

## Give Now During the March Campaign!

Your donation during March will make a difference in the lives of area families who struggle to put food on their tables during the summer months when children are home from school and more meals are needed.

The Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign was created to help food shelves purchase food through the busy summer months. The campaign is a program of the Minneapolis Council of Churches, who brings together businesses, faith communities and individuals to raise matching funds to help food shelves across the state. This is one of the times of the year when your dollar will be stretched through a partial match by the FoodShare campaign. Please consider making a donation of significance to BCFS at this time to help us continue our great work here in northern Minnesota.



### From the President

“Whatever you did for the least of these...”  
*Matthew 25:40*

It was just last month that we gathered together for our Annual Meeting. Thanks to all who helped with food and the many details that are a part of our gathering. The meeting provided a good review of last year's work and a challenge for the many opportunities that 2018 brings. I am grateful for our Director, Mary Mitchell, and our executive committee for the strong leadership they provide.

I want to extend a special word of appreciation to the stores in our community who donate thousands of pounds of food to us each year. Our work would not be possible without their generous support.

2018 is a time of transition for our Food Shelf. Enid Peterson, our board secretary, is retiring. Thanks Enid for your fine work and great attitude as you have served us well. Our Farm Manager, Hannah Klemm resigned in February. Hannah's work provides a base on which we will continue expand our farm production. Great work Hannah! Candy Barthel, our Assistant Farm Manager has



## MARCH 2018 NEWSLETTER

resigned as well. Candy and her husband John have made significant contributions to the Food Shelf through the years. Thanks Candy for your work. Continue to pray for John and Candy as they move into a new chapter of their lives.

In the coming months we plan to complete the re-organization of our Board of Directors. This is an on-going conversation that I am excited about. We need your help as we seek people to fill these important positions. Please let Mary or myself know of gifted people who may be a good fit for our outreach. Please let your congregations and community contacts know of our need.

March brings the Minnesota Food Share Campaign. We join with Food Shelves throughout the state in raising funds and gathering food to serve the needy. This is a vital part of our work.

We continue to look for someone to rent our warehouse. The rent we receive is a big help with our mortgage payments.

We are grateful for longer days and the hope of spring. Isn't it good to know that our work brings hope to many in our community who have so many needs? Be encouraged! Our work makes a significant impact on the lives of many!

---Jim Fretheim, BCFS Board President

### Update! Sleigh Ride ~~March 18~~ March 25



The Go and Whoa Harness club is again hosting a sleigh ride to benefit the food shelf! If you enjoy horses, snow and fresh air, this event is for you. Bring the whole family to the Beltrami County Fairgrounds ~~March 18<sup>th</sup> from 1-4 p.m~~ March 25 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. If there is no snow, there will be wagon rides. This is a great event for the whole family. 100% of the free-will donations will go to the food shelf.

## Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

Thank you to all who attended our wonderful annual meeting on February 10. We re-elected Jack Judkins as Vice-President and elected Delphine Jacobsen as our new Board Secretary. We said goodbye to Enid Peterson, who did a fantastic job as our secretary for the past few years and will be moving out of town. We also bid farewell, but not goodbye, to our Farm Staff, Hannah Klemm and Candy Barthel, who both have family commitments but who will remain in the area and I hope, visit often. We recognized the work of our amazing volunteers who really keep this place going. Jack Judkins received special recognition for his work with the Farm Project and continued dedication to the Food Shelf. Thank you to everyone who contributes to our mission. We would not be here without your support.

I would like to share a few highlights with you from 2017:

- In February, we elected a new President – Jim Fretheim – and said goodbye to Bill Beyer
- We reached the 10,000 pound milestone for the Lueken's Community Meat Program
- We exceeded our goal of \$110,000 for the 2017 Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign, and took in 31,233.00 pounds of food
- We received \$30,000 for a van from the NFL Legacy Fund and purchased a commercial van
- We welcomed our amazing VISTA, Emily Schaeffer of York, PA, who has been working diligently to find ways in which we can strengthen our volunteer program.
- Hannah and I were interviewed by Mark Oppenheim for an Insight video which has run multiple times on Lakeland TV - <https://www.moppenheim.tv/insight-bemidji-community-food-shelf-mary-mitchell-hannah-klemm/>
- We built a Deep Winter Greenhouse and have since hosted both an open house and a training
- We got a new website: [www.bcfsmn.org](http://www.bcfsmn.org)
- We got a new logo, submitted by an area artist
- We harvested 11,000 of produce on the Farm
- We dedicated a Peace Pole
- We had a super successful and very enjoyable Harvest Ball

- We received a CERTS grant to help install LED lighting throughout the building.
- We served 2,924 families who made 11,282 visits and received 857,903 pounds of food.

~ Mary Mitchell, BCFS Director

## T-Shirts for Sale



You will look awesome in your new BCFS T-Shirt! They come in men's and women's styles in all sizes. Stop by or give us a call at 218-444-6580. All shirts are \$12, regardless of size.

## New Website

The food shelf has a new website! The address is [www.bcfsmn.org](http://www.bcfsmn.org). Please check it out and let us know what you think. If you go to the "Get Involved" tab, you will see job descriptions for the volunteer positions at the food shelf and on the Farm. We think that giving people more information about what is involved will help them find a good fit for their time and experience. It is a work in progress so your suggestions are welcome!

## What is #GiveHealthy?

#GiveHealthy is an online giving platform just for groups to support food shelves and food banks. Groups doing food drives can choose their purchases from a variety of healthy foods that will go directly to the food shelf. This is a great way to support the food shelf because it is easy, and the foods on the list are healthy and ones which we identified as needed. For more information or to donate, please go here: <http://givehealthy.org/>

## 2017 Farm Report

This past year has been filled with successes and challenges for the BCFS Farm Project. Despite disease and a cool season and early frost, the 2017 Harvest was our most productive yet contributing about 11,000 pounds. Over the past four growing seasons, the Farm has produced and distributed around 35,000 pounds of produce to BCFS customers.

The past summer's construction of a Deep Winter Greenhouse in partnership with the University of Minnesota will prove to be a significant addition to the Farm's infrastructure. With it, we will be able to grow salad greens all year and also have a designated space for starting the Farm's bedding plants.

Differently-abled farmers from the Developmental Achievement Center and low-income families participating in the Community Raised Bed Project (CRBP) completed another growing season. Assistant Farm Manager, Candy Barthel led these outreach efforts. Both groups learned new gardening skills and the CRBP participants also learned about healthy eating and food preparation with Beltrami County SNAP-Ed educator, Deb Dille. Unfortunately, due to a lack of funding these programs will not continue in 2018.

With all of this activity, the Farm offers hundreds of hours of volunteer opportunities to hundreds of volunteers. The Oak 5 team of the National Civilian Community Corps which joined us early this summer was

instrumental in this success by helping plant, mulch and tend our young plants. Overall, 268 volunteers served 2,213 hours with the Farm. Without their hard work, we wouldn't be able to do what we do.

Those who toured BCFS and its Farm Project over the last year nearly always found our approach to hunger relief a source of inspiration. BCFS illustrates that food insecurity isn't just a lack of access to calories, but a lack of access to good nutrition and thus to good health. We have thus joined a larger, visionary movement towards reconciling hunger relief and access to healthy food.

The Farm is entering a new phase of existence as the grant that supported our beginnings comes to an end. Having graduated from a pilot project, we must come to terms with the need for sustainable financial support. The second year of our largest fundraiser, the Harvest Ball, was a great success but we must narrow our focus to conserve our resources while looking for new and creative financial sources.

### ~Hannah Klemm, Outgoing Farm Manager

#### CERTS Award

We are very excited to announce that with the help of an award from the Clean Energy Resource Team, we are upgrading the lighting throughout our large facility. Our location in the Bemidji Industrial Park is comprised of an office area, a large shopping area, and a warehouse, which together make up 12,480 square feet. We will be replacing

our existing florescent lighting with LEDs and adding motion sensors in the bathrooms and warehouse. Lighting in coolers and freezers will also be upgraded.

The award is one of 39 grants given to innovative renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in communities across Minnesota. These awards mark the ninth round of Seed Grants from the group, totalling over \$1 million to 300 projects since 2006. A complete list of funded projects can be accessed at <http://mncerts.org/2018grants>.

### Healthy Food, Healthy Lives

BCFS has been awarded a grant of \$24, 584 for its proposed project, "Nudging Our Way to Health". The grant comes from the Healthy Food, Healthy Lives Institute at the University of Minnesota.

The project will develop new ways in which we can encourage or "nudge" our customers to make healthier choices in the food shelf. Surveys will be employed to determine what greens our households prefer to guide us in our planting of the Deep Winter Greenhouse. Deb Dille of the U of MN Extension will train volunteers to encourage healthy customer choices. Store organization and product placement will also be reviewed. In addition, we will be conducting at least one focus group to identify barriers to customer participation in the Farm Project.

Stand by for healthy changes coming soon!



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[www.bcfsmn.org](http://www.bcfsmn.org)

Check us out on Facebook!

**Hours of Operation:**

MWF 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and  
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Every 3rd Monday

**Bemidji Community Food Shelf  
Contribution Form – MARCH 2018**

Mail completed form and your tax-deductible contribution to:  
BCFS, P.O. Box 3118, Bemidji, MN 56619-3118

Here is my tax-deductible gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to support the work of the Bemidji Community Food Shelf.  
(Please make check payable to: BCFS)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your support!*

\_\_\_\_\_ Please contact me about volunteering!

\_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in becoming a monthly (sustaining) supporter.

(See [www.bcfsmn.org](http://www.bcfsmn.org) and click on “Donate Now”.)

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like this donation to go toward the BCFS Farm Project

\_\_\_\_\_ Please contact me with information about making a Legacy Gift to the BCFS.

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to receive future newsletters via email.

Telephone/Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_