FOOD for THOUGHT

WINTER 2019 NEWSLETTER

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In the summer of 2015, the Board and staff of River Bend Foodbank set an ambitious goal — to triple the number of meals we distribute by 2025. We chose that goal because that is how many meals it will take to end hunger throughout the 23 counties we serve.

In 2014, we distributed 7.3 million meals to hungry children, families, and seniors. And I am thrilled to report that in 2018, we distributed over 15 million meals, twice as many as just four years ago.

This has only happened because of a great many people. The food donors who take the extra time to donate perfectly good food rather than letting it go to waste. Our partner agencies who get the food we distribute to them to hungry people. Our very dedicated staff and volunteers, who are doing twice as much work as just four years ago. And we could not be doing this without your growing financial support, with every $1 providing 5 meals for people in need.

This newsletter provides details on how we reached this milestone together in 2018, with a look back at how much we have grown over the past four years. There is info about a past and an upcoming special event. And we have an exciting announcement that will help achieve the 2025 goal in the Dubuque area and surrounding communities.

Doubling meal distribution is a great achievement that we celebrate with you. We thank you for making it happen. And we look to the future asking you to press on with us toward the goal of ending hunger in eastern Iowa and western Illinois by 2025.

Together we can solve hunger.™

Michael P. Miller
President & CEO
Our Mobile Food Pantry Program has grown to an average of 15 Mobile Pantries being held each month throughout the 23 counties that we serve. Volunteers distribute a truckload of food to clients through a farmers’ market-style distribution. Each of these Mobile Pantries are providing over 10,000 meals, feeding hundreds of families who are in need.

There are currently 36 School Pantries being run by volunteers throughout our service area. These pantries are safe places within a school where students and their families can access food items stocked directly from our warehouse. Students often have younger siblings or other family members who are missing meals. All families have students at the school and are selected by school administrators. The goal is to offset food insecurity for children at a critical point in their development.

During the 2017/2018 school year 111,486 Backpacks were distributed throughout the year to students who were identified as going hungry over the weekend. This program provides a sack of nutritious, easy-to-prepare foods to children who would otherwise go hungry on weekends when school is not in session.

The Senior Pantry Program serves residents 60 years and older—the fastest rising population of chronically hungry people in our community. This past year, there were 8 Senior Pantries located in low-income senior living apartment complexes which served 255,978 meals to seniors.

Partner Agencies provided over 9 million meals this past year, up from 8.6 million last year.

2018 UPDATE

Meals Distributed by Month — 2014–2018 (Calendar Years)
The St. Stephen’s Food Bank Board of Directors has decided to merge with River Bend Foodbank, effective January 1, 2019, after 30 years of partnership. St. Stephen’s is now a branch of River Bend Foodbank, where the commitment to feed the hungry in Dubuque and Jackson Counties, and close the meal gap, continue to grow.

By merging, reaching the goal of ending hunger in Dubuque and Jackson Counties can be accomplished more quickly. Last year, St. Stephen’s Food Bank distributed 1,511,407 meals of nutritious high-quality food in Dubuque and Jackson Counties.

“This is an extremely exciting time to be part of the successful merger of St. Stephen’s Food Bank with River Bend Foodbank,” says Jeff Streinz, Board Chair of St. Stephen’s Food Bank. “This merger will bless St. Stephen’s Food Bank with economies of scale resulting in greater quantities and quality of food, improved logistics, and a more efficient use of our personnel, equipment, and volunteers, thus helping us inch ever closer to our goal of ending hunger in our community.”

The same resources will continue to be utilized and expanded upon in Dubuque and Jackson counties, with more programs added as needed.

“Congratulations to everyone involved with St. Stephen’s Food Bank,” said Michael Miller, President & CEO of River Bend Foodbank. “The Board, employees, volunteers, partner agencies, food donors, and financial contributors have been feeding hungry people for over 30 years. River Bend Foodbank is excited about deepening our partnership with St. Stephen’s in Dubuque, and we look forward to working with everyone in the community toward our shared goal of ending hunger in eastern Iowa and western Illinois.”

Fill the Bowl was held on Sunday, December 9th, at the Foodbank. Approximately 200 community members came together to share in a meal, participate in a volunteer activity, and learn more about the hunger issue in our community.

Many people had never had the opportunity to visit the Foodbank before, so this was a great occasion for them to see our facility and to learn more about our mission.

This event could not have been possible without our sponsors: Cobham Mission Systems, Heart of America Group, Hy-Vee Avenue of the Cities Moline, Marie Ziegler, Quad City Storm

Women Fighting Hunger
Thursday, March 28, 2019
Rhythm City Casino – 7077 Elmore Ave., Davenport, IA

Featuring a keynote by Nataly Kogan, CEO and Founder of Happier Inc., a global technology and learning platform, and author of Happier Now: How to Stop Chasing Perfection and Embrace Everyday Moments.

$400 for a table of 10
$45 for a single ticket

Purchase tickets at riverbendfoodbank.org/women-fighting-hunger.

Registration deadline is March 22, 2019!

WELCOME ST. STEPHEN’S!

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Michael Miller, President & CEO
River Bend Foodbank

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A Branch of River Bend Foodbank

In-kind sponsors: Hy-Vee Avenue of the Cities Moline, Marie Ziegler, Quad City Storm