good on Tuesday, May 4th! Together, with your generosity, our community raised more than \$34,000 for our Food Bank in just 24 hours! With our buying power we can multiply the amount raised by 10 times to provide \$340,000 in food value. We are grateful for your support and the Community Foundation of North Louisiana.

**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.

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Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: 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.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

RoseStone Wealth Advisors – Ameriprise Day of Service



RoseStone Wealth Advisors
Ameriprise Private Wealth Advisory Practice



We welcomed our very first group of volunteers in our new facility. On June 4, 2021 the volunteers from our friends and partners from RoseStone Wealth Advisors an Ameriprise private wealth advising practice volunteered with us for a national Ameriprise Day of Service. Multiple shifts of volunteers packed 7,200 pounds of food into 160 boxes for our senior program. We are grateful for the support from the RoseStone Wealth Advisor team!

Join Us for Virtual Trivia Night

Join us for “Droids and Dragons” Virtual Trivia Night Together with Coastal Connection, a Shreveport based organization focused on addressing both domestic and international development goals of extreme poverty, the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana is hosting the second annual Virtual Trivia Night.



Event Date: Saturday, October 9, 2021
Time: 6:30 pm
Theme: Droids and Dragons/Sci-Fi

All proceeds from the event benefit the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana’s local Backpack program and Costal Connection’s School Food Pantry Programs. Costumes encouraged! Prizes awarded for Trivia Winners, Best Use of Theme, and Team Name.

Become a Monthly Giver and Help Us Crush Hunger!

We invite you to help fight hunger by becoming a monthly giver to the Food Bank!

Why Monthly Giving? Consistent donations to the Food Bank help us to ensure that we are reaching as many of those in need as possible. Monthly giving also allows us to lower administrative costs associated with paper and printing, and is environmentally friendly.



It’s very easy to become a monthly giver! Monthly reoccurring donations may be made by credit card, or automatic bank draft. You can visit our website at <http://www.foodbanknla.org> for a Monthly Giver signup form, or contact the Food Bank to sign up. For more information, contact Auburn Brasher, Development Manager at 318-675-2400, ext 111 or development@foodbanknla.org.

International Paper Foundation Grant

Our special thanks to Mr. Ed Barr, International Paper Mill Manager; Dr. Traci Washington, Mill Communications Manager and the Committee for their generous support to the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana. International Paper selected the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana for a \$40,000 grant to help fight hunger.



Dining by Design

Empty Bowls 2021

Dining by Design: Empty Bowls 2021 is a new look for the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana’s annual main fundraiser and hunger awareness event. The event has been transformed thanks to Bonne’ Summers of Apex Communications and Events. Over 20 area wide designers and creative people will decorate tables with various themes and local chefs will prepare special designed meals. The event will be held at Sci-port Discovery Center on Thursday, September 16, 2021. In past years, the event has generated funds to provide food for 325,000 meals in Caddo, Bossier, Webster, Claiborne, Bienville, Red River and DeSoto Parishes. The decorated tables will be on display for public viewing from September 1 – 15 at Sci-port Discovery Center.

At Dining by Design: Empty Bowls 2021, attendees will enjoy dinner along with donated goods and services to be available in a silent auction. At the end of the event, everyone attending will choose a ceramic bowl (crafted by artists and the community) to take home. These bowls remind us of all the empty bowls in our community that do not get filled each day.

For tickets and event sponsorship please contact Auburn Brasher at 318.675.2400 ext.111 or development@foodbanknla.org.

TikTok – Garden of Good

TikTok has developed a new simulation game that offers gamers the ability to grow a virtual garden and give back to the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana through Feeding America. The game is called “The Garden of Good”. For every pound of “harvest” donated by TikTok gardeners, TikTok will donate 10 cents from June 1, 2021 through May 14, 2022.



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Dee Ann hopes that in a year or so she’ll be able to get Duncan into a public preschool for kids with similar developmental issues. And once that happens, she can find a job. But in the meantime, despite all the challenges she’d had to overcome since moving to Louisiana, Dee Ann wouldn’t change anything. “Duncan has been my strength. Him and I, we’re a great team.”



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 2019-2020 fiscal year, we distributed 13.5 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 Lucy Hines for information on volunteering with the Food Bank, 318-675-2400 ext. 100 or adminassist@foodbanknla.org