

FOOD LIFELINE

FEEDING HOPE FEEDING WESTERN WASHINGTON

ISSUE 4 2011

MEET
LILY



NETWORK NEWS



Against Hunger” from our website. It features real children and families who have dealt with hunger, including 7-year-old Josie, who says when her dad wasn’t working, they couldn’t afford snacks. “So what I would do is just drink water from the fountain, until my stomach’s full of water.”

The episode stays in true Sesame Street form with positive endings and upbeat tunes, ensuring the message is well received. It does not focus on the more depressing facets of hunger, like the inability to focus in school, subsequent illnesses and fatigue. The show took a difficult subject and turned it into an opportunity to educate in a positive way.

WHAT DOES SESAME STREET HAVE TO DO WITH HUNGER?

Nearly 49 million people in our nation are food insecure, and 16 million are children. In Western Washington, 1 in 7 families are financially stretched to the point where they can’t be certain that members of their family will not go hungry.

Lily, the newest muppet to join Sesame Street, teaches children (and adults) about hunger. Hunger isn’t easy to talk about, especially for children, and Lily shares how people struggling with hunger are just like them.

Feeding America, the national organization of which Food Lifeline is a member, partnered with Sesame Street to increase awareness of hunger and create an avenue to communicate directly with future advocates. Educating children will help foster understanding of the issue, introduce the concept of volunteering, and encourage the idea of giving back.

You can link to the special, “Growing Hope

At Food Lifeline, we know all too well the effects this economic downturn are still having on our community. We saw another 9% increase in the number of people we served this past year. If we can begin to understand the impact hunger has in our region, we can begin to solve the problem together. Plant a vegetable garden, hold a food drive--or watch Sesame Street. A \$10 donation is enough for a month’s worth of dinner for a hungry person. Let’s work together to make a difference.

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When you’ve finished reading this newsletter, please pass it on to a friend!

➤ FOOD LIFELINE
RECEIVES 4 STARS
FROM CHARITY
NAVIGATOR!



DEAR FRIENDS,

The Season of Giving is upon us at Food Lifeline. Every year we marvel at our community's generosity as individuals from all walks of life step forward to help us meet our mission. Your incredible contributions of food, of time volunteering and of precious funds keep food flowing, and keep our head and hearts firmly focused on our mission of ending hunger in Western Washington.

This past year, your contributions enabled us to provide more food than ever before. In our Fiscal Year 2011, Food Lifeline distributed more than 35 million pounds of food and groceries (more than 27 million meals!) to our member food banks, meal programs and shelters throughout Western Washington, an increase of 13% over the previous year.

Sadly, the need for food continued to grow. Our member agencies served more than 745,000 unduplicated individuals last year, an increase of 9% over FY 2010. Beyond the services we supported at food banks, our member meal programs served over 4 million meals and snacks to hungry people.

Those turning to the emergency food system continue to be among the most vulnerable in our population, with 35% being children, and 14% being seniors. In fact, we saw a 30% increase among seniors we serve, who struggle to stretch their fixed income to put food on the table as costs of medicine and other basics like fuel and rent went up.

In light of the continued need for food, your help is more valuable than ever, and you can trust Food Lifeline to be a strong steward of your support. When you give \$1 to Food Lifeline, 96 cents goes directly to feeding hungry people. Even more, that \$1 is enough for us to provide an entire day's nutrition to a hungry person. These incredible efficiency statistics were possible because 94% of the food we distributed was donated – not purchased, and because almost 9,000 of you volunteered over 42,000 hours of your time to help us out. That's the equivalent of over 20 full time staff!

Your support is inspiration for all of us. Whether you volunteer, host a food drive to fill plates or give funds to help us bring in more food, you're helping us end hunger, one meal at a time. This Season of Giving, we're thankful for you.

Warmly,
Linda



FOOD LIFELINE

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TAKE HOLIDAY ACTION

Thanks to your support of our special events, food and fund drives, and generous financial gifts, Hunger Action Month was a huge success, and we received enough funding to provide over 855,000 meals to hungry people in the months to come. In addition, we moved nearly 1.6 million much needed meals out into the community through our network of food banks, meal programs and shelters.

September was packed with ways to take action against hunger: whether you were an event attendee, a volunteer at our warehouse, or became a fan of Food Lifeline on Facebook! Hunger Action Month may be over, but there's still time to take action before the end of the year.

QFC's **Bringing Hope to the Table** holiday campaign benefitting Food Lifeline kicks off October 30. QFC shoppers can support hungry people in their communities in a variety of ways: add a pre-packed \$10 grocery bag to your cart before checkout, purchase a case of specially marked Kendall Jackson wine or Full Sail Ale beer, or donate funds at the register. Bringing Hope to the Table lasts until January 1, with special events happening at select locations. Ask your QFC what they have in store this holiday season.

Take out your cell phones and snow tires; it's time for the annual **Q13 FOX Food for All Holiday Food and Fund Drive** with Les Schwab Tire Centers! Beginning November 14, Q13 FOX is encouraging viewers to put holiday meals on the tables of those in need by texting "MEALS" to 52000 to donate \$10, or giving online at www.q13fox.com. Or, donate food at any Les Schwab Tire Center.

"We're looking forward to another successful holiday food drive this year. Along with our partners Les Schwab Tire Centers, we want to exceed our goal of providing 100,000 holiday meals for children and families in need," said Pam Pearson, Senior Vice President and General Manager of Q13 FOX.

Q13 FOX has a long history of supporting leading nonprofits in their efforts to strengthen our community and make sure children and families get the assistance they need. To that end, they're proud to have partnered with Food Lifeline for the last 10 years. Donations are being accepted until the end of the year.



4 STARS FOR FOOD LIFELINE

Food Lifeline is proud to announce that we have earned respect throughout the nonprofit community as one of the most efficient charities in Washington. We recently earned national recognition when we were awarded a four-star charity rating (the top tier) by Charity Navigator, an independent body that evaluates the financial health, accountability, effectiveness and transparency of nonprofit organizations.

We are so proud to be given four stars and we truly appreciate all the support you have given to help us get there.

TOGETHER WE CAN END HUNGER

Over the past year Food Lifeline has seen a 9% increase in the number of hungry individuals we serve throughout Western Washington.

In this season of giving, we ask you to help us provide as much food as we can for the hungry seniors, children and families in our community.

Call 206-545-6600, visit us at www.foodlifeline.org, or email give@fl.org for questions.

■ **\$30**, the average cost for a week of food for a school-aged child, which we can stretch to provide a full month of meals.

■ **\$80**, the average cost for a week of food for a senior couple, which we can stretch to provide food for nearly six weeks.

■ **\$140**, the average cost for a week of food for a family of four, which we can stretch to provide food for more than a month of meals.

➤ *"IF WE DIDN'T HAVE FOOD LIFELINE, OUR DOORS WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO STAY OPEN."*

-PORT TOWNSEND FOOD BANK

LOOKING BACK

WRAPPING UP OUR SPECIAL EVENTS AND PROMOTIONS

The first annual **Dress Down Hunger** event on Friday, September 30 was a



ANDREA HORNS PHOTOGRAPHY
Jennifer Etkin and Walter Robello enjoying some delicious food & drinks.

rousing success! More than 250 guests turned out to Food Lifeline's Seattle Distribution Center to enjoy gourmet pizza, wine and beer

tasting, auction items, a warehouse-themed "Raise Your Pallet"

fundraiser, and rockin' music by the Cherry Cherry Band.

The event tripled its fundraising

goal by raising nearly \$85,000—enough to provide over 250,000 meals to hungry



ANDREA HORNS PHOTOGRAPHY
Cherry Cherry Band helps get the crowd moving at Dress Down Hunger.

individuals in Western Washington. A big thank you to our generous sponsors, The Boeing Company and Seattle Metropolitan Credit Union. Thank you as well to our fantastic attendees, and to our food, beverage and auction item donors.

Hunger Action Month was jam-packed with action and activities. Read more on p. 3 of this newsletter. We hosted a Neighborhood Repack Challenge, a Community Egg Breakfast where we helped



Chef Jeffrey Saad with Linda Nageotte at our Community Egg Breakfast.

feed nearly 800 hungry people, and of course, our Dress Down Hunger event. We appreciate all the time and effort you gave to make Hunger Action Month meaningful and effective, both for us at Food Lifeline and all the hungry people we serve.

ENDING HUNGER AWARDS



(From Left) Matthew Wong & Jim Elsea of Puget Sound Energy, Bob Driessnack of Intermec Foundation

Food Lifeline's annual Ending Hunger Awards were presented at Dress Down Hunger. These awards recognize those companies and individuals who go above and beyond in their support of Food Lifeline's mission. Congratulations to the 2011 honorees:

- Intermec Foundation**
Outstanding Corporate/Foundation Donor Award
- Kelli Linville**
Special Appreciation Award
- Puget Sound Energy**
Outstanding Volunteer Award
- Seafreeze / City Ice**
Outstanding Food Donor Award
- Villa Academy**
Raising Hunger Awareness Award

LOOKING AHEAD

A LOOK AT WHAT'S GOING ON WITH FOOD LIFELINE IN THE MONTHS AHEAD

DRIVE OUT HUNGER

Hunger Action Month may be over, but hunger is not. Join us this holiday season to engage your community through a **food & fund drive**. Whether you host a drive in your office, school or neighborhood, we have the tools to help your drive be a success. Check out www.foodlifeline.org/drives to get inspired and start your drive today!

END HUNGER FROM HOME

Try a new spin on your holiday gatherings: hold a hunger-themed dinner party at your home to benefit Food Lifeline. Invite your friends to enjoy thought-provoking conversation over dinner, and then make a donation to support Food Lifeline's mission.

Take advantage of our new online toolkit, including video, suggested menus, and conversations starters about hunger. This could be just the new angle your holiday party needs, or it could even be a fresh and meaningful way to celebrate your birthday with friends. Contact events@fl.org for more information.

BUILD YOUR TEAM AND GET READY TO REPACK!

Food Lifeline is kicking off another new event this year: The first annual **Food Lifeline Repackathon** on Saturday, February 11, 2012. Get your team together now for this volunteering marathon featuring non-stop music, competitive spirit, and thousands of

pounds of food going out to hungry families. Gather friends, register online, collect pledges, and get ready to rock at the Shoreline Repack Center alongside fellow corporate and community teams.

SAVE THE DATE FOR SUSTAINABLE ELEGANCE

Coming up Friday, April 27, 2012 is your chance to go green while sampling food from the best chefs in the city. **SAVOR: Sustaining Lives, Nourishing Hope** promises an unforgettable, sustainable five-course dinner and auction at Cedarbrook Lodge, featuring renowned local chefs and paired wines. Watch www.foodlifeline.org for information on all of our upcoming events and promotions.



Carolyn Pesheck and Betsy Comstock help sort cans at our Shoreline Warehouse.

> **NEARLY
9,000 PEOPLE
VOLUNTEERED AT
FOOD LIFELINE LAST
YEAR**



SISTERS ON A HUNGER MISSION

CAROLYN AND BETSY STOP AT FOOD LIFELINE ON THEIR TOUR AROUND THE NATION

Carolyn Pesheck and Betsy Comstock are on a meaningful adventure. After stopping by to see us, they wrote about their travels and the reasons for them:

Thank you for allowing us to help at Food Lifeline while we were in Seattle in August.

We were two of a handful of volunteers that day put to work by Hank, the PRC Manager, sorting pallet-loads of canned vegetables that had been rejected at the factory because of dents or other blemishes to the cans. We applied the criteria that Hank trained us on (e.g., no kinks in the metal, bulges, or damage to the seal) and salvaged the cans that could be given to someone in need.

How did we come to volunteer at Food Lifeline? Here's the story: Both of us found ourselves retired a bit earlier than we expected. We felt fortunate to have reasonable financial security ourselves. But we were concerned by reports that more than 15 percent of the population of the US live in poverty, and that a similar number experience food insecurity. This is not the vision we have for our country.

So we started "Facing Hunger in America"

to study what is being done to help feed those without adequate, nutritious food. What works best, and what else should be done? Our plan is to visit at least one hunger-related program per state, interview staff, volunteer, and blog about our findings as we go.

We've deliberately chosen as broad a spectrum of organizations as we can find. In Washington we chose to visit SeaShare and spent a morning volunteering at Food Lifeline.

So far our travels have taken us to about 60 programs in 37 states. We've visited SNAP, WIC and school meal programs, as well as the USDA Food and Nutrition Services offices in Washington DC. We've visited small grass-root programs, as well as state policy councils and human services departments, even up to Michigan's Senator Debbie Stabenow, chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. We've seen programs effectively rehabilitating those with substance addictions, and programs training unemployed people in culinary arts. And of course, we've visited many food banks, food pantries and feeding programs.

The demand for programs such as these has increased dramatically in the last few years. It is clear to us that everyone has a role to play in ending hunger! At the end of our project, we plan to:

- Support the charitable food safety net (especially by donating time, money, and healthy food to organizations like Food Lifeline)
- Support the federal food safety net (especially by contacting our congresspeople, advocating for SNAP, WIC and healthy school meals)
- Support local, healthy food systems (especially by buying local produce and supporting more nutrition education)
- Support economic stability for all (especially job training and fair wages)

Thanks again, and keep up the good work!

-Carolyn Pesheck & Betsy Comstock

facinghungerinamerica.blogspot.com

YOU SIGNED AND WE DELIVERED!



Kelsey Beck, Congressman Dave Reichert, Clare Garvey, Kerri Fischer & Issaquah Food Bank Board members.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our postcard campaign and signed and completed a postcard this summer and fall. The cards helped tell our members of Congress how important federal nutrition programs are in ensuring everyone has access to emergency food programs.

Out of 830 signed cards, we delivered half in person to U.S. Congressman Norm Dick and U.S. Congressman Dave Reichart. The rest traveled to Senator Patty Murray's office in Washington D.C. Murray is part of a new 12 person federal Joint Committee charged with creating a deficit reduction plan, so it was important to show her just how many people care about ending hunger.

Thank you to the following individuals and organizations for helping us collect postcards throughout Western Washington: Mt. Si Food Bank, St. Leo's Parish, City of Issaquah, Tacoma FISH Food Bank, Issaquah Clothing and Food Bank, Ann Eachus, University District Food Bank, Within Reach, Seattle Tilth, Bremerton Foodline, Des Moines Food Bank, WIC-Public Health King County, Hunger Intervention Program, Sky Valley Food Bank, Phinney Neighborhood Center, Skagit County Distribution Center, and KPAC Cold Storage.

SPECIAL DELIVERIES

MOUNTAINS OF GRATITUDE FOR TRUCKLOADS OF FOOD

Over 745,000 people in Western Washington needed our member food banks, meal programs, and shelters to help feed themselves last year. This time of year, many people bundle up in warm jackets (or even not-so-warm jackets) grab their umbrellas, and often wait in long lines to receive food.

These people are our neighbors. Almost one quarter of them own their own homes. Thirty-five percent are children and 14 percent are seniors. Almost half of them have some form of post secondary education, and only 9 percent of them are actually homeless.

It can happen to anyone. It's the child that sits next to your child at school. It's the family down the street, where both parents are working, but pay so much for child care and health insurance that it is hard to make ends meet. It's the senior citizen waiting with you at the bus stop who worked hard and saved for retirement but is now facing a depleted retirement account and outrageous prescription costs.

Without the various organizations donating nutritious food to Food Lifeline, the people

waiting in these lines would not receive anywhere near the amount or quality of food they are given by the committed volunteers and staff at our member agencies.

Food Lifeline receives donations from food donors large and small. Distribution centers, manufacturers, restaurants, produce wholesalers, grocery stores, and others donated over 35 million pounds of food to Food Lifeline last year. This accounts for more than 27 million meals put on the tables of our friends and neighbors in need.

We want to say thank you to our food donors during this season of giving because their season of giving to Food Lifeline is all year long. Thank you for making these much-needed donations during your busiest times of the year. Thank you for giving us space in your warehouses, on your trucks, in your grocery stores, at your restaurants, and on your farms to make sure that a hand reaching out for help is not reaching out in vain.

We at Food Lifeline appreciate you, and on behalf of the all the individuals we serve, thank you.



THANK YOU from some of our Food Resources Staff Members (Laura, Amy and Emily).



JoEllen picks fresh peppers from her garden in Seattle.

CANDY CANES AND HOPE

STRUGGLING FAMILIES GET SUPPORT DURING THE HOLIDAYS

We don't think it is an exaggeration to say that the staff and volunteers at our member agencies work miracles during the holidays.

Sue Osborn, Director at Hands of Hope Food Bank in Everett, was reminded of the meaning of giving to others during the holidays, no matter how little we may have:

"We were open giving out food the week after Christmas. One of the volunteers was handing out candy canes to the children as they came in. One of the little boys came across the room to me...He looks at me with a sweet face and says, 'I just wanted to give you this candy for Christmas because I didn't get a chance to get you anything.' Let me tell you, I cried. For a young child who I know does not have much, to give up his candy [so he could] give something to me for Christmas--that was awesome."

During the last holiday season alone, our member agencies saw a 17 percent increase in the number of visits to their food banks and meal programs. This is in addition to the 9 percent overall increase Food Lifeline saw in individuals accessing services this past year. Despite the rising need, local communities and our member agencies

continue to provide hope at the holidays.

JoEllen, a local food bank client, used to organize her company's holiday program that raised gifts and money for families in need. "I was on the giving side of the food bank," she says. She soon found herself on the receiving end when she became pregnant later in life. Even with a full-time job, after her son was born, she struggled to get by with no support from his father. "There were many times we needed a food bank...they have really helped me stay on my feet." The food JoEllen received allowed her focus her income on her mortgage, utilities and medical costs.

Families in need visit our member agencies in order to enjoy things about the holidays many of us take for granted. They may enjoy a holiday meal, access warm clothes, or get support for heating bills. In some cases, gifts may be available to take home and give to family or friends. These gifts often come from companies, like JoEllen's, which organized a holiday giving program.

Thank you to our member agencies and our community for giving the gift of hope to those needing help this holiday season.



"For a young child who I know does not have much, to give up his candy [so he could] give something to me for Christmas--that was awesome."

FOOD LIFELINE

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From left: Rep. Moscoso and Rep. Frockt participate in a Repack Challenge during Hunger Action Month

"I'm proud to participate in this event to help put food on the tables of struggling families and individuals."

-Rep. Louis Moscoso



NEIGHBORHOOD REPACK CHALLENGE

Our Neighborhood Food Repack Challenge was a the perfect way to take action during Hunger Action Month. On September 8th, legislators, staff, and community members of North Seattle, North King County and South Snohomish County joined us in Shoreline to see how much food could be repacked in a single volunteer session.

Rep. Louis Moscoso (1st district) said, "As our state economy continues to be impacted by the recession, I'm proud to participate in this event to help put food on the tables of struggling families and individuals. Organizations like Food Lifeline and our local food banks are key to helping provide nutritious food in tough times."

Rep. Moscoso and Rep. David Frockt were

joined by their staff and staff from the offices of State Representatives Ruth Kagi, Derek Stanford, Cindy Ryu, and the office of the late State Senator Scott White. Several community volunteers also participated.

At the end of the session, peanut butter had been sorted and stacked, fruit compiled, and awards given out based on both speed and creativity. Nearly 6,700 pounds of food were repacked, which is enough for more than 6,000 nutritious meals for hungry people.

"I'm proud that North Seattle volunteers took part in the national campaign. Rep. Louis Moscoso and I—and dozens of other volunteers—had a great time packing food to fill the shelves of local food banks," said Rep. David Frockt (46th district).

Our **mission** is to end hunger in Western Washington by engaging communities and mobilizing resources.

www.foodlifeline.org