

HARVEST

Newsletter

Neighbors Helping Neighbors



"I have never seen a male student cry..."

During our staff meetings we love to share stories that particularly touch our hearts and at the last meeting we spent a great deal of time talking about an Assistant Professor at UAF who saw a student in need. The story was so tender that we gave the Assistant Professor, Dr. Walkie Charles, a call and here was his version:

A student came to me and told me that he was very embarrassed. His father drank up all the student's spending money and the student, his wife, and their 4 year old son were left without resources to pay for food. They just moved into town and had nothing. What brought the student to a breaking point was the simple question of his 4 year old son: "Can I have some juice?" The student's response was "I am sorry, son, drink some water. That is all we have."

Dr. Charles was touched by this story and decided to seek help for this young family. He was expecting to jump through a bunch of hoops but in his words: "I only had to make one call, and YOU (Fairbanks Community Food Bank) answered."

After giving us the information needed to prepare the food box Dr. Charles sent another student over to pick up the one box of food. And much to his surprise, there wasn't one box, but multiple. "Oh, there's more!" That was what Dr. Charles kept hearing. "Oh, there's more!"

When he was able to deliver the food to the student in need Dr. Charles said there were no words to describe the level of gratitude felt by the student. The student was so thankful that someone had taken the time to help him that his heartfelt response will always be remembered by Dr. Charles: "I wish I had a father like you."

Sometimes the days are long and hard here at the Fairbanks Community Food Bank and sometimes we wonder if we are making the impact that we need to be making. Talking with Dr. Charles today, and hearing things like: "We are so blessed to have this Food Bank. Food creates community and this food bank is truly a Community Food Bank. You are the epitome of community, the epitome of love." That is a great thought for our staff members to take home at night. Thank you Dr. Charles for recognizing a student in need, and acting on your concerns.

Thank you Fairbanks for helping our neighbors who have no idea where their next meal will come from. We can only give out what we receive each day, and every day is different! We ended our conversation talking about the amazing generosity of this community. We truly live in an amazing place. Thank you!



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Our Mission Statement

The mission of this Food Bank is to:

- Encourage those who can to share food from your cupboards and gardens.
- If you are a commercial food vendor, review your salvage food policies to make sure you eliminate as much food waste as possible.
- Collect surplus food in the community and share it with local people who need it.

BOARD MEMBERS 2011

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If you would like to receive our e-blast newsletters and event notices, please send your email addresses to anne@fairbanksfoodbank.org.

Did you have a cup of coffee this morning?

Some people in our community could not afford one. Help us help them by purchasing HARD TIMES coffee, thanks to our sponsors North Pole Coffee Roasting Company. \$3 for a sample package.



Food Assistance Model

Our Food Bank helps meet the most urgent food assurance needs for people who don't know where their next meal is coming from. We know that people in our community, over half of them children, end up hungry for a lot of different reasons, and our job is to help fill empty bellies.

Other partner organizations are very involved in making sure that people in our community have more consistent access to food, through the food stamp program, school meals, and other programs. When we are able to meet the urgent needs of our customers, these partner organizations can take over and help them move to a better place for themselves and their families. While people on such programs are past the stage where we are most helpful to them, they are on their way to improving their lives, and take greater responsibility for meeting their own food assurance needs.

When our customers can move beyond their urgent situations, and then can find greater access to consistent food, they can start to think more about making healthy food choices. We have a role to play here, too – that's why it is so important for us as a food provider to have strong partnerships with WIC and Cooperative Extension Service, that help through food and nutrition education, mentoring, and advocacy. When people make the choice to eat healthy foods, they are really taking much greater responsibility for their own nutrition.

We love to hear stories and see people who move through this model from urgent food needs immediately met, which allows them to achieve greater food consistency, and ultimately being able to choose the most healthy foods. It is always important for Food Bank donors, volunteers and staff, and board of directors to remember that we are part of a strong foundation of food assurance in our community.

Wild Game Donation Act

We really appreciate Congressman Young's attempt to help Alaska's food banks keep their freezers full of fish and game. Here is an article reprinted from *Fairbanks Daily News Miner*, Oct 16 2011. If this bill is enacted, it is one more way to help this food bank. **Thank you Congressman Young!**

Article written by Tim Mowry (tmowry@newsminer.com).

Young, Alaska's lone and longtime Congressman, introduced a bill earlier this month that would make hunters who donate game meat to food-based charities like the Food Bank of Alaska (**and Fairbanks Community Food Bank**) eligible for a tax deduction for the processing cost of their wild game.

The bill also provides a tax credit for processors who take part in the program.

The Wild Game Donation Act, bill, H.R. 3142, was filed Oct. 6 and requires that all animals are killed in accordance with state

and local laws and by the individual making the contribution.

"When the Food Bank of Alaska tells me that 93,000 Alaskans don't know where their next meal is coming from, there is a real problem," Young said in a press release earlier this week. "Our state has far too many resources for any Alaskan to be hungry. My bill will begin to help solve that problem while also providing an economic incentive for hunters to donate their game."

Young said he anticipates "broad bipartisan support" for the bill.

We Need 18-30-Year-Olds

Generational experts tell us that 18-30-year-olds are so busy they do not have time to work at their food banks and other local charities. They spend all their awake time going to school, starting a family, starting new jobs...there just isn't enough time left in the day.

That has not been our experience at this local food bank. One-third of our volunteers are local students, many have various community projects, work sites come here to do team-building projects because it increases job satisfaction, parents with young children like to "tour" and parents with children a little older like to come spend time with them "doing good" in our community. Fairbanks is a wonderful place to live and work. We are always the exception to what experts say about other communities – **and we like it that way.**

We are, however, learning new ways to communicate, so 18-30-year-olds can hear us/find us. See the article below from our *Fairbanks Daily NewsMiner*.

We also love our **BLOG** on the new website. It gives us more opportunity to brag about all the wonderful donors and their projects to make our community a healthier place for those who woke up this morning, wondering where their next meal would come from.

Thanks for sharing your great stories of how you collected the food, why you want to share, how you are "giving back" to the community in your activities...there is so much negative news blaring all day every day. At this Food Bank we enjoy telling the story of the world of Interior Alaska as seen through the eyes of those who care for one another...those who roll up their shirt sleeves and put their muscles to work. We are not talkers here in this geography, we are **DOERS!**

Fairbanks food bank accepting donations online

by Mary Beth Smetzer / msmetzer@newsminer.com

Oct 15, 2011

FAIRBANKS — A new way of supporting the Fairbanks Community Food Bank went online this month with the launching of a Virtual Canned Food Drive on its website — www.fairbanksfoodbank.org.

Donors can select canned food or donate money while sitting in a desk or easy chair, and even specify if they want the donation attributed to a particular 1,000 pound community group Canned Food Drive.

With a quick click on a shopping bag logo, donors may select specific grocery items from several shelves of food — be it turkey or canned peaches, peanut butter and rice, or a truckload of food for a \$1,000 donation. The choice is up to the donor and the food bank does the rest.

"This is a new concept; we don't know if it will work or not, but we are making it more fun and easier to donate," said Samantha Kirstein, food bank executive director. "We are hoping that more people will do it."

Focusing on collecting canned food electronically for the food bank is directed towards attracting the younger generation. "We're trying to capture the crowd that doesn't have cans in their pockets or are

not accustomed to doing canned food drives," Kirstein said.

"I had my staff read 'Who Moved My Cheese,' because change is the constant these days in the new reality we are all experiencing."

There's even talk about iPhone apps among food bank board members and volunteers.

A local Americana band, the five-member Anna Lee Company, has picked up the concept and Friday night put up a banner that said, "We'll Sing for Food," and set up a computer to encourage patrons to donate to the virtual food drive during their gig at The Pub on the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus.

The week before, they passed around a laptop while performing at the College Coffeehouse, and 100 pounds of canned food was donated — virtually of course.

"We're out there, and even if just a few people pick up the idea, it's giving back," said Marie Mitchell. "It's kind of like a side mission of the band."

Mitchell has volunteered from time to time at the food bank and knows the demand for food has gone up in the past few years.

She thinks the virtual canned food drive will not only help raise funds but allow the organization to procure more nutritious food and select most needed foods for food boxes and agency distributions.

The virtual food drive concept is being tested and used in other states as well, Kirstein said, adding, "It's kind of a giant new step for us."

"We're taking this one step at a time. We know the future is in their hands," Kirstein said, referring to the younger generation.

"We want them to access community food as we have and have the joy of sharing."



Sponsored by:

Fred Meyer

How can you help?



If you have "extra" money or can make an extra donation this time of the year because of the permanent fund dividend, please consider a gift to your local, home-grown, made in Alaska, food bank.

Our government grant funds are 10%. We are just folks here in the Tanana Valley who have DARED TO CARE and are helping folks in Interior Alaska, and we have been doing that job since 1982. Your help is definitely needed to keep the doors open and to continue to do the important tasks of recycling usable food. We certainly cannot do this work without your support. Please go to www.fairbanksfoodbank.org to make a donation.



Scan with your smart phone to donate now.

Thank You!!

Pick.Click.Give.

Please think of Fairbanks Community Food Bank and our important mission as you file for your 2012 PFD in January. When you go on-line to sign up for your PFD dividend (www.pfd.state.ak.us), you will see the option called PICK.CLICK.GIVE. Search for us by name, Fairbanks Community Food Bank. Click and follow the instructions to make a new donation, or an additional gift. Additional information on this program can be found at www.PickClickGive.org or by calling Sam at 456-7267. Thanks again!



Volunteer!

COMMUNITY SERVICE and our operations are inseparable. We provide the opportunity for citizens to give their time and talents to help us reduce hunger in our community.

The hundreds of volunteers who donate thousands of hours each year make it possible for us to serve many thousands of people who would otherwise go hungry. We invite you to become a Food Bank Volunteer! Call 45-SHARE (457-4273) and ask for the volunteer coordinator.

Donate Food!

PLANT A ROW FOR THE FOOD BANK!
Take the best locally grown items you have to the Food Bank.

Donated produce is low this summer.
We need and appreciate your help!

Call Sam at 456-7267 with questions.

DONATE AT www.fairbanksfoodbank.org


