



FOOD FOR

Thought

Winter 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.

Corporate Spotlight - Wal-Mart Corporation



The Food Bank received a grant for \$15,000 from the Wal-Mart Foundation's State Giving Program. This program gave out \$595,000 to Louisiana non-profits during 2008.

Through the State Giving Program, the Wal-Mart Foundation seeks to support organizations with programs that align with their mission to create opportunities so people can live better. The State Giving Program strives to award grants to support programs that have:

- ~the most impact
- ~for the most people
- ~in the most meaningful way



Wal-Mart sponsored a company softball tournament and fundraiser with all funds from area stores being donated to the Food Bank of NW Louisiana. Leading up to the tournament, each area Wal-Mart raised money through various fundraising events including raffles, a pancake breakfast, bake sales and many others. The Food Bank received over \$10,000 from this event alone and an additional \$9,000 from area store grants.

During 2008 a total of 48,708 of food products were donated to the Food Bank by Wal-Mart and Sam's.

It's Coming Soon... Empty Bowls 2009

Here is a unique way for you, your business or a group to support the fight against hunger in our community and gain name recognition at the same time.

- Sponsor a Bowl Painting Party
- Host our Empty Bowls Kick-off Party
- Sponsor a Table at our event

For more information about Empty Bowls contact Amie Roberts at 675-2400 ext. 111.





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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 in about the Food Bank.*

A member of:



Letter

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MARTHA MARAK



Dear Friends of the Food Bank,

It's a new year at the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana and we are already busy. These months ahead will bring with them some tough challenges for the Food Bank, member hunger relief agencies and supporters.

Our main challenge is to be able to meet the demand of providing sufficient food to our more than 100 member agencies at a time when they are seeing a growing number of requests for food assistance. This is no small feat, and we are working diligently at the Food Bank to secure enough food and financial donations to keep our agencies well supplied.

It is important to note that we have not run out of food. And for that we are grateful to you our supporters. But the possibility is always there, so we do not get complacent. I hope you have a great 2009 and will continue to remember those who are struggling and are generous to those in need. Your support helps to ensure that we may provide food to the hungry citizens in our community.

Martha Marak

Martha Marak
Executive Director

The need for reliable transportation is an integral component of the Food Bank's mission to serve as a central resource for fighting hunger in Northwest Louisiana. The Food Bank has been blessed to receive donations over the last several years which have allowed the purchase of large trucks capable of transporting thousands of pounds of food each day. The trucks run five days a week all over the seven parish area served by the Food Bank. However, in some instances, food drives or donations aren't large enough to require the need of such a large vehicle. We currently have two cargo vans that service the smaller pickups and deliveries. One is relatively new, thanks again to your donations. The second van is in disrepair and in need of repairs which would literally cost more than it is worth. Among the highlights: the headlights are out, the odometer no longer works, the gas gauge and speedometer are both unreliable, the radio is broken and to top it off, the heater went out during the coldest week in December. There are other problems as well. So, we are again calling on you to help us be able to help others in need. We are asking for the donation of a new or slightly used cargo van to be put into immediate service. This value of this donation is tax-deductible on your 2009 taxes as allowed by law. If you have any questions, please contact Martha Marak, Executive Director at 318-675-2400.



NEEDED IMMEDIATELY: Plastic Bags

Do you have plastic bags from your last visit to the store? Does your company have bags that you could donate to the Food Bank? We are in need of these bags to help in the packing of our senior boxes.

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.

After School Feeding Program

- Provides nutritional hot snacks for hungry children during after-school programming.

Kids Cafe®

- A national program of Feeding America, provides hot meals and nutritional education to hungry children in 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 bag includes items such as granola bars, fruit juice, pop top canned food in these weekly bags.

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 which 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 past 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. We try to make it easy for you... we will pick the food up from the drive at the end!

TOP 25 HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVES

By Poundage

NWLA - Election Food Drive	7405
Willis Knighton MC	6650
Bossier Parish Community College	4459
Byrd High School.....	4147
Youree Drive Middle School.....	3347
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church.....	3183
Capital One Bank.....	2614
Church at Red River.....	2004
Wal-Mart	1961
Kroger - Youree	1714
Coldwell Banker - Shreveport	1532
Boomtown Casino	1428
Ridgewood Middle School.....	1276
Mooringsport Elem School.....	1080
Little Union Baptist Church.....	917
Shreveport Police Department	800
Turner Elementary School.....	642
Fairfield Elementary.....	564
Coldwell Banker - Bossier City	562
Caddo Magnet High School.....	540
South Bossier Storage Center.....	538
YMCA.....	520
Frymaster	466
Blanchard, Walker, O'Quinn	450
North Highland Elementary	442

TOP CORPORATE FOOD DONORS

Sam's Club.....	6897
Target	6474
Harrison Co	4739
Pepsi.....	3136
Olive Garden	1028
Pizza Hut	1019
Morris & Dickson.....	1196
Longhorn Steakhouse	774
Hunters for the Hungry.....	537
Coca-Cola	500
Red Lobster.....	383
Starbucks	367

Ways You Can Help the Food Bank

- Volunteer to help with the Hunger Study
- Have a Bowl Painting Party
- Host a Food drive
- Pack Senior Boxes
- Be a Volunteer Driver
- Make a Donation
- Invite us to speak to your group
- Donate an item to our Empty Bowls Fundraiser

“SOUP FOR BOWL” TO BENEFIT FOOD BANK

KRMD and Holiday Lanes teamed up to gather food donations for the Food Bank on Saturday, December 20, 2008. Radio personalities Hillary and Derek from KRMD 101.1’s morning show were broadcasting live from Holiday Lanes in Bossier City to encourage food donations. Bowlers that brought 5 canned goods or 2 boxes of cereal received a FREE game.

Food Drives



Children from Barksdale Daycare came for a tour and brought a donation of canned goods.



Employees from Brookshires – Line Ave took time out of their busy schedules to help pack senior boxes.



Boomtown Casino's Food Drive collected 1428 pounds of food products.



Centenary's Softball team helps sort food from holiday food drives.



Blanchard/Walker /O'Quinn Law Firm's "Food Christmas Tree." They donated a total of 450 pounds of food.



Air Force Sergeant Association Auxiliary Ana Marie Arpino.



Southern Hills Church of Christ Food Drive

ANNOUNCING: 2009 HUNGER STUDY

What is the Hunger Study?

Hunger in America 2009 is the fifth national hunger study conducted by Feeding America – The Nation’s Food Bank Network and its member food banks and food rescue organizations. The purpose of the study is to conduct extensive research into the distribution of food assistance services to low-income Americans through our comprehensive network of agencies. This research is one of the most in-depth surveys of its size assessing the hunger problem in America. The 2006 study amassed over 52,000 personal interviews with individuals who received food assistance as well as 31,000 social service agency employees.

How You Can Help!

We will need volunteers to help conduct surveys from February thru April. There will be a short training session and we will have flexible days and hours. For more information contact Amie Roberts at 675-2400 x111 or aroberts@foodbanknla.org.