



BEMIDJI COMMUNITY FOOD SHELF NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2017

Meet the New President: Jim Fretheim

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. Matthew 25:35

Thanks to everyone who came to our Annual Meeting. It was a time of celebration as we heard the reports of staff and board members. Those in attendance enjoyed a wonderful soup lunch and fellowship before the meeting began. It is clear that the work we are involved in is making a difference in the lives of many in our community.

Special recognition was given to our President Bill Beyer who is completing eight years of faithful service. He was given gifts and a standing ovation in appreciation for his service. It was good to hear Bill say that he will be around to serve in any way that he can. Thanks again Bill!



Outgoing President Bill Beyer (L) with Newly Elected President Jim Fretheim

It is my privilege to succeed Bill as your president. Bill and our Vice President, Jack, have promised to coach me in the many details of this ministry. I look forward to getting acquainted with our staff and board members.

I am a retired pastor in the Evangelical Covenant Church of America. I retired as Superintendent of our Northwest Conference in 2011. Our Northwest Conference includes congregations in MN, WI, ND and SD. My wife Kathy and I have been married for 44 years and have two adult children and one grandchild in St. Paul. The distribution of food and clothing has been a vital part of the work of many of our congregations.

This outreach is certainly a team effort. Our task as a board is to bring strong support to our staff and cadre of volunteers as we seek to bring food and hope to the many who are in need in our community.

I will be grateful for your wisdom and help as we work together!

If this is all new to you I invite you to join our dedicated crew of volunteers as we seek to bring nourishment and encouragement to those who enter our doors. –**Jim Fretheim**



March Match!

During March, BCFS joins food shelves throughout the state who participate in the **Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign** coordinated through the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (GMCC).

It is because of this campaign that we are able to keep food on the shelves and pay our staff and utilities through the summer months.

It is interesting to note that use of the food shelf spikes in the summer at a time when donations are at their very lowest.

At the end of March we will report to the GMCC, which will send us a partial matching donation that really makes a difference. **Please donate in March and stretch your dollar!** Watch our Facebook page to follow our progress toward our goal of \$110,000 and 50,000 pounds of food!

Did you know?

- 1 in 10 Minnesota families experiences food insecurity.
- In 2015 there were over 3.2 million food shelf visits in Minnesota, half of which were made by children and seniors.
- Last year the March Campaign raised more than 5.2 million pounds of food and \$7.9 million for food shelves around the state.
- 100% of contributions go towards hunger relief.
- Bemidji Community Food Shelf can make each dollar donated stretch further through its access to low-cost products.

Spring Brings New Beginnings to the BCFS Farm

A couple of weeks ago, as I was driving home, I noticed with sudden glee that it was 5 pm and I didn't yet need headlights. Maybe it's the longer days or the unseasonably warm air but about this time of year certain restlessness sets in. For me it's the undeniable itch to feel the cool, damp soil between my fingers as I push tiny seeds into the earth.

The delights of the growing season call to me when our landscape is still blanketed in snow but we can all feel the sun getting stronger and know in our bones we don't have long to wait. The anticipation and excitement to start seeds and get out there and transplant pushes me to think about all of the work and all of the rewards that will come when the ground thaws.

Planting may be my favorite part of farming but it requires a little forethought and so does the rest of the farm. So that is mostly what we're doing right now: planning. I'm the new kid as of January, so I'm doing a lot of learning as I go too. Luckily, I'm inspired by the intents and accomplishments of the Farm: wanting not to provide people just with calories, but with the freshest, healthiest produce we can. And also I have lots of help!

We can always use more hands to make our labors light. So if you too are itching to get outside, let us know! Whether you want to help out on the farm for an hour or for a day (or maybe even more frequently), we'll find something fun for you to do.

Hannah Klemm
BCFS Farm Manager

Farm Shout-Outs!

Our area SNAP-Ed educator, Deb Dille, along with a number of collaborators is working on a project called One Vegetable, One Community which focuses on creating space in our community for conversations about our food. For more information please check out the website (<http://www.veggieoftheyear.com/>)

We're looking forward to another growing season with the Community Raised Bed Project. We currently have 30 beds at low-income housing units around the city and are seeking a person to

aid Farm staff in kicking-off the growing season and providing on-going assistance to the families that manage them.

We are in need of 5 gallon-buckets to use as tomato planters for the Community Raised Bed Project. If you have some to donate please contact the farm or bring them in.

We are also getting ready to work for another year with the Developmental Achievement Center (DAC) clients to maintain the raised beds outside the warehouse. DAC Farmers come to the Farm three days a week (one hour on MWF) during the growing season to plant, weed and harvest. Volunteers can help with these activities along with setup and clean-up for these work days.

We need folks to help build and install raised beds as a fundraiser for the Farm. With planting season on its way, we are gearing up for this project so let us know ASAP if you would like to help!

We will be starting seeds in the coming weeks for transplants for the Farm. We will be putting demo shelves in the lobby and will have a growing space in the warehouse as well. Let us know if you want to get your hands dirty.

If you are interested in becoming involved in these projects or would like to volunteer on the farm, please contact the Farm Manager Hannah Klemm at bcfsgarden@paulbunyan.net or 218-444-6580.

What's a Deep Winter Greenhouse?

Over the summer of 2017, we will be constructing a deep winter greenhouse in which we will be able to grow greens throughout the winter for our customers. This project will be with the University of Minnesota. A total of five similar greenhouses are being constructed in different regions of the state. Results will be compared to determine what practices work the best. Stay tuned for more information!



RSVP Volunteer Spotlight: Carl Newman



About 2 ½ years ago I received a phone call at my office from Carl Newman. He said he was interested in finding some volunteer opportunities in the Bemidji area. Carl and I met for a cup of coffee to talk about all the options available. RSVP partners with 23 agencies in Beltrami County, so there are plenty of options.

Carl decided to check out the Bemidji Community Food Shelf. He met director Mary Mitchell and she plugged him into the volunteer schedule. He now volunteers every afternoon that the food shelf is open. He was not joking when he said he'd have extra time on his hands after retiring and selling his downtown Bemidji business. In the last 2 ½ years Carl has logged 1,257 hours! Wow!

Carl says "I've met some really fun people and also some really thankful people. Every day is a different experience with new people to meet and new situations to encounter."

And Carl claims to know

every one of the volunteers here at the food shelf since he volunteers every Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoon. If you haven't met Carl, prove him wrong by stopping by to introduce yourself.

Thanks, Carl, for sharing your time at the Bemidji Community Food Shelf!

By Jane Furuseth, Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) Coordinator

The RSVP office for Beltrami County is located at the Bemidji Community Food Shelf.

'Like Us' on Facebook for stories, photos and events about our RSVP program and volunteers:
RSVP Volunteer Services: Beltrami, Cass, Lake of the Woods, and Morrison

What is Planned Giving?

Planned giving is sometimes known as gift planning. A planned gift is a major gift that is made as part of a person's estate planning either over time or at death.

Planned giving allows individuals to support non-profits and charities in a more substantial way than they can by using their discretionary income. This can be done simply as a bequest in a will, or using annuities or trusts that will return income to the donor at the same time.

While at this time the food shelf does not have a planned giving program, individuals can work with their financial planners to

craft a plan that works for them. Financial planners in the Bemidji area include Thrivent, Edward Jones Financial, and Ameriprise Financial.

For more information, contact Mary at 218-444-6580.

"Our Family" Barcodes

BCFS is able to collect a five cent rebate for each Our Family barcode we send in to Nash Finch. Recently we earned \$1,000 by sending in a large package of code labels. Please remember to donate Our Family products, and also to save and drop off barcodes from the Our Family products you use at home.

Food Shelf 2016

In 2016 we once again found that about 70% of families who use the food shelf came in only 1-4 times a year. Our highest usage in 2016 was in June. We served 2,716 families who made 10,178 visits and received 710,705 pounds of food. Thank you to everyone who helps us serve!

Thank You!



2017 Annual Meeting – Table Placemats

Thanks to Eric Carlson's Kelliher 2015-2016 third and fourth grade art classes for the beautiful placemats for our annual meeting! In addition to the art, they included tips for a healthy diet.



Bemidji Community Food Shelf (BCFS)

NEWSLETTER/MARCH 2017

1260 Exchange Avenue SE

Bemidji, MN 56601 (218) 444-6580

bcfs@paulbunyan.net

Hours of Operation:

MWF 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and

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

We're on the Web!

www.bemidjifoodshelf.org

Like us on Facebook!

Bemidji Community Food Shelf Contribution Form - MARCH 2017

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: _____

_____ I am interested in volunteering.

Thank you for your support!

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

(See www.bemidjifoodshelf.org, and click on an amount; then click on
"Donate Now".)

_____ I am interested in supporting The FARM at BCFS.

_____ 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: _____