

FISH Food Banks

1224 South I Street • Tacoma, WA 98405 • 253-383-3164 • www.fishfoodbanks.org • Spring 2006

Friends in Service to Him

On the front lines: being the first responders to poverty and hunger

A Letter from the Director

Beth Elliott, Executive Director,
FISH Food Banks of Pierce County

Dear Friends:

I see the lines in our food banks continue to grow even as the headlines read, "State jobless rate lowest since 1999" (*The News Tribune*, March 1, 2006).

Food Lifeline recently released the key findings for Western Washington from the study, "**Hunger in America 2006.**" America's Second Harvest, the largest non-for-profit domestic hunger relief network in the United States, commissioned the study. While we are not a partner of Food Lifeline or America's Second Harvest the information gathered from this comprehensive study, I believe, is reflective of all food bank customers in our area.

As we have long surmised, many individuals who visit a food bank are the working poor. The box at right summarizes the survey's findings for Western Washington.

FISH Food Banks increasingly plays a vital role in the health of our community. **In 2005 we served over 282,000 individuals.** As Sam Edwards, our 2005 President of the Board said, "**Food banks are the first responders to poverty.** People in need come to get food before they do anything else. Because we see them first, we have the opportunity to provide nutritious food and then direct them to other service providers

Who are FISH's clients?

In Western Washington:

- 62% of food bank clients count a job, social security, SSI, unemployment or disability as a main source of income
- 4.5% count welfare as their main income source
- 51% of food bank customers choose between food and paying for heat
- 40% choose between food and paying for medicine or medical care
- 40% must choose between food and rent
- 45% of food bank customers have some form of post-secondary education
- 20% do not have a phone
- 44% do not have a vehicle
- 31% do not have health care

for their additional needs."

We take our role as first responders to poverty seriously. In 2006 we will continue and expand our work with South Sound Outreach Services. One of their caseworkers will travel from food bank to food bank on a schedule helping enroll eligible individuals in the Basic Food Program and providing useful information on utility, rent, pharmaceutical and other types of emergency assistance.

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Dedicated volunteers stock shelves (left) and pack food sacks (above) at the Breadbox FISH Food Bank at Christian Fellowship Church in Tacoma.

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The **Nutrition Education Program** will expand from three to six food bank locations. We will continue to demonstrate that it is easy to prepare a variety of nutritious recipes from the food individuals receive in their food bags. Taste samples, nutrition information and various recipes will be available on a regular basis.

In April, in cooperation with Washington State University Pierce County Extension Service, we will be hosting a series of **classes on Diabetes** in two of our food bank locations. Individuals will have the opportunity to have their blood sugar levels checked on site and learn more about the cause and how to care for the disease.

In our desire to offer more nutritious food and in response to our clients needs we made a commitment to purchase more protein. Therefore we will make four bulk purchases of various types of protein throughout the year.

As always, our goal remains to provide nutritious food ingredients for individuals to make three meals a day for three consecutive days. No one needing food is turned away.

It is my hope that we can count on your continued support as we provide for those in need.

Sincerely,
Beth Elliott
Executive Director

E-News

FISH Food Banks is considering electronic distribution of this newsletter. Would you prefer to receive your FISH news via email? If so, please email director Beth Elliott at bethelliott@fishfoodbanks.org.



Spring: A time for planting seeds and new ideas!

That is exactly what the Board of Directors is doing in March. A retreat is being held at Trinity Presbyterian Church, above the Old Town FISH Food Bank, to create a vision for the future. We will examine where we are now and where we want to be three years from now. As board member Lu Farber said, " This is not a plan that will be put on a shelf." Task groups will be formed and action plans with a time line will be created and implemented. Possible items for discussion include expanding and improving technology and improving food bank facilities.

"We must be the change we wish to see in the world."

- Gandhi



Seventh-graders from Concordia Lutheran School are pictured with their generous donation of food to their local FISH Food Bank.

What's cooking at FISH?

Below is an example of the nutritious recipes that are being sampled at some of our food bank locations. If you are interested in finding out where or would like more information please give us a call at (253) 383-3164.

Spanish Rice

6 - One cup servings

- 1 chopped onion
- 1 cup water or chicken stock
- 1 cup uncooked white rice
- 2 cups canned tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon chili powder and salt
- 1-2 cloves of garlic
- 2 teaspoons of oil, butter or margarine

Directions

1. Heat oil and sauté onion & garlic
 2. Add rice and spices, stir until mixed
 3. Add water, tomatoes, bring to boil
 4. Reduce heat, simmer for 5 minutes, stir occasionally, when liquid is absorbed turn off heat, let sit for 5 min.
- Variations: top with shredded cheese or add cooked ground beef or turkey*

About Rice

- 1 cup uncooked rice = 2-1/2 cups cooked
- 1 pound rice = 2-1/4 cups dry = 11 servings = 5 1/2 cups cooked

Produced by Washington State University Pierce County Extension, Tacoma and FISH Food Banks. Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension office.

*Funding provided by
the Milgard Family Foundation*



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Tacoma, WA
Permit NO. 613

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BREAD BOX

Christian Fellowship Church
5010 South G Street, Tacoma

EDGEWOOD

Mountain View Lutheran Church
3505 122nd Avenue East, Edgewood

GRAHAM

Holy Disciples Catholic Church
10425 187th Street East, Puyallup

JACKSON STREET

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
7419 South 12th Street, Tacoma

LAKES

Little Church on the Prairie
6310 Motor Avenue S.W., Lakewood

OLD TOWN

Trinity Presbyterian Church
1619 South 6th Avenue, Tacoma

SOUTH TACOMA

Tahoma Unitarian Universalist Congregation
1115 South 56th Street, Tacoma

SOUTHEAST

Lutheran Church of Christ the King
1704 East 85th Street, Tacoma



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