



FOOD

FOR

thought

Spring 2009

A Quarterly Publication from the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana

The Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana has a mission to serve as a central resource for fighting hunger in Northwest Louisiana.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

JoDel Adkins -

Noel United Methodist Church Pantry



JoDel Adkins' life changed forever on August 29, 2005. Safely evacuated along with her husband to their daughter's home in Shreveport, the former New Orleans couple lost their 17th Street Canal area home to Hurricane Katrina. Adkins said once they learned their home had flooded, they eventually got their own apartment in Shreveport and are now once again homeowners. She said it worked out because their neighbor in New Orleans ended up purchasing their property. "It felt like The Lord led us here," she said. Not too long after relocating, Adkins volunteered to help Noel Neighborhood Ministries, a food pantry located within Noel Memorial

United Methodist Church, located at the corner of Herndon & Highland streets in Shreveport. The pantry is one of over a hundred agencies served by the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana. "It's very rewarding to work here," she said. Her main duties include loading grocery sacks with food for those in need and keeping the pantry organized. Adkins said she learned of the opportunity from her pastor at Kings Highway Christian Church. She had been looking for something to do since retiring from her husband's construction business, which had closed because of the hurricane and her husband's health. Of her time at the food pantry, Adkins says she puts in about four hours a couple of days each month or more if needed. "This is a very tangible thing we're doing here and it makes me feel good knowing we're helping people in need and those who face sudden emergency situations," she said.

Noel Neighborhood Ministries, the largest food pantry in Northwest Louisiana, has been in operation since 1985. Susan Foster, who has served as director of the pantry since 2001, said over 10,000 bags of food are handed out annually from the pantry, excluding emergency distributions.

PURSUE YOUR PASSIONS

Feeding America is proud to announce that they have been named the beneficiary to the Advil "Pursue Your Passions" campaign, featuring



long time supporter Ellen DeGeneres. Starting April 8th, folks who visit advil.com are able click to hear an inspirational message from Ellen. For each click, Advil will donate 50 cents to the featured charity of the month. Feeding America will be showcased for the duration of the month of April.

TOP CORPORATE FOOD DONORS

	Pounds
Target	10,370
Harrison Co	8,336
Sam's Club	7,515
Pizza Hut	2,970
Hunters for the Hungry	1,633
Coca-Cola	1,562
Olive Garden	1,179
Longhorn Steakhouse	983
Red Lobster	311



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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 in about the Food Bank.

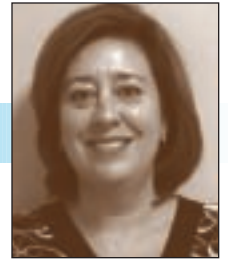
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Letter

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MARTHA MARAK



Dear Food Bank Friends,

For a few weeks now the calendar has said that spring is here. It hasn't quite felt like it up until now—and it certainly will by the time this newsletter gets to you.

Birds are singing, flowering trees are everywhere and new leaves are sprouting. This is, by far, my favorite time of year. It is faith restored and hope renewed. This year, more than ever before, we need both.

Words can't even begin to express my gratitude to you for the caring and support you have provided to our less fortunate neighbors. What you do is truly a blessing for the individuals and families we serve.

More and more people are turning to our doors for help. The working poor, seniors and others living on fixed incomes are struggling to keep up with the rising costs of everyday basic needs. And as the price of milk, bread, rice, cereals, pasta, eggs, meat, poultry and almost all other food items continue to rapidly increase, these people are finding themselves without money and without food at the end of the month—and some don't even make it that far. It's difficult to fathom what it must be like for even something as basic as food to be an unaffordable luxury. But that's simply the case for so many within our community.

What we do in providing food for those in need has always been important; but now, and in the upcoming year, it will be more important than ever as we see an increased need for our services due to the struggling economy, not to mention that we are facing the same increases in food prices that challenge everyone. At the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana we are continually looking for ways to do more with less.

It is our faith and hope that everyone will join us in meeting this challenge. Thank you for our continued support.

Sincerely,

Martha Marak

Martha Marak
Executive Director

JOIN US FOR OUR EMPTY BOWLS 2009



*Thursday, June 4th at the
Eldorado Casino Ballroom
from 6 – 9 pm*

*Ticket prices: Adults \$25
12 & Under \$15*

For more information about

Empty Bowls contact

Amie Roberts at

675-2400 ext. 111

Food Bank Facts

As a hunger-relief organization, the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana solicits, stores, and distributes food and other essential items to low-income children and families through a functional network of 105 community- and faith-based nonprofit organizations within seven (7) parishes. These agencies consist of schools and churches with meal programs; charitable organizations with kitchen and pantry programs; shelters and residential centers for adolescents, adults, and families. We save these agencies millions each year by providing free and low cost food and products. Last year alone we distributed more than 3.7 million pounds of food!

OUR PROGRAMS INCLUDE

Summer Food Service Program

Provides nutritional breakfasts and lunches for hungry children who have no access to free food when school is not in session during the summer months.

Kids Cafe® After School Feeding Program

A national program of Feeding America that provides hot meals and nutritional education to hungry children enrolled in community after school programs.

BackPack™ Program

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

Senior Lagniappe Program

Provides an approximate 35 pound box of food every month to nearly 2,000 needy seniors throughout our 7 parishes.

K.I.D.S. (Kids in Distressed Situations)

A national program, that distributes new clothing and toys to children in need.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Sort donated food: Volunteers help inspect, clean, and sort donated product that may be damaged or passed the consumption date.

Packing food boxes for senior citizens: Groups come and pack boxes of food for our Senior Lagniappe Program. We feed nearly 2,000 senior citizens every month in our 7 parish region with these boxes. It is a way that volunteers make a major impact on their community.

Deliver senior food boxes: Many seniors enrolled in the Senior Lagniappe Program are homebound and depend on volunteers to deliver their food box monthly.

Light construction/ landscaping: We need volunteers to help with light to heavy construction renovating our two warehouses as well as maintaining and improving landscaping at each site.

Organize a food drive: Food drives provide the Food Bank with food to feed the hungry in our area. Many volunteer groups organize food drives that will benefit the Food Bank. Some food drives are organized to benefit particular programs such as the Backpack Program.

TOP FOOD DRIVES

By Pounds

SPAR	1,719
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church	1,568
South Bossier Storage Center	451
LSUS University Center	365
Albertsons- Bossier	362
Parkway High School	355
St. Rest Baptist Church	242
Kroger – Youree Drive	202
Tech Results	170
Transatlantic Brides, & Parents Association	128
Woodridge Baptist Church	104
Caddo Fire District 8	100
Lakeview United Methodist Church	98

NEEDED IMMEDIATELY

Volunteer CDL Truck Driver

Due to a great new partnership with the Wal-mart Corporation we will begin picking up donated products from 7 area Wal-marts three times per week. With this brings a need for a part-time volunteer truck driver. For more information please contact Martha Marak at 318-675-2400 x 103

Ways You Can Help the Food Bank

Host a Food drive

Pack Senior Boxes

Be a Volunteer Driver

Make a Donation

Invite us to speak to your group

Purchase tickets to our Empty Bowls Fundraiser

Donate an item to our Empty Bowls Fundraiser

2009 HUNGER STUDY

We want to thank each participating agency, staff member and volunteer for making the 2009 Hunger Study an overwhelming success! We will have all of our data collected by the end of April and this was made possible by your contributions and efforts. The Hunger Study will provide valuable data to the food bank, our agencies and to our national affiliate, Feeding America, about hunger and food insecurity in our service region. The Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana will receive state and local reports that can serve as strategic planning tools and help

with future fund raising efforts. The current study will also serve as an authoritative source of information on private, domestic hunger relief.



Thanks to Kroger Corporation for the donation of Milk coupons for our Hunger Study clients.

And a special thanks to Libby Patterson for her organized leadership of this program.

Empty Bowls Kick Off

took place on Thursday, March 26th at the Boardwalk. Over 70 bowls were painted for our Empty Bowls event scheduled for June 4th.

Thanks to our Empty Bowls Title Sponsors:

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Grace kids sorting box

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