

3rd Quarter 2023

Food For Thought

"Lend a hand to help feed your fellow man"



806 Fayette Street • Bastrop, Texas 78602 | (512) 303-0033 | www.BastropFoodPantry.org



BCEFP NEWS FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TRESHA SILVA

Well, just when we thought the summer of 2022 was hot, we ended up with a heat dome over Texas in 2023! But despite the record-breaking 75 consecutive days over 100 degrees and temps as high as 110, we have also set some BCEFP records.

This summer we have seen some record-high emergency client days and overall requests for food and support days—a 29% increase from 2022! We have also had a 50% decrease in the pounds of food we have received from the Central Texas Food Bank compared to last year. I'm very proud of our amazing staff and volunteers who have supported our mission and process and continued to serve and meet the needs of our community despite the environmental and economic challenges that we have faced this year.

On a very positive note, we kicked off the summer in June with the employees of the City of Bastrop sponsoring a month-long food drive to support us. The City of Bastrop Departments collected over 2,500 lbs. of food. The food flowed in weekly, just as we were seeing our numbers of emergency clients peak.

*The pantry hours are Monday – Friday
from 8:30am – 4:00pm.*

Welcome New Volunteers

Chris Bacorn
Vickie Baych
Les Baych
Cathy Bachik
Rich Bachik
Pam Barbar
Georgia Reese
Evelyn Reese
Mary Hall
Elizabeth Pleacher
Lindsay Varn
Jack Pilar
Riley Pilar
Lilian Gregory
Mark Timerman



- Sept 21 **Hunger Awareness Observation Day @ BCEFP Campus**
- October 19 9 am-11, **Brown Bag Senior Health & Wellness Fair** (if you are interested in volunteering to support this Health Fair that will be held here at the pantry, please see Beverly or Sherry.
- Nov 11 **Elgin Empty Bowl** (shifts will vary between 8 am-1:30 pm). If you are interested in learning more about this and volunteering, please see or email sherrydarwin@bastropfoodpantry.org.

BCEFP HOLIDAY/CLOSED DATES

November 23-24 Thanksgiving
December 25-26 Christmas

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It's after a challenging summer like this that we are even more motivated to push through on our capital campaign goal to build a single facility with the space, equipment, and infrastructure that will help us to meet rising demands. To date, we are approaching 57% of our goal! Our Good Neighbor Campaign steering committee along with our new Director of Development (see her bio below) are out in the community delivering the important message about the campaign, the objective, the rising demands, and what an opportunity this is to come together to take care of our neighbors in need.



SEPTEMBER IS HUNGER AWARENESS MONTH

It's September! What happens in September, you ask? HUNGER AWARENESS! We will be once again raising money for our NIBBLES program. You all can help in this process. How? First, please, wear ORANGE as often as you can this month. FEEDING TEXAS sponsors and leads this campaign and we invite you to visit their site feedingtexas.org to learn more about the largest hunger-relief organization in Texas and the support that they provide through their member food banks. Bastrop County Emergency Food Pantry hosted a Lunch & Learn on Thursday, September 21, with community invitees and we invited our volunteers to wear their bright orange on this day as well!

Another way you can help is by sharing our fundraising page with your family, friends, neighbors, church friends, and neighborhood pages. You can share the link to the donation page or make one of your own. just click on the "I want to raise for this" button!

Donate Page: <https://secure.givelively.org/donate/bastrop-county-emergency-food-pantry-inc/september-hunger-awareness-campaign-2023>

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Support children can count on...

- 272 students from 7 schools receive weekly bags of nutritious food every Friday that will last them the whole weekend THROUGH OUR NIBBLES PROGRAM
- We have served over 4,000 individuals this year and half of them are children under the age of 18.

How you can help...

1. Make a financial donation by scanning the QR Code on the right
2. Collect/ Donate Food directly to the Food Pantry

- tuna
- chili
- peanut butter
- Mac N cheese
- canned soup
- gnona bar
- cereal
- dried fruit
- shelf stable milk
- juice

wish list



Scan to Donate On-line

CONTACT US

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512-303-0033



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3RD QUARTER OUR FEATURE PROGRAM IS INVENTORY

For this spotlight, Sherry Darwin, Volunteer Coordinator checked in with Stephanie Castillo, BCEFP Inventory Lead, to ask some key questions about the Inventory Process at BCEFP.

Sherry: How many different sources does BCEFP have for food? Can you name them?

Stephanie: The Central Texas Food Bank, Universal Food Distributors, Labatt, In-Kind Donations and Retail Rescue (HEB, Walmart, Pizza Hut, Chick-fil-a, Chicken Express, Dollar General and Simply Sweets).

Sherry: Do we buy from Central Texas Food Bank or is it distributed to us as part of their Partner Network?

Stephanie: Prior to the pandemic we did purchase from CTFB, but since the pandemic, we do not pay, it comes to us free. We place an order every week, but this year we are seeing a sizable reduction on the food we receive from them. In total, we are realizing a 54% decrease in the amount of food that we received from CTFB last year for the same period. Much of the availability issue is still related to the aftereffects of the pandemic and the War in Ukraine on the supply chain as well as challenging economic conditions. The direct impact on the pantry is that we have had to purchase more food at a higher price to cover the difference—which has resulted in a sharp increase in food purchases.

Sherry: Out of our different food sources, where does most of the food come from?

Stephanie: The majority of our food still comes from CTFB and the Retail Partners that we rescued from. The retail pick-ups are for good food that might otherwise have been thrown out.

Sherry: Can you describe the positive impact that Volunteers make when they train for and sign up for Donation Center, Inventory or Emergency Boxes.

Stephanie: It helps so much to have so many volunteers. We would not have time to do everything that needs to be done without them. Volunteers provide assistance at the beginning, middle, and end of the entire food distribution process. Without them, we would not get the donations sorted and on the shelves. They also assist in breaking down produce and frozen items like chicken and other proteins into family-size portions. The Volunteers that build emergency boxes free up our staff to do more data entry and reporting as well as keep our inventory accurate for replenishment and future ordering. We see the dedication and commitment in our Volunteers that result in relief for our Emergency Clients when they go home with the best possible assortment of food in their boxes.

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OUR IMPACT

VOLUNTEER HOURS & IMPACT

In Q2 (April, May and June) our volunteers contributed 1413 hours and or an average of 118 hours a week. This is a **37% increase vs. our weekly average in Q1**. We continue to be so pleased to see the momentum, energy and positive impact that all our existing and new volunteers are bringing to the Food Pantry. Volunteer hours are incredibly valuable to the mission of the Food Pantry and equate to a financial contribution.

The most current value of volunteer hours is

\$31.80!

Independent Sector (IS) has announced that the estimated value of a volunteer hour in the United States reached \$31.80 in 2022, up 6.2 percent from 2021.* Apr 23, 2023

*Based on this updated value, BCEFP volunteer hours contributed support equivalent to payroll on average of \$3,754/week or **\$44,933.00**, for the first quarter of 2023!!*

*IS creates and shares knowledge and research to understand and accelerate the impact of the

Client Service Report Month May 25, FY2023

Volunteer Hours for the reporting month of May

Volunteer Hours: 462 hrs

	# of Clients	Pounds	Members of Food in Household
NIBBLES	35	8070	0
Brown Bag	111	2333.8	174
Commodities	71	2100	104
Emergency Asst.	216	18018	717
Fresh Foods for Families	85	2252.48	162
Open Arms	7	65.8	8
Disaster Asst.	0	0	0
Pantry Express	4	338	8
Special Asst. Program	0	0	0
Senior Activity	16	424	19
Whole Grains	577	4952	907
TOTAL SERVED	1122	38554.08	2099

Client Service Report Month April 25, FY2023

Volunteer Hours for the reporting month of April

Volunteer Hours: 512.77 hrs

	# of Clients	Pounds	Members of Food in Household
NIBBLES	28	6450	0
Brown Bag	117	3447	185
Commodities	67	2000	99
Emergency Asst.	190	15063.6	624
Fresh Foods for Families	103	3459.65	213
Open Arms	4	64	4
Disaster Asst.	0	0	0
Pantry Express	4	364	18
Special Asst. Program	0	0	0
Senior Activity	0	0	0
Whole Grains	516	5837.6	838
TOTAL SERVED	1029	36685.85	1981

Client Service Report Month June 25, FY2023

Volunteer Hours for the reporting month of June

Volunteer Hours: 438 hrs

	# of Clients	Pounds	Members of Food in Household
NIBBLES	0	0	0
Brown Bag	123	1858	190
Commodities	70	2100	108
Emergency Asst.	242	17042	818
Fresh Foods for Families	98	2790.2	187
Open Arms	6	54	7
Disaster Asst.	0	0	0
Pantry Express	3	170	8
Special Asst. Program	0	0	0
Senior Activity	4	0	7
Whole Grains	473	4990.25	777
TOTAL SERVED	1019	29004.45	2102

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FOOD DRIVES – UPDATE



In June, The City of Bastrop sponsored a month-long food drive with each of the department employees contributing! The result was 2,523 LBS of food collected. This was an amazing effort from the City of Bastrop employees, and we are so grateful to them and Tanya Cantrell, their HR Director, and Anthony Chavez, our Inventory Clerk, for working to coordinate this. Anthony and Sherry were able to go pick up weekly from multiple departments, which allowed us to have a significant flow of food, just as our summer emergency clients were starting to peak. We want to thank our Donation Center volunteers for working so hard to get this processed! You are each so dedicated to this critical first step in our process of preparing the food for distribution. We are continuing to seek organizations that would be willing to sponsor a month-long food drive and anniversary it each year! If you know of any organizations that would be willing to sponsor a drive, please contact Stephanie Castillo or Sherry Darvin to get the process started.

BCEFP VOLUNTEER SHIFTS NEEDED UPDATE

When talking to new volunteer candidates, we frequently get asked where we need the most help?

Programs Still Needing Additional Support

EMERGENCY BOXES

We could use some additional volunteers to consistently build Emergency Boxes on Mondays and Wednesdays.

ADMINISTRATIVE/RECEPTIONIST

We are working with some new Admin/ Receptionist volunteers, but we routinely need help on Wednesday morning and afternoon shifts plus Friday afternoons.

INVENTORY SHIFTS

In order to keep the Pantry well stocked having Inventory Afternoon Shifts prior to Emergency Days is a huge help in making our process efficient. The Inventory shifts needed most are on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday afternoons.

FRESH FOODS FOR FAMILIES

Finally, on the 3rd Friday of every month we have Fresh Foods for Families from 9 am-11:30 am. This event takes 14-16 volunteers. Fortunately, our Bastrop Knights of Columbus group helps us every other month (for Fall that will be September and November). So, in October and December we will welcome any volunteers that are interested.

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VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION



Our Volunteer of the 2nd Quarter is **Andy Stringer!**

Congratulations!

Andy is currently supporting our Inventory team 4 days a week! He has served over 250 hrs. to date in 2023. Andy started his volunteer role at the pantry about seven years ago. Andy is always flexible and accommodating and works with multiple programs during his shift. In addition to inventory tasks, he supports the truck unloading, Nibbles delivery, and has also helped the Whole Grains and Brown Bag program with carry-outs of Whole Grain items and Commodity

Boxes. This means he is assisting multiple clients over a 4-hour timeframe with getting a 30 lb box of grocery staples out to their car. Andy always completes his tasks with a smile and kind words for every client. Andy has lived in Bastrop for about eight years and previously resided in Colorado and Mississippi. When Andy is not at the pantry, he enjoys watching movies and football and his favorite pro team is the Green Bay Packers. When asked what he enjoys the most about volunteering at the Bastrop Food Pantry, Andy says he enjoys making clients happy and personally helping them. Thank you, Andy, for making all that you do!

VOLUNTEER!.....LIVE TO BE 100+!

Psst, want to know
the secret to living to
100 years old!



Recently, I sat down to watch a docu-series on Netflix called Live to 100, Secrets of the Blue Zones by Dan Buettner. If you are not familiar with Dan Buettner's work, he has traveled the world, researching communities that have produced the highest # of residents that lived to 100 and beyond. It was so interesting and fulfilling to see that Volunteerism was one of the factors that was attributed to these

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miraculous blue zones. Here are a couple of excerpts from the Blue Zones, Editor in Chief, Naomi Imatome-Yun and Elisabeth Almekinder, Registered Nurse and Health Journalist

Volunteering: Improves Health, Lowers Stress, Boosts Self-Confidence

Volunteering helps because you can see right away the effects of your contribution and commitment. Research has documented the positive feelings that surface during a "helper's high." Individuals develop increased trust and social interactions. Participating as a volunteer with others in a group cause boosts self-confidence and decreases the risk of depression, especially in the elderly population.

Lowered levels of stress hormones have been documented in those who volunteer, versus those who don't. Social benefits include a new network of friends with shared interests and a sense of purpose. At the same time, volunteers learn new skills.

Volunteering has shown to improve mental and physical health in one study of adults over 60. In another study, volunteers reported better physical health and life satisfaction. They perceived volunteering as a catalyst to positive changes in their health.

A longitudinal study of aging found those who volunteer their time to have longer life spans. Participants also experienced a decrease in pain from chronic illness.

If you volunteer, you often get more out of it than you give. It can be an enjoyable experience, such as the music festival Payne helped to organize. Besides combating loneliness and bringing joy to your life, volunteering regularly also improves physical well-being. A study published in the journal Psychology and Aging showed volunteers had lower hypertension risk and higher levels of psychological well-being than non-volunteers.

Another study published in BMC Public Health concluded that volunteering should be promoted at the public health level through education and policies to improve the health of community members and the community at large. It should primarily be supported in the elderly population, minority groups, those with a lower educational level, single folks, or those who are unemployed.

By Naomi Imatome-Yun, Blue Zones Editor-in-Chief and Wall Street Journal bestselling author, and Elisabeth Almekinder, RN, BA, CDE, Health Journalist, Registered Nurse, and Diabetes Educator for the Manos Unidas North Carolina Farmworker Health Program

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BCEFP WELCOMES ONE NEW TEAM MEMBER AND ONE RETURNING MEMBER!

Here's a little bio from each of them:

First, Dara Myers, Director of Development.

I am a Texan by birth and spent the first 20 years of my life in Corpus Christi. I spent the next 40 years transferring throughout Texas in the mortgage industry, obtaining my BBA from UT Austin, and raising 4 children to adulthood. After 40 successful years in the mortgage banking industry and many hours volunteering with family at local Food Banks, I am thrilled to have retired from mortgage banking and begin working my passion full time for Bastrop County Emergency Food Pantry. My husband and I moved to Bastrop at the end of last year to be here for my father and his wife and are thoroughly enjoying our time here! My husband and I enjoy spending as much time as possible with our family and our last adventure together was kayaking the Colorado right here under the railroad bridge in Bastrop with our children and their spouses! What else can you do outside when it's 102? My husband and I also enjoy gardening and purchased a home in Bastrop with no landscaping, so we are busy, busy getting our external environment just like we want it and look forward to next Spring to see the fruits of our labors. I am also looking forward to meeting more of the kind folks in the Bastrop community and working together to mitigate food insecurity for our Neighbors!

Next, we are excited to welcome Nycole Thorp back, as she has returned to the Inventory Team.

I am a mother of 2 boys. I previously worked at BCEFP, until last September as the inventory manager setting up the new inventory system. I have returned as an inventory clerk. I have been in the inventory field for almost 10 years. I have lived in Bastrop for most of my life and love watching the impact our organization has on the community and getting to a part of the mission is amazing. I am a wife and football mom. So, most of my free time is spent at games or taking care of my family.

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Daily Reminders

1. Please continue to wear your Volunteer Name Badge and turn it in before leaving campus.
2. Capture your hours by checking in and out for your shift in Galaxy Digital. An easy way to do this is to utilize the email sent on the day of your shift.
3. If you cannot make your shift, first unregister for your shift in Galaxy Digital and if you are unable to do that then send an email to sherrydarwin@bastropfoodpantry.org to let us know that you are unavailable.



WEAR A VOLUNTEER NAME BADGE UPON ARRIVING FOR YOUR SHIFT AT THE FOOD PANTRY. 😊

Please be sure to pick up a Volunteer Name badge as soon as you arrive at the Food Pantry for your shift. A name badge serves multiple purposes and is important for providing the best experience for our clients, visitors, and you as a volunteer. The badge helps everyone differentiate between staff and volunteers. Badges are available in our buildings that serve clients directly, both the main Food Pantry and the Support Center.

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VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE FORMING TO SUPPORT A VOLUNTEER DRIVEN FOOD DRIVE EFFORT

Would you like to be part of a committee to do community outreach regarding food drives? Our end goal will be to build a calendar of food drives supported by community organizations that can potentially be annual food drives for BCEFP. Volunteers will plan and implement this effort with the support of BCEFP staff. If you are interested, please email sherrydarwin@bastropfoodpantry.org.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST, SHARE TO CARE

We would like to invite you to follow us on social media. We are currently utilizing multiple platforms: Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Social Media allows us to keep the public and clients informed about our programs, success stories, challenges, immediate needs, and our overall mission! When you follow us and 'like' or share our posts, this expands our reach and builds awareness about our cause exponentially!



1. **Sign in and out** each time you volunteer here at the Bastrop County Emergency Food Pantry. (Your volunteer hours count in more ways than you know; they help provide matching dollars for grants!)
2. If you have symptoms of any contagious illness, a positive COVID test, exposure to someone with COVID-19 or any other contagious illness, please stay home.
3. Volunteers **MUST** wear volunteer badges during their volunteer shift.
4. Gloves must always be worn while handling food items.
5. Food items are never to be placed directly on the floor. Plastic tubs, bins, boxes, cases, etc. containing any food items are to be placed 6" above the floor on to pallets, risers, tables, chairs, etc.
6. Please contact Volunteer Coordinator, **Sherry Darwin** directly as soon as possible if you are not able to make your shift either by email atsherrydarwin@bastropfoodpantry.org or by phone at 512-303-0033 Ext 104.
7. Please do not bring friends or relatives to your volunteer shift who have not been cleared by Volunteer Coordinator, Sherry Darwin. All visitors must be cleared by the pantry staff and volunteers must have attended required orientation/training.

Friendly
Reminders

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