

Food Notes

The Newsletter of Food For People • The Food Bank of Humboldt County

Summer Issue, 2011



Stamping Out Hunger!

By Jason Whitley,
Local Food Resources Coordinator

The 19th annual National Association of Letter Carriers' Food Drive was a success due to the hard work and dedication of the Letter Carriers' Union, Postal Staff, and the many volunteers who devoted an entire day to unload, sort and box food donations.

Each year we at Food for People are amazed at the generosity of Humboldt County residents. The sheer volume of food donations that arrived as part of the Letter Carriers Food Drive was astounding. Here in Eureka and throughout the county, residents pitched in to help out their neighbors in need. The food that was received helped replenish the shelves of local food pantries that rely on this food drive to carry them through the summer months. We would like to extend our deepest appreciation to Dustin

Roberto, Dana Utman, and all Letter Carriers, who worked hard to collect the more than 35,000 pounds of food countywide.

Heartfelt thanks also go out to the 106 dedicated volunteers who donated 341 hours to this important effort. Local businesses also provided support by supplying food to volunteers, staff and Postal Employees. The restaurants that helped us feed everyone here in Eureka were very generous. Thanks to Go Go Bistro, Oberon Grill, Big Louie's, Angelo's and Papa Murphy's for all of the food that helped us get through this event. Several Eureka businesses helped out by posting reminders about the food drive on their marquees. We would also like to express our gratitude to Safeway, John's Cigars, Country Club Market and Coldwell Banker for use of their parking lots

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The People's Produce Markets By Ivy Matheny, Food Distribution Coordinator

Families from all over Eureka came out in record numbers to the food bank on July 21st to collect fresh fruits and vegetables for their families. The patient line of 297 households stretched to wrap completely around 3 sides of the Food for People building, excited to participate in the monthly farmers' market-style produce distribution. Families conversed and made new friends in line while being entertained by local musician Dale Winget, enjoying hot food samples prepared with available produce, and connecting with nutrition experts and local resource representatives.

This market season, participants have collected a generous variety of fresh produce items such

as spinach, plums, potatoes, onions, corn and mixed baby salad greens. The market is offered completely free of cost for our income eligible community members at our four market sites in Humboldt county. The markets are offered in addition to the monthly distribution of food boxes, and appointments are not necessary. As in previous years, distributions will run throughout the summer, concluding in October. Markets are located at Food for People in Eureka, Fortuna Community Services, the Garberville Presbyterian Church and the Redway Baptist Church.

Last season, these People's Produce Markets served an average of 520 households per month with fresh fruits and vegetables. All in all, over 191,000 pounds of healthy,

nutritious produce items were distributed last season, in addition to the 27,000 pounds of other bonus foods! This season, select sites may also be offered vegetable plant starts for home gardens.

Food for People offers these markets to ensure that low-income families throughout Humboldt County have access to the fresh fruits and vegetables necessary to support a healthy diet. Sources for the produce provided at these markets come from several partner organizations. The primary source of funding comes from a generous Care for the Poor Grant from St. Joseph's Health System of Humboldt County. The California Emergency Foodlink program called "Donate, Don't Dump" captures market surplus

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In This Issue

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We feel it's important to keep you, our supporters, updated on the programs and progress we are making at the food bank. If you do not wish to receive a newsletter, please don't hesitate to contact us and have your name removed from our newsletter mailing list.

Spotlight on Volunteers

By Laura Hughes, Volunteer Coordinator

It's a sunny Tuesday afternoon at the food bank and the Choice Pantry is bustling along as usual. A large contingent of volunteers is working hard to serve our community and keep our programs going. As I walk around the warehouse and pantry on rounds, I chat with our crew to hear more about why they volunteer with us at the food bank and what they like about working here. Everyone agreed they love the volunteer lunches! Here's what else they had to say:

Susanne works at the Front Desk as the receptionist, which can be a challenging job on a busy day. Her favorite color is pink, she loves listening to Carrie Underwood and Taylor Swift, and you can catch her outside reading on her breaks, something she loves to do when she has the time. Susanne hails from Whittier, California, and likes working at the food bank because she loves working with people. She's seen many friends come in whom she was able to help, and is proud to work for such a good community resource.

Tim has been volunteering at the food bank for four years. He helps out as the Front Desk receptionist at times and also does the job of Intake Interviewer. We have another pink lover and he is a self professed Gleek (loves the music and songs from the show).

Going to the beach is his favorite thing to do and he originally comes from North Carolina. Tim tells us he likes helping people get food because he knows what it is not to have any.

Bill works as an Intake Interviewer and his favorite color is blue. He loves Gospel music and his favorite hobby is oil painting (when he finds the time). He is originally from Indiana (via Colorado) but has been living here in Humboldt County for 22 years. Bill likes working at the food bank, "putting a smile on people's faces and seeing them happy - come on down, you're the next contestant!"

Tyler volunteers as a Gleaning assistant and Warehouse assistant. His favorite color is forest green and his favorite band is Sublime. He enjoys hiking in the forest and is originally from Long Beach, California. Tyler likes that we feed people. He admires the Girl Scout group that came to help out this week, noting their positivity and enthusiasm. He is also impressed by how much the farmers in our community give to the food bank.

Matty grew up volunteering for us, originally helping out with our Child Nutrition Program, but also participating with food drives, gleaning, stocking, pantry and more! He tends toward dark blue and listens to Classic Rock. He can't decide whether he likes do-

ing yard work or sleeping better. He was born and raised in Kneeland, California.

What Matty likes about working at the food bank is serving his community. Matty says he has come to realize over his past years of working with us how many people actually do need help meeting their daily needs. He is impressed by the many hardworking people devoted to their community. He is truly sad to be leaving us after many years of service (off to attend college) and says he is eternally thankful for the many friends he's made while here.

Desiree is the Warehouse Crew Leader and likes red. Her favorite music is Fleetwood Mac and she pulls out the puzzles at home when she has free time. She hails from Sacramento, California and likes working at the food bank because food makes people happy. She tells us she is happy to be working with such a great group of people

and gain valuable work experience.

Yia is a Warehouse Assistant and also favors red. He likes Hip Hop and fishing (but probably not at the same time). He comes to us from Fresno by way of Thailand and Portland, Oregon. Yia appreciates the friendly atmosphere at Food for People and feels good about giving back to the community.

Hank is a Warehouse Assistant who loves blue and listens to Phish
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Susanne and Tim work together at the front desk (on left), Matty stocks fresh produce for the Choice Pantry (top) and Shawn sorts non-perishable donations in the warehouse (bottom).

DONATE ONLINE BY GOING TO: www.foodforpeople.org

CLICK ON THE LINK:



Network for Good™

Notes from the Director

Keeping it Local

By Anne Holcomb



Buy fresh, buy local. Buy local and support local businesses. The “buy local” mantra has been gaining steam in recent years, thanks to some great campaigns sponsored by local businesses, the Chamber of Commerce and the North Coast Growers’ Association. We’ve all seen the bumper stickers, listened to the ads on TV and radio and heard from local businesses that are competing with the “big box” stores for customers. Each one tells us how important our business is to their bottom lines. And since we all want to see our local farmers and businesses survive and thrive, we do our best to support them.

Giving locally is a natural extension of that local focus, and

is one that has served Humboldt County’s nonprofit community very well over the years. Humboldt County is continually cited for having one of the highest levels of giving per capita in the state, despite our isolated location, struggling economy and a poverty rate of 21%. It is a reflection of how much we care about the health of our communities and the people who live here. We take care of each other. That spirit of caring also prompts us to step up when people in other parts of the country or around the world are faced with natural disasters or other challenges. But we don’t lose sight of the importance of helping the person next door.

Food for People couldn’t be more grateful to all those who “**give locally.**” You do it in three very different ways that are equally important in terms of our ability to serve the local community.

Your giving includes the fresh fruits and vegetables harvested from backyard gardens and orchards; the produce gleaned from our generous local farmers; the food donated by local grocery stores who want to see those “close to pull date” items used to feed someone rather than put it in a dumpster; and the tens of thousands of pounds of food that

is collected through food drives, large and small. Some of these food drives are sponsored by local businesses who engage their customers and employees. Others are sponsored by churches, civic groups, service clubs and individuals, young and old. They ask us what we need and set to work gathering the desired items.

The financial donations are just as important and reach us in much the same way. Some of our supporters make a monthly, quarterly or annual pledge. Some respond to our direct mail appeals or attend special fundraising events. Others just give what they can when they can, or organize their own events or giving opportunities. It is all very much appreciated, especially since we have to raise more than two thirds of our operating costs annually. Given the draconian budget cuts at the local, state and federal levels, there is no way we could serve all those who need our help without that base of local financial support. It also holds true that when we have money to spend on food, we spend it at our local stores. Last year, including the funds provided through ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act), we spent more than \$265,000 at local grocery stores, keeping that circle of sup-

port intact.

And last but not least, are the donations of your time and talents. Last year, volunteers of all ages donated almost 30,000 hours of their time – the equivalent of 16 full time staff positions. It’s a great way to learn more about the organization and the people we serve. Some folks apply their specialized skills in cooking, carpentry, landscaping, graphic design, gardening or entertaining kids at summer lunch sites, while others roll up their sleeves, willing to sort produce, mop floors, answer phones and generally do whatever it takes to keep things running smoothly. Once again, it’s local community members going the extra mile to help their friends and neighbors.

We would like to extend our warmest thanks to each and every one of you for “**keeping it local.**” You are part of the fabric that keeps our community healthy and strong in good times as well as bad times. We would like to suggest altering the “**buy local**” tag line just a bit to reflect the scope of what we see happening daily throughout our community. “**Support your community by buying and giving locally.**” It benefits us all.

People’s Produce

Continued from page 1

for distribution to hunger relief organizations. The “Farm to Family” project is sponsored by the California Association of Food Banks and accesses produce from the farm fields in the central valley and other large agricultural producers to make it available to food banks.

Thank you to all of our donors and volunteers for making these markets a reality, working towards building a stronger, healthier community. Contact your local pantry to find out more about volunteering.



Carrots are in abundance at the free Produce Market in Eureka!



Spotlight on Volunteers

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and the Flaming Lips. In fact, listening to music is one of his favorite things to do. He comes from the east coast where he grew up in the state of Massachusetts. “Helping people is fun,” he says. There are also many more young people that use our services than he expected.

Shawn is a Warehouse Assistant who favors red and Twista, hanging out with his daughter and listening to music. He is also homegrown from right here in Eureka. He finds the staff and his co-workers friendly and the environment comfortable.

Thank you to our generous volunteers for working with us at Food

for People! We can ONLY do all we do with their help! In the last year, our volunteers gave over 29,000 hours of service (the equivalent of 16 full-time staff positions) to help keep our pantry, warehouse and programs running! If you’re interested in giving back to your community by volunteering with us, please contact Laura Hughes, Volunteer Coordinator, with any questions at 445-3166 extension 310 or lhughes@foodforpeople.org. Thanks for your support and we look forward to seeing you at the Food Bank!



Desiree is the Warehouse Crew Leader and shown here getting food ready for general distribution (on left) while Tyler works at sorting fresh produce for our different pantries and programs (on right).



The Power of Many By Harriet Pecot, Fund Development Director

Photo by Ginny Dexter

Once upon a time, the phone rang and a woman answered it. On the other end of the phone was a fisherman. He knew this woman had a personal mission to help feed hungry folks and he was feeling generous. He had just had an exceptionally good catch while out fishing on his boat. "I would like to bring some food over to help you feed people," he said. What she didn't expect was a 40 pound salmon! Although there have been many twists and turns to the story, I am told this was the beginning of our food bank.

Originally the food bank was in a small one thousand square foot house in Eureka which no longer

exists and was called the Food Rights Action Project. Food for People slowly evolved from these early roots to meet the growing need here in Humboldt County. One day a gentleman called and said, "I will pledge \$5 a month to your organization. You know, if you get more people to join in donating monthly, we could raise enough money to help keep your efforts going!" Thus the beginning of the 800 Club, our regular giving program!

Cynthia Chason, past Executive Director of Food for People, tells the story of Mabel. "We used to be located near Silvercrest and there was an elderly client by the

name of Mabel. She would come in monthly for food but also donated \$5 every month. She loved coming in early for her appointment and sitting with the families, being social and giving attention to the kids. It was very important to her that she contributed her \$5 and gave back to help others."

Since then we have grown many times over. But what remains the same is that if everyone does their part and donates a monthly amount that is comfortable for them, it turns into something powerful. Money we can depend upon allows us to make long term plans while building strong foundations for our programs. Your donations

make a direct impact right now, right here at home - helping kids grow into their better selves, allowing seniors to have better food choices and providing a safety net for struggling families and folks who are going through hard times. Join the spirit of Mabel and Food for People and commit to regular donations!

Thank you to all who are 800 Club members - your commitment is making a difference, allowing us to help when needed most. It's easy to become an 800 Club member. Contact Harriet Pecot at harriet@foodforpeople.org or call (707) 445-3166 extension 306 for more information.

Stamping Out Hunger

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as collection points. Also much appreciation to all the volunteers who staffed the collection points and provide this food drive with a decentralized way to get donations back to the food bank without having Letter Carriers drive all the way to our 14th Street location.

In Eureka the donations yielded 12 pallets stacked high with non-perishable foods. Thanks to your generosity, many low income individuals, families and seniors will have access to a wide diversity of foods in the months to come. This food drive is the nation's largest single day effort to end hunger. Despite the lingering effects of economic recession, citizens across the United States increased

donations to "Stamp out Hunger." NALC President Fredric V. Rolando thanked all who participated in the drive. "Six days a week, letter carriers see firsthand the needs in the communities they work in, and we're privileged to be able to help the needy and to lead an effort that brings out the best in so many Americans," he said.

Americans donated a record 70.6 million pounds of non-perishable food to their communities this year. Here in Eureka we are proud to be a part of this 19th annual event. Thanks again to all the donors, volunteers and Letter Carriers, we could not have done this without you!



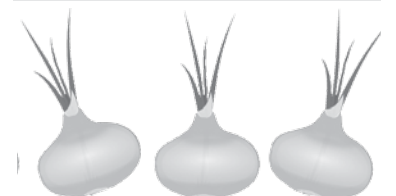
The Letter Carriers' Food Drive is one of the biggest food drives across the nation. Volunteers came out in full force - 106 of our Food for People faithful donated 341 volunteer hours to help sort and pack food.



The 800 Club is our regular giving program that supports Food for People. In 1982, Food for People's yearly budget was roughly \$48,000. Calculator in hand, it was determined that if 800 Humboldt County residents gave only \$5 each month, the total operating costs would be met. Since then, we have greatly increased our services to children, seniors and working families in need throughout our community. We currently feed over 12,000 people a month and our yearly budget has increased to over \$900,000 to accommodate our many programs.

It's easy to become an 800 Club member. Just fill out the slip on this page and send it in. You will receive a packet of 12 envelopes that makes sending in your monthly donation easy. Or contact us directly to help you set up a monthly or quarterly charge on the credit card of your choice. You can also set up an automatic fund transfer with your bank. For more information, contact Harriet Pecot, our Fund Development Director, at 707-445-3166 extension 306 or email her at harriet@foodforpeople.org.

Only with the support of a caring community can we accomplish our mission to end hunger in Humboldt County. Your contributions as part of the 800 Club make it possible for us to help when needed most and thanks to you, no one has been turned away. Thank you for your continued support that allows us to feed people and also provides hope and dignity to the most vulnerable members of our community.



Please send me an 800 Club Packet

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Please charge my credit Visa or Master Card:

Monthly Quarterly Amount: \$ _____

Card Number: _____

Exp. Date: _____ Sec. Code (on back of card): _____

Eating Smart and Living Strong

By Jessica Collar, Nutrition Educator Coordinator

Eat your fruits and vegetables! This is a phrase we have all heard many times in our lives, mostly from our parents, grandparents and teachers while growing up. This message can be easily forgotten by the time we reach a certain age and have established a dietary routine. We know we should eat well, but why? And, what exactly does that mean? During the month of June, I spent about an hour each Friday at Silvercrest talking with residents about these very questions and discussing why it is so important for seniors to get adequate nutrients in their diets.

With the variety of age related health problems that can occur later in life, it is a vital stage to ensure proper nutrition and physical activity. The benefits of a healthy lifestyle are countless. We spent much of our time together at Silvercrest talking about these benefits and really reinforcing the point that small changes can make a huge difference in the quality and duration of your life!

We also spent time exploring the reasons why some people do not practice these healthy eating behaviors and how to overcome these obstacles. There are many barriers being faced by seniors in our community in getting enough fresh fruits and vegetables into daily eating patterns. From inability to afford or prepare fresh vegetables, to having no transportation to get to the grocery store, we were able to tackle many of these barriers by coming up with creative solutions together. Whether it means taking a bus down to the local farmers

market, carpooling with a neighbor, applying for food assistance programs, or simply planting a small garden on your balcony - where there is a will, there is a way!

It was a pleasure to meet such a welcoming and enthusiastic group of seniors who were engaged and interested in this healthy conversation. Each week participants were given recipes, exercise guides, nutrition tip sheets and forms to track their daily eating patterns, as well as time spent doing physical activities. It was amazing how quickly the word spread about our presence at the center. Each week we were joined by new and familiar faces eager to report their progress and share their stories with one another. We talked about how to add fruits and veggies to our favorite recipes, how to make the most of your money when buying food and how to connect with local food resources and available assistance programs.

By opening up this conversation, and getting people together to set their personal health goals, a big step towards healthy living has already been taken. I would personally like to congratulate each and every person who began their journey with us at Silvercrest to Eating Smart, and Living Strong! I hope that this trend of healthy habits will continue to spread throughout the center, and begin to emerge more prominently within the senior community as well. For those of you who are currently striving for good health, keep up the good work and don't forget; eat your fruits and vegetables!



Group discussion at Silvercrest included Bernice Abrew, Sarah Greenwood, Eunice Noack, Dorothy Johnson, Jerry Cosentino and Evelyn Reed.

Tributes, Memorials & Gift Contributions

IN HONOR

NITA MIRSLY
FREDERICK O. BOTT
PEGGY HARTRIDGE
JUDY ANDERSON
TODD WATTS
BOBBIE URSON
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Mission Statement

Food For People is working to eliminate hunger and improve the health and well-being of our community through access to healthy and nutritious foods, community education and advocacy.

Our Vision

We envision a hunger-free community where everyone in Humboldt County has access to good quality, nutritious food, everyone in the community understands the consequences of hunger and poor nutrition, and each of us has a role to play in creating a strong, healthy community.

Our Values

- *Respect - We will treat all of our relationships with respect.*
- *Teamwork - We will foster cooperation among our diverse volunteers, staff and community partners.*
- *Innovation - We will continually seek to provide excellent services through the development of new and improved methods to reduce hunger.*
- *Stewardship - We will be accountable to all through the efficient and most appropriate use of resources entrusted to us.*
- *Integrity - We will demonstrate the highest ethical standards in all interactions.*



Thank you Humboldt Roller Derby

for allowing us the opportunity to host the beer table at your July bout and helping us raise money to meet the increased need for food assistance this summer. Many thanks to Humboldt Beer Distributors, Lost Coast Brewery, Six Rivers Brewery and Arctic Ice for all your very generous donations which makes this fundraiser possible. Special thanks to Brian Baku from Humboldt Beer Distributors for transporting the beer and the equipment plus providing expert assistance on the night of the event - where would we have been without Nate & Alex coming to our rescue over and over again during the evening? We appreciated Jason's running commentary in support of Food for People. And of course many thanks to the Reverend David Kuzmar for running a tight and well organized "ship" and being so great to work with. We applaud your efforts in supporting this great sport within our community as well as your continued support of nonprofits. This is just one more example of the generous and wonderful community spirit here in Humboldt County. **Thanks again to all!**



Thrill of the Grill Rocks on!

By Harriet Pecot, Fund Development Director

Great food, excellent music & sunshine - what more could one ask for a lunchtime BBQ benefit? Food for People shouts a big thank you to everyone who helped make this year's Thrill of the Grill a huge success. For the past six years, the North Coast Co-op has generously organized and hosted this lunchtime BBQ. All proceeds from the day go to our Child Nutrition Programs. This includes our Summer Lunch Program, currently in motion, our Backpacks for Kids Program and our After School Snack Program. We also send a big thanks to Duane Hagans of CDH Painting for sponsoring the wonderful music provided by Blue Rhythm Revue consisting of Samantha Tose, Timothy Day, Dan Perez, Zach Stone and Bill Moehnke with the wonderful sound system via Tofu Mike. Special thanks to April Hagans for her generosity in supporting our work and helping us connect with great music. Thanks to all who showed their support by attend-

ing this event and joining us for lunch. We appreciate the Co-op for their generosity and wonderful community spirit and thank them and their many distributors whose contributions made this event possible including Humboldt Grassfed Beef, Tofu Shop, Niman Ranch, Oroweat, Barbara's Bakery, Hain Pure Foods, Westbrae Natural, Santa Cruz Organic, Earl's Organic Produce, Rudi's Organic Bakery, Honest Tea, Spectrum and Food Should Taste Good.

Currently, 52.7% of the children in Humboldt County qualify for free or reduced cost school meals equaling over 10,000 of our children at risk for hunger. Only with the support of our community can we succeed in our mission to end childhood hunger. It does take a village to raise a child and we appreciate our wonderful Humboldt community working with us to make sure that every child, every day, has enough to eat here in Humboldt County.



Rio Dell Community Garden Takes Root

By Jason Whitley, Local Food Resources Coordinator

On Sunday July 24th, fifty volunteers planted nineteen fruit trees and twelve berry bushes at the Rio Dell Community Garden. Brian Olson and the Rio Dell Community Resource Center (Rio Dell CRC) coordinated this planting to address food security that will provide fresh fruits to low-income households in the community.

Several months ago, Jason Whitley, Food for People's Local Food Resource Coordinator, passed on information to Brian regarding a grant available from an organization called the Fruit Tree Planting Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing fruit orchards to communities to fight hunger across the nation. Brian worked with several local agencies to partner on this initiative - working with the Chamber of Commerce who provided the necessary insurance coverage, the city of Rio Dell to provide free water for the garden and orchard, and the Rio Dell Baptist Church, which has been a long time partner hosting the community garden and now hosting the orchard. With these partnerships in place, Brian wrote

a successful application to participate in the program and made it through two grueling online voting stages, where he competed against other agencies seeking fruit orchards from the same grant. Raking in 26,366 votes, the Rio Dell Community Garden won a fruit tree orchard, and on July 24th, with the help of 50 community volunteers, the trees were permanently installed at the garden.

It was an early Sunday morning for Brian - waiting for the trees to be delivered, setting up to feed 50 volunteers and preparing the land for planting. Making the work a little easier was the generous donation of equipment and labor from a local company called *That Tree Guy*, who arranged for the use of an auger to drill holes for the trees. At 12 pm, with all the trees in place and 50 volunteers on hand, a ceremonial planting begun with key people from the community including - Julie Woodall, the Mayor of Rio Dell, Clif Clendenen, our District Supervisor, Jason Whitley, Food For People's Local Food Resources Coordinator and Brian Olson planting the first tree. Following this was a short intro-

duction from Rico Montenegro, the lead Arborist with the Fruit Tree Planting Foundation, who gave instruction on how to properly plant and care for the trees and gave some history on the Foundation and the work they have done.

Following the ceremony, volunteers worked in teams of 3-4 planting the trees, mulching, and creating a basin to provide better irrigation and to trap rain water as the trees are on a downhill slope. Volunteers then helped install deer fencing around the perimeter to help protect the fruit trees. An irrigation system was also installed. Concluding the day, Rico gave a workshop to a handful of volunteers, teaching pruning techniques and the importance of regular watering, which will be crucial to the health of these trees for the next several years before they see their first harvest. It was a moving experience to say the least. To think that years from now the orchard will be producing large amounts of fruit to feed the hungry in Rio Dell is very inspiring. Thank you to everyone who helped to make this project a success. Kudos to Brian Olson for all his dedication and hard work!



Photos courtesy of E. Chris Wisner include group shots of volunteers at the Rio Dell Community Garden for tree planting day.



Summer fun at Carson Park in Eureka includes a healthy sack lunch full of surprises including juice, fresh fruit, yogurt, sandwiches and more!

A Day in the Life of Summer Lunch

By Niki Gribi, Child Nutrition Program Coordinator

I was serving lunch at Food for People at our Eureka site one day last week when a young woman and her two-year-old daughter came in. The little girl was very polite, washing her hands and asking for a "lunch please." She happily unpacked the contents of her sack lunch with mom's help and gleefully exclaimed over every thing she pulled out. "Apple! Peanuts! Yogurt!" The yogurt was just too fantastic, "Ooooh, yo-gut! Eat - Please?" Mom helped her open the yogurt and it was quickly consumed. Next to disappear was the apple. As she was nibbling away and chatting with us, she suddenly stopped. "Auntie - done?" She wondered about her aunt who was getting food in our Choice Pantry. Was she done shopping? She had to check. She stepped out into the hall, looking for her aunt, and spotted her. "Shopping," she declared, and came back to her lunch. Juice! Milk!

Just then, another pair came in for lunch, this time a young man and his six year old son. They had never participated in the program before, so I told them about the rules and asked the boy to wash his hands. They sat down and the boy dug right into his bag, pulling out the sandwich and taking a big bite before opening up his milk and having a sip. While he was busy with his food, his dad told me how they came across our lunch site. "My landlord just told me he sold the house we're living in. Now we have 30 days to find a new place to live, so we've been out every day this week walking around trying to find places for rent. There's not much and most of the places are too expensive for us. I'm a single dad! Anyway, we saw your sign out front and decided to come check

it out." The boy chimed in, "We saw some huge mansions! One even went underground!" His dad chuckled, encouraged him to eat his apple and told me about the basement apartment they'd seen. I let him know that we'd be serving lunch every week day until school started and wished him luck.

Heavy gray clouds hung low over Scotia School in a display of Humboldt County's typically grim summer weather. I huddled in my sweatshirt waiting for lunch to start. District Superintendent, School Principal and summer lunch volunteer Jaenelle Lampp was busy inside, taking the temperature of the milk and counting out sack lunches. When everything was in order, she made an announcement over the school's PA system, "Lunch is served!" And the kids came streaming up the hill on their bikes, eager to try that day's offering. The children gathered in front of the school, grabbed their lunches and settled down to eat. More kids came with their parents, babysitters or older siblings, until there were about 15 young people gathered on the benches and steps. They chatted while they ate, inspected the goody box for something interesting, and tested out each other's bikes. As they finished eating, they wandered down to the playground to start climbing and swinging. A neighborhood cat came by to see if anyone would spill their milk. As luck would have it, a toddler did spill her milk that day and the kitty sat happily lapping it up, while letting some of the kids pet her soft fur. Scotia is one of our new sites this year. The friendly, community atmosphere at the site has helped participation stay strong. We look forward to providing lunches to the children of Scotia for many years to come.

Join us on September 24th for **Smokin' in the Redwoods**, when Food for People joins with the Rotary Club of Eureka to host this Backyard Bar-B-Q Challenge and raise money for our Backpacks for Kids Program. Great food,

wonderful music and our unique Humboldt County community will come together for a day of fun while providing for one our most important resources - our children! Opportunities abound for first time as well as experienced bar-beque teams, vendors, sponsors

and judges - or just show up on Saturday, September 24th from noon to 5 p.m. at Redwood Acres Fairgrounds and taste the "fruits" of the day while enjoying great food, music and community spirit. Contact Harriet Pecot at (707) 445-3166 for more information.



Support Backpacks for Kids

By Niki Gribi, Child Nutrition Program Coordinator

You've heard the statistics before, and sadly, things have not improved much for our county's children. Over 50% of kids in Humboldt County are still eligible for free or reduced price lunch at school. That means nearly 10,000 children are living at or below the federal poverty line. Hungry kids live in our neighborhoods and there are no easy solutions or changes coming soon. For many of us, it's hard to believe that there could be so many families struggling to put food on the table in our own communities. Many of us are lucky. We have enough to eat. We can go to the grocery store and buy nutritious food for our kids. We have enough in the bank to pay our rent, our utility bills and buy groceries. We don't have to make difficult choices like sacrificing quality food in order to put a few gallons of gas in the car to get to work. But many of our neighbors are not so lucky. They have to make those difficult choices every day. Food is often one of the only flexible items in a family's budget. Many of the families we work with are forced to go without food in order to keep the lights on and a roof over their heads. They come to us for help, and now we're reaching out to you. Could you afford to spend \$6 a week to help a child get enough to eat? That's how much it costs to sponsor a child through our Backpacks for Kids program.

Each Friday during the school year, we send sacks of groceries

home with students across the county. The goal of this program is to alleviate weekend hunger. Most of the children who receive Backpacks eat free or reduced price breakfasts and lunches at school during the week. Those meals are not provided on Saturdays and Sundays, but children still need to eat. We try to fill that gap by providing enough food for breakfast, lunch and dinner on the weekend so students can return to school ready to learn on Monday mornings. Last year, we expanded the program significantly and were able to help an additional 170 children get enough to eat. We distributed over 10,000 bags of food to over 400 children through our 17 partner schools countywide. School staff tells us the kids seem healthier, have better attendance, and are in a better mood, all of which contributes to better performance in the classroom. We hope to keep participation in the program high in the year to come and we need your support.

Each bag of kid-friendly, easy to prepare, nutritious food costs approximately \$6. You can sponsor a child for one month for \$25. You can sponsor a child for the *entire school year* for just \$200. If you'd like to learn more about the program and how you can get involved, please contact Niki Gribi at (707) 445-3166 extension 309 or by e-mail at ngribi@foodforpeople.org.

Summer Food Drives to the Rescue!

By Jason Whitley, Local Food Resources Coordinator

During summer months, the shelves of Food for People's Choice Pantry tend to be somewhat bare compared to the winter months when the Holiday Food Drive is in full effect. There are still a wide variety of foods to choose from, but the locally donated foods are conserved for emergency food boxes. Emergency boxes, what Food for People distributes to individuals and families who are completely out of food and who are unable to make an appointment for the Choice Pantry, are entirely composed of foods that are donated by the local community. During the month of June, 2,300 lbs of non-perishable food was distributed in emergency boxes serving more than 353 individuals. This means that our supply of locally donated foods began to run quite low. That is, until our community stepped in once more and boosted food bank supplies by organizing food drives.

Grocery Outlet recognizes the needs of the people in their community. That is why the entire chain of Grocery Outlets organized "Independence from Hunger." This food drive was held during the month of July beginning July 4th. Customers donated food at Grocery Outlet in the food collection barrels and they also donated funds directly at the register. Donors were then entered into a drawing for a 100 dollar gift card. "We are proud to partner with Food for People to help people who don't always know where they will find their next meal," said Mary Barber, owner of the Eureka Grocery Outlet. "As local business owners, we are committed to supporting our local community and neighbors in need." A very spe-

cial thank you to all the donors, employees and volunteers who helped to make Independence from Hunger a success!

Safeway also helped to end hunger this July. With their "Every Bag Counts" campaign Safeway preassembled bags of food to sell to customers. Each bag included items such as peanut butter, spaghetti, tuna, macaroni and cheese



and other nutritious items. Many Safeway customers purchased these bags and donated them at their local store. Every Safeway in Humboldt County participated in this food drive, alleviating hunger in Arcata, McKinleyville, Fortuna and the two stores in Eureka. Heartfelt thanks to all the donors who purchased a bag of food to help their neighbors in need. Thank you to Safeway for organizing this important effort.

Relay for Life is an annual fundraiser for the American Cancer Society (ACS). Although

the main objective of Relay is to raise money for cancer research and cancer patients, the event is held to unite a community in the fight against cancer. For the past two years the Relay has also been a vehicle for the fight against hunger as well. This year cans of food were used in the Luminaria ceremony. Luminaria bags are often decorated by participants, honoring a loved one who has passed or is fighting the disease. These bags are often placed around the track and candles inside the bags are lit before the start of the Ceremony. For the past two years The American Cancer Society has placed a can of food inside each bag to weigh them down and keep the bags stable. They had previously used rocks but locally they decided that a food drive was a better option. Nearly 900 lbs of food has been raised by the local ACS since 2010. Thank you to all who participated and donated. Your method for hunger relief is a creative example of how to incorporate a food drive into most events.

The pantry here in Eureka has been serving a record number of households this summer - 1,248 holdholds in June and 1,345 in July - with July being the record month of households ever served by the Choice Pantry. A total of 1,778 emergency food boxes were also given out during July which is more than has ever been given in a month. This means that Food for People needed to have a vast supply of foods available to meet this increased need. Thank you to everyone who donated to help us continue to provide relief for our friends and neighbors in need.

I'd like to be a Regular Donor!

Please send an 800 Club Packet to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Please charge my credit Visa or Master Card:

Monthly Quarterly Amount: \$ _____

Card Number: _____

Exp. Date: _____ Sec. Code (on back of card): _____

Clip and mail to:

800 Club, Food for People, 307 W 14th St., Eureka, CA 95501



Voices from the Pantry

By Harriet Pecot, Fund Development Director

Carolyn Ayers, retired school teacher, tells us about her experience working as a volunteer at Food for People. "I see a lot of people desperate for work, down and out on their luck, embarrassed and ashamed of having to ask for help and people who try not to come until they have no other choice. I see people with very little yet still concerned only about others in need, careful about not taking more than their fair share and leaving enough for others. The only time I've ever felt shocked is by how little help there is for people."

Recently we met Luis and Angela, elderly grandparents, who came in with their four grandchildren. Their daughter is going to nursing school and can only work part time. The fixed income on which they live and feed themselves now needs to be stretched to feed a family of five. More and more we see this trend of families living together to deal with the economic challenges of these times.

Ivy Matheny, our Food Distribution Coordinator tells us, "I am touched by individuals and families going out of their way to assist other people, especially families feeding other families' children, buying shoes for them, treating their health issues and people taking in family members. I am also touched by people struggling with new medical issues. I see people who are already going under but can't say no to people in worse situations. It is hard to watch but at the same time inspiring."

Josh is a client at our Choice Pantry. "You could say I was raised by the system since I've been in Foster Care for as long as I can remember. I want to give back and help others and I am studying for my degree in Social Work. It's a challenge to make ends meet. I don't have a lot of money for food and no family to fall back on. I didn't want to come to the food bank but found good kind people here."

Lew Litzky, a volunteer and community activist says, "I feel a genuine sense of humility. It is sobering to hear people's stories. We don't experience anything like the

problems of the people who come here. On the other hand, I feel very inspired by the volunteers - they are amazing. Their kindness, sense of purpose and generosity of spirit is uplifting."

Recently I saw a young woman standing outside "reading" announcements on our door. After a few minutes she tentatively came inside and asked about getting food. She began to cry as she asked and was embarrassed by the emotion. Although her husband was working, she was a student with two small kids and their budget couldn't stretch to cover all the essentials. We helped her to feel comfortable and encouraged her to use our services to provide healthy food for her family.

Tim Stogner has volunteered for three years here at Food for People and tells us he's seen every type of person he could think of coming to the pantry. "They all have a common bond in that they need food and when they leave, they leave happier than when they arrived." I asked Tim what he thought about people coming who look like they don't need our services. "I don't judge them because you never know the real story behind their situation and troubles."

Recently, a woman came in with her extended family totaling nine people. Their home had burnt down and they had lost everything. We gave her food for her family including special food for her husband who had certain dietary restrictions due to illness. We also helped them connect to local resources where they could find additional services.

Steve D'Agati, volunteer and retired probation officer says, "People need to understand that the people who come here are not getting food for the whole month. We are only helping a little." On staff and other volunteers he adds, "There is a wonderful blend of people who come together to help - a real meeting of community. There is a team of young people here who are selflessly making a difference - they are compassionate and hard working and they are making a difference in the lives of many people

in this community."

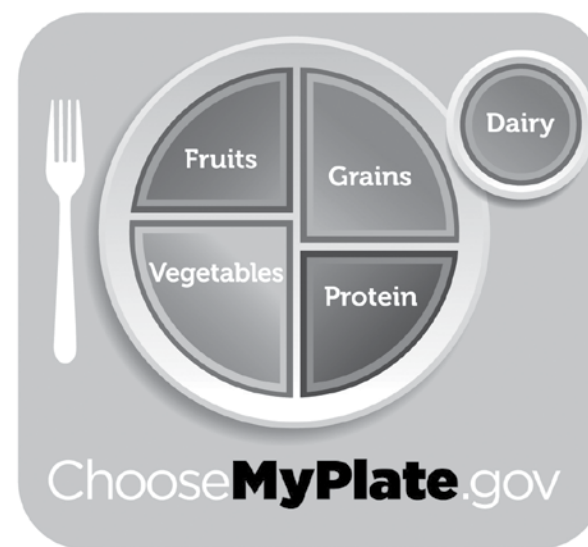
John is in his 70's and came to the food bank for the first time to get some food for himself and his wife who is ill. He was delighted to find items that would please her ("she'll like this" and "I'll cook this for her tonight"). He also was pleased by the many healthy recipes he found throughout the pantry using the ingredients at the food bank.

Brian Gustafson is a volunteer and reluctantly retired business owner. "I see a lot of people coming in sporadically. I tell them they qualify to come in monthly but it is a matter of pride for them not to come in more than they have to. I notice a lot of elderly in need of food, feeling displaced and unwanted. There is an adjustment into senior years and I try to help others with this transition."

Michael Canning our Food for People Community Education and Outreach Coordinator explains, "The people we help are not the "other" - they are friends, neighbors, people your children go to school with or people you work with who are often working one or two jobs and doing what they can to provide for their family."

Karen, Writer, Artist and Food Bank Client reveals "It took me years before I could actually make it to the food bank. I felt ashamed of needing help, afraid of repercussions for using services and somehow I had this image of fighting for a loaf of bread with others who were struggling. People who have never walked in the shoes of poverty really don't know how it feels until they have someone they love or they themselves fall upon hard times. Most people don't want to look at the pain or the unattractiveness of poverty - we are the untouchables of our society."

Lew says he comes here to help and give to his community but definitely feels like he gets more back. A lot of people get treated very badly out in the world, like excess baggage. It is a good feeling to be able to connect with people, talk to them heart to heart and make a connection. "I like to put a smile on people's faces."



The Food Pyramid Retires, MyPlate is Here!

By Deborah Waxman, Director of Programs

At the beginning of June, the federal government's food pyramid got a makeover. The pyramid concept is a thing of the past, making way for the brand new *MyPlate*. *MyPlate* does a great job of conveying how to put together a balanced meal, with an easy to understand visual symbol of the proportions of different food groups that make up a healthy plate. The USDA has an interesting history of ever-changing food guides that dates back to 1916, including the now retired *MyPyramid*. One can view the history on the website www.choosemyplate.gov.

The intention is for the new *MyPlate* to make it easier for folks to eat a healthy balance of food groups with an easy to remember graphic. Half of the plate is made up of fruits and vegetables. For the other half, a quarter is protein (preferably lean) and a quarter is grains (preferably whole grains). A circle resembling a glass of dairy next to the plate reminds us to in-

clude dairy (preferably low-fat) or calcium-rich food or drink. Food for People's Nutrition Education team will be utilizing this new graphic to continue teaching the food bank community about putting together healthy, balanced meals.

MyPlate draws from the 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, the federal government's guide for nutrition assistance programs, nutrition education programs and dietary advice. Some of the key messages include balancing calories by avoiding oversized portions, increasing fruit and vegetable intake, choosing whole grains, reducing sodium (salt) intake, and drinking water instead of sugary drinks. The USDA will be partnering with First Lady Michelle Obama's *Let's Move!* initiative in the coming years to promote *MyPlate* and its nutrition messages and resources. For more information on *MyPlate* and eating healthy, visit the website www.choosemyplate.gov.



I want to become a Volunteer at Food for People!

Call 707-445-3166 or email:

Volunteer@foodforpeople.org. Or fill out and send in:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Please have someone contact me:

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Fighting Hunger With Behind the Scenes Partners

By Jason Herwin, Pantry Network Coordinator

Food for People relies on partnerships with agencies, faith based organizations and volunteers in communities across the county in order to address food security in Humboldt County. One such relationship is with the Rio Dell Community Resource Center, and specifically, Brian Olson, the Resource Coordinator at the Rio Dell CRC. Brian has been a partner with a number of Food for People programs. Recently, he has become the Pantry Coordinator for the local food pantry in Scotia that serves an average of 120 households each month within the Scotia and Rio Dell communities.

Brian recently competed and won a fruit tree orchard through the Fruit Tree Planting Foundation. The Rio Dell Community Garden was awarded 19 fruit trees and berry bushes that will allow their food pantry to distribute locally grown fresh fruits to low-income households in the community.

He also supervised the merging of the two local pantries into one location. This will provide clients with the choice of several distribution days and allow a stronger volunteer base. The Community Resource Center is a part of the St. Joseph Health System, one of Food for People's strongest partners in fighting hunger in Humboldt County. Brian shares his experience and impressions:

1. You partner with Food for People on a number of programs, could you tell us how you got involved, and what programs you coordinate in your community?

"One of St. Joseph Health System main goals is building the healthiest communities through addressing issues of food security, obesity and fitness in Humboldt County. Food For People has been one of our key partners in meeting this goal. While I have been working at the Rio Dell Community Resource Center I have helped coordinate the Backpacks for Kids

Programs, After School Snacks and the Summer Lunch Program. I am currently coordinating the pantry that serves both the Rio Dell and Scotia communities. The Community Resource Center provides a good fit for these programs as we are well connected, involved in the community and can help families get information about services in the community."

2. Could you give us some background on the Rio Dell and Scotia communities and why the food pantry and food programs are needed?

"Well, the population is roughly 3,100 with slightly over 16% of the population living in poverty. 85% of the children in school are enrolled in the free and reduced lunch programs. There are also a high percentage of seniors in the area. Many households depend upon SSI or have very limited fixed incomes. These families rely on the food pantry and community food programs to help get through the month to pay for other basic essentials like rent, utilities, transportation, etc. What is great about Food for People and St. Joseph's Community Resource Centers, is we share the same mission of helping low-income households in their community. Food for People's Pantry Network allows community members to access food locally rather than having to travel to Eureka. Many of the services and organizations that support low-income households are often only available in Eureka, requiring Humboldt County residents with very limited incomes in isolated communities to have to find a way to get to Eureka to apply for these programs. The Community Resource Centers help connect these households with these programs and provide assistance with paperwork, referrals, transportation and general guidance on how to access these programs and what services may be available to them."

3. What is your favorite part of your position at the Community Resource Center and coordinating with Food for People?

"Probably one of my favorite parts is coordinating community events. I coordinate two community health fairs connecting community members with health



Brian Olsen, Pantry Coordinator, with volunteers Clarice, Susan, Don Williams (past Pantry Coordinator) and Peggy at Bread for Life pantry.

services. I also coordinate the Rio Dell Bike Rodeo which is, I believe, the largest bike rodeo in Humboldt County, with 103 kids coming out to receive free bike tune-ups, learn how to maintain their bikes and have fun activities throughout the event. It feels great to put so much work into a project and then see the rewards all in the day of the event.

Community events, like the bike rodeo or the health fairs, are great community building tools. In communities like Rio Dell, that are isolated, it is easy for community members to feel alone and think they may not be able to help address an issue or take on projects. When they see other people in their community coming out and supporting an issue or participating in an event, you really see them begin to feel empowered and ready to get involved in their community. I organized a community dinner to discuss the high level of dog poop in Rio Dell and lack of trash cans. This was an issue that many people were complaining about but had previously thought they were the only ones who were concerned. This meeting resulted in the installation of facilities for dog owners to dispose of their pet's waste. It is rewarding seeing people realize that other people share the same feelings, and seeing them become

more empowered."

4. What do you feel is the most challenging aspect of your job?

"Helping a community progress forward requires the citizens in that community to be at the table, making decisions, planning and taking ownership of these projects. That can often be a difficult process as it requires time, and a lot of outreach. It is easy for a few people to make decisions, but when this happens many issues may be overlooked - like barriers that may be preventing or causing problems, or perceptions that the community may have that may get overlooked. Creating a sustainable community building movement requires time and the citizens taking a lead role in shaping the projects that are benefitting their community. While this can be challenging it is also very fulfilling to see people bring a positive change in their neighborhoods."

5. Why do you think the collaboration between the two communities will be successful?

"This goes back to the community partnerships. In Rio Dell and Scotia there have been great partnerships with the Rio Dell Church of Christ, and the Scotia Union Church which have been committed to feeding their communities for so long. We have also been

Continued on page 12

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- I am enclosing a donation to help eliminate hunger in our community.
- I would like to join the 800 Club & donate regularly.
Please send me a packet of envelopes

or

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Monthly Quarterly One Time

For the amount of: \$ _____

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Network for Good™

New Policy Improves Food Access and Encourages Financial Stability

By Michael Canning, Community Education and Outreach Coordinator

In January of this year, Fern came into our Eureka pantry looking for help applying for CalFresh (formerly food stamps). Fern is a senior, living off her Social Security and what little savings she has left. I assisted Fern with her application and submitted it in early January. When I called her in February to follow up, Fern told me she had been denied for having too much money in the bank.

Apparently, Fern had a little over the then allowable resource limit (\$3,000 for a senior). Fern explains she is "hoping to save so my children don't have to take care of me" and that she also wants to avoid leaving her children with lots of expenses after her death.

Thankfully, California recently opted to waive the resource limit for households applying for CalFresh. The new policy took effect on February 1st of this year and means that the amount of money a household has in the bank or the value of their assets is no longer counted against them when determining eligibility.

Fern was able to reapply for CalFresh in February under these new rules. Having been approved on her second attempt, Fern now reports she is using her CalFresh regularly. With it she is able to make sure she has enough to eat and she is also able to afford more healthy items when shopping.

Fern Jensen is not the only person benefiting from this new policy. Thousands of seniors and recently unemployed families in California, struggling to live off meager savings accounts are now able to access assistance without first spending themselves into destitution and those already deeply in poverty will not be discouraged from building assets, which is key to long-term financial stability.

The policy of waiving the resource limit, also known as Modified Categorical Eligibility, was fought for by advocates throughout California and has already strengthened the effectiveness of the program. Despite this progress, there is more to be done.

Finding Resources and Eliminating Significant Hurdles: The CalFresh Act of 2011...

Assembly member Felipe

Fuentes recently introduced an Assembly Bill titled AB6: The CalFresh Act of 2011, which would simultaneously push forward three crucial reforms. Combined, these three policy changes would greatly increase the effectiveness and efficiency of a program over 3 million Californians depend on.

If AB6 passes, the first policy change would change the way CalFresh participants report their eligibility information updates to their County CalFresh offices. Currently, CalFresh participants are required to send in an updated report on the household's income and expenses every three months (quarterly) in order to continue receiving benefits. California is the last state using a quarterly reporting system. Under AB6, California would transition to an every six months (semi-annual) reporting system, similar to the rest of the country. The USDA has long supported the switch to semi-annual reporting, as experience in other states has shown it can decrease burdens and simplify rules for clients, reduce administrative burdens and costs, and improve program accuracy.

The second policy change would affect the way CalFresh benefits are calculated. It would allow households to automatically take the full standard deduction for utility costs, resulting in increased CalFresh benefits for some. It would eliminate the client's burden of providing additional paperwork (copies of bills, etc.), and would extend the standard utility deduction to renters who pay for utilities through their rent. This is accomplished by automatically enrolling CalFresh recipients into LIHEAP (the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program), allowing all households to qualify for the standard utility deduction. An estimated 130,000 households statewide would benefit from this initiative, each seeing an average benefit increase of 13%.

The third piece of AB6 is also the most controversial; it would eliminate the finger-imaging requirement for CalFresh. Currently, California requires all adult members of households receiving CalFresh to come into the office to get finger printed. This process is intended to reduce duplicate-aid

fraud, but discourages participation in the program.

On average, states that use finger-imaging have 7% lower participation rates when compared to similar states (in terms of caseloads). California is just one of three states that continue to use finger-imaging, despite active requests from the USDA to end the practice. This policy links the need for food assistance with an activity typically associated with the prosecution of criminals. This linkage greatly discourages many eligible households from applying for assistance, including a disproportionate amount of Seniors, who are especially vulnerable to diet-related health problems, and miss out on nutrition assistance that could positively impact their health (just 10% of eligibly seniors in California use the program).

The purported purpose of the finger-imaging requirement is to prevent fraud; however, the policy consistently fails to illustrate its effectiveness in this area. First of all, the finger-imaging requirement is only aimed at catching one type of fraud - duplicate aid. There are already several detection measures in place to prevent duplicate aid, which are as effective as and more efficient than finger-imaging. Secondly, California currently spends roughly \$17 million each year on finger-imaging when simply comparing Social Security Numbers between counties is a more than sufficient prevention measure and far more cost effective. Furthermore, fraud and abuse overall is really a much smaller issue than many people are led to believe.

Ultimately, AB6: The CalFresh Act of 2011 could increase access to and participation in CalFresh by removing barriers and simplifying the application process, while also providing cost savings in the administration of the program. Approximately half of eligible residents in California do not participate in the program, a state with the next-to-lowest participation rate in the nation. Increasing participation could benefit Californians by reducing hunger and improving nutrition levels through access to healthy foods at local stores and farmers' markets.

Hunger Action E-News

Food for People's Hunger Action E-News is your monthly guide to the latest information on hunger, food and nutrition. Follow the most recent news, track upcoming legislation and learn easy ways to voice your opinions to government representatives. Subscribe now for access to hunger action information and advocacy opportunities at the local, state and federal levels.

To subscribe to this monthly e-newsletter, please send your name and e-mail address to HungerAction@foodforpeople.org.

Note: Your personal information will not be shared or sold to any third parties and you can unsubscribe at any time.



REDWOOD ACRES



Recycling Center

Redwood Acres Recycling Center's Community Contribution Program gives you the opportunity to donate your California Redemption Value (CRV) refund to Food for People. Just tell the scale operator the next time you are at the center and use your recycling for donation dollars!

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Food For People Wish List

Our goal of giving everything back to the community can be challenging and sometimes we go without. We would like to update our much used & loved kitchen. Let us know if you could help out with the following unused items.

Fruit Picking Bags

Electric Can Opener

Paper Cutter

So we can show our appreciation to volunteers:

Special Discounts, Gift Certificates or

Movie Tickets

Passages...



After nearly one year with Food for People, Jessica Collar has left her position as our Nutrition Education Coordinator. We are all very sorry to see Jessica move on, but wish her the best of luck as she returns to her hometown of Chico. In her capacity as Nutrition Education Coordinator, Jessica organized our monthly cooking classes, produced recipes and other materials, helped facilitate *Hunger 101* presentations, and represented Food for People at health fairs, farmers' markets and other community events. She consistently brought abundant levels of enthusiasm, energy and innovation to her position. While her departure from Food for People represents a loss to our community, we are pleased to learn Jessica will be continuing to pursue her role as a nutrition educator when she returns to Chico. Thank you and good luck, Jessica!

Fighting Hunger

Continued from page 11

blessed with great volunteers. Les Miranda and Beverly Langdon had coordinated the Rio Dell Pantry for many years, and Don Williams has and still is deeply involved with the Scotia pantry. Showing a continued commitment to helping their community, the Town of Scotia Company recently donated the use of one of their facilities, which is providing us with a great place to merge the two pantries and serve both Rio Dell and Scotia through one location.

Another important part is recruiting new volunteers. We have many new volunteers including Bill and Winifred Park, Peggy, Clarice, Diane and Susan, who have helped the Rio Dell and Scotia pantries. It's great to have a good volunteer team that can rely on each other to sustain the pantry and fill in for each other in case one person can not be there one month."

6. July was the first month of consolidating both pantries into



We are proud, and a little sad, to report that long time volunteer Matthew Hildebrandt, better known as Matty, will be leaving us to attend Regis University in Denver, Colorado this fall. Matty has been working with the Child Nutrition Programs at Food for People twice a week for four years, as well as helping out in the Choice Pantry during the summer. He has logged in over 650 volunteer hours packing snack orders, loading Backpacks, harvesting food from farms, assisting with pantry deliveries and helping clients. Matty is a model volunteer, reliable, eager to help with any task and always has a great attitude. As student body president and head dishwasher at his parent's restaurant, Go-Go Bistro, Matty has also proven himself responsible and driven beyond his years. Thank you for your time and dedication to the food bank, Matty! We will miss you very much!

one location. How well do you think the new site will meet the needs of low-income households in both communities?

"With the new site we will be able to provide flexibility through having two distributions each month rather than one day. If a client for some reason can not come one day they can still receive food the next. The new site has a great location - easy to find, good parking, and easy access for seniors and disabled. We will also have a greater ability to staff the pantry with a combined volunteer base. Now that the Community Resource Center is involved, we can help direct clients to other services that might benefit them, and possibly provide assistance during weeks where there isn't a food distribution."

9. Could you tell us about your community garden?

"Community gardens provide a great opportunity for community members to get involved, get ex-



We'd like to welcome Seth Perez to the Food for people team as our new Summer Lunch delivery driver. Seth moved around a lot as a kid since his father was in the Army, so he basically grew up everywhere and knows everything. Seth spent three years working as a wild land firefighter and EMT on the Hotshot Crew based out of Gasquet. Now he's studying natural resource economics at HSU full time during the school year. Seth has a great sense of humor, positive attitude and work ethic. He also loves pie and enjoys biking, camping and boating. We are glad to have him on board and will miss him in the fall!



ercise and meet their neighbors. Community gardens also help address food security by providing the opportunity for people to grow their own food and increase their access to healthy and nutritious foods. Over the past three years our community garden has grown from about four plots to now having 19 plots. Our community garden also supports the local food pantries with excess produce that is grown being donated to the pantries."

11. Any closing thought you would like to share?

"Well - I just want to say thanks to all of those who supported the Rio Dell Community Garden in voting (see article on page 6). Also if anyone is interested in volunteering with the food pantries or at the Rio Dell Community Resource Center please let me know by calling me at (707) 764-5239."

Senior Spotlight

By Chris Smiley, Community Food Programs Coordinator

I recently received a call from a wonderful woman in Fortuna by the name of Sandy Todd. Sandy had seen an advertisement in the Times Standard about the senior programs at Food for People and called to find out if she would qualify. When she found out she did qualify, she wondered if maybe a couple of her neighbors would qualify also. Over the next week and a half Sandy called back every other day with another prospective client until the day of the Fortuna distribution. She had assembled 12 seniors in the Mountain View Activity Center with identification and appetites ready.

It was a pleasant, sunny day and the mood in the lunch room was jovial and good natured with long time, familiar neighbors chatting and joking with each other. I sat behind a small table in the corner signing up one new client after another while enjoying the social atmosphere. Even though the majority of the prospective clients live by themselves, Mountain View has a very close knit community. I began to understand how easily something like a food bank distribution could fit in with the routine here. After we finished up with all of the paperwork, I went out to the lawn and set up a couple of tables with bread and fresh produce and started the distribution. Thanks to our gleaning coordinator at Food for People, clients were able to fill up their bags with fresh off the farm organic summer squash, greens, broccoli, potatoes, carrots and white pearl onions. Other residents who hadn't yet spoken with Sandy about the program or had heard about the food bank started coming over just to see what the

occasion was and ended up signing up and walking away with armfuls of groceries. The afternoon was a success and wouldn't have been possible without the outreach efforts of Mountain View resident Sandy Todd.

Sandy has a natural, comfortable and easy way of talking to people in her community that comes from being born and raised in Humboldt County. When asked about how she went about such a successful outreach program she responded: "I just went knocking on doors. I've lived in Mountain View Apartments for eight years now and it's real nice. Everyone knows everyone else; everyone likes everyone else and gets along great. So I went knocking on doors to tell people about the free groceries." And she hasn't stopped. Since the first distribution, Sandy has reached out to even more residents, with nearly 30 more prospective clients next month.

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) provides a 30-40 pound box of nutritious food monthly. Right now we are able to provide a bag of fresh produce, two pounds of cheese, bread and about 32 pounds of non-perishable food items. The programs are tailored towards seniors who are living on fixed incomes like social security, and find it challenging to purchase nutritious food. To sign up, all you need is a photo I.D. and a proof of income or a MediCal card. We distribute food throughout the county, from Trinidad all the way down to Redway. If you, or anyone that you know, is over 60 and could use a little help by the way of free groceries, contact Chris Smiley at Food For People, (707) 445-3166 extension 303.

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