



# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2010

## ***Be A Superhero in the Fight Against Hunger***

March Madness is here - and we are not talking about NCAA basketball. It is FoodShare time! For the past 28 years, food shelves all across Minnesota have participated in the March Minnesota FoodShare campaign. FoodShare is a program of the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches. The March Campaign is a public awareness opportunity to educate the public about the need for food shelves and the good work they do in each community. This year, FoodShare is encouraging everyone to step up and be a superhero in the fight against hunger.



## ***Channel One 2010 FoodShare Goal - \$175,000 and 175,000 pounds!***

While there are some signs that the national economy is beginning to rebound, at Channel One we continue to see families who are struggling every day. For over six months, we have had more than 200 new households apply to use the Channel One Supplemental Food Shelf each month. Increased usage by already registered families along with hundreds of new households means that we need more superheroes in the fight against hunger than ever before.

March is one of the only times in the year where we can use your support to **leverage additional donations** through the FoodShare campaign. The more food and funds that we collect during March, the greater Channel One's share of the overall FoodShare incentive fund. Channel One also benefits through our participation in the Feinstein Challenge. For the 14th year, Rhode Island philanthropist Alan Shawn Feinstein will divide \$1 million among hunger relief agencies nationwide. As with FoodShare, the more donations we receive during March and April, the greater our share of the Feinstein Challenge money.

Please consider being a superhero in the fight against hunger by participating in FoodShare and the Feinstein Challenge this year. To get started simply visit the Channel One website at [www.helpingfeedpeople.org](http://www.helpingfeedpeople.org). All the information you need to run a Food and Fund Drive campaign is



there for you. Or click on the "Give Funds" and you can safely and easily make an online contribution to support Channel One. Or you can use the enclosed envelope to mail in a donation. Inside this newsletter are several activities you can participate in to support Channel One during FoodShare. However you choose to support Channel One, please know that we are grateful for your support during this important time.

### ***Channel One***

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## Cynthia's Corner

**Cynthia Shaffer**  
**Executive Director**

For many years our food shelf has been the largest in the region, and we are working to make it not only the biggest but also the best. For the past several months staff and volunteers have been working on a plan to become a model food shelf for all of Minnesota. A Vision Committee has been formed and an action plan developed. We are blessed with wonderful donors and partners who supply food to the food shelf, but there are times when our clients are unfamiliar with how to utilize some of our donated food and this has become a barrier. To address this issue, staff and volunteers have begun preparing sample dishes using items many of our clients are unfamiliar with. Tasting these dishes and receiving these recipes has made a huge difference and our clients have become excited with the new possibilities. This will be additionally important during the months we receive fresh produce that requires special preparation such as squash. Also part of the Vision Committee plan is a goal to encourage better health. To help out with this goal nutritional information is being distributed, cooking demonstrations are being provided by interns and student nurses are conducting mini wellness fairs for our clients.

Another way in which our food shelf is leading the fight against hunger is through increased technology usage. Our food shelf was the first agency in southeast Minnesota to begin utilizing new software which allows us to track client referrals and their follow through as well as reduce intake time for clients utilizing multiple community services. Since our implementation, several more community organizations have signed on to use the database.

Inside this newsletter you will see an article on the recent Hunger Study which gives us a picture of hunger today. One measure consistently used in the study and industry wide is food insecurity. Food insecurity is defined as limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways. I believe this phrase minimizes the reality of hunger. Being unsure where you will find your next meal is not the same as going without your next meal. Food insecurity does not relay the stress of looking for food or the humbling effect of having to ask for assistance.

I have been speaking to groups frequently in the past few months, and I am excited to talk about Channel One's impact in southeast Minnesota and La Crosse County, Wisconsin and meet a lot of people genuinely concerned for their communities. As we move into March and our annual FoodShare campaign, I know that I will see that concern and generosity many times over. Thank you for each and every way that you support Channel One, during FoodShare and all year long.

In gratitude,



## **Denim Day - Go Casual to Fight Hunger**

Again this year, Channel One is offering a fun and easy way for businesses and other groups to get involved in Minnesota FoodShare. Denim Days offer employees a chance to purchase a sticker for \$5 that allows them wear jeans on the day of their choice. *Denim Day* is available for businesses, schools, and other groups that are interested in raising money to support Channel One during Minnesota FoodShare month.

If you choose to participate, employers will receive stickers (shown left) to give to employees who “purchase” a casual dress day for a minimum of \$5. All proceeds will count towards the \$175,000 fundraising goal for FoodShare. For more information or to request Denim Day stickers, please contact Julie Christensen at 507-424-1705 or [juliechristensen@channel-one.org](mailto:juliechristensen@channel-one.org). Thank you for your support of our FoodShare campaign!

## **Be a Channel One Superhero - March FoodShare Activities**

There are several ways that you can support Channel One and be a superhero in the fight against hunger during March:

### **ABC 6 Superhero Contest and Drive By Food Drive**

ABC 6 News is sponsoring a month-long contest to name the new Channel One superhero pictured here. Visit [kaaltv.com](http://kaaltv.com) to submit your name for the Channel One superhero. Votes for the best name will be collected until March 27th, when ABC 6 News staff will hold their second annual Drive-By Food Drive at all three Rochester Hy-Vee stores. Food will be collected from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The winning name will be announced on ABC 6 News on Monday, March 29th and the winner will receive a \$200 gift certificate courtesy of Hy-Vee and a \$75 gift certificate to the Canadian Honker. Thanks to ABC 6 News, Hy-Vee and the Canadian Honker for being superheroes in the fight against hunger.



**5 A Day 5 K** This 5K race will be held on Saturday, March 13th. Registration begins at 8 a.m. and the race begins at 9 a.m. at the Running Room. Registration is only \$10 and a non-perishable food item. For more information visit [5aday5k.org](http://5aday5k.org). All proceeds will benefit Channel One.

**Eastwood Bank Food and Fund Drive** Eastwood Bank is holding a Food and Fund Drive for Channel One. Please bring your non-perishable food items or a cash donation to any Rochester Eastwood bank location and register to win an Eastwood Bank Visa Gift Card. Five \$100 gift cards will be given away. One prize registration per customer per day. Cash donations should be made by check payable to Channel One. Winning registrations will be drawn on Friday, April 2, 2010.

**AgStar Financial Services Food Drive** AgStar Financial is holding a Food Drive for Channel One in its Rochester office. Anyone is welcome to drop off food donations. Cash donations made by AgStar team members and clients will be matched by the AgStar Fund for Rural America.

## ***Still Time to Take the Challenge!***

Thank you to everyone who has gone online and made their pledge in the Pound for Pound Challenge. If you have not yet made your pledge there is still plenty of time to do something good for yourself and help feed people in need at the same time!

Take the Pound for Pound Challenge! Now in its second year, this program has partnered with NBC's The Biggest Loser, General Mills, Subway, 24 Hour Fitness and Walgreens to encourage Americans to "Lose Nationally, Feed Locally."



Simply sign up and pledge your weight loss goals at [www.pfpchallenge.com](http://www.pfpchallenge.com). For every pound you pledge, the Pound for Pound Challenge will donate 14 cents to Feeding America, enough to purchase one pound of groceries for our food bank. In addition, you can quickly and easily gain encouragement for reaching your goal and pledges for Channel One through the program's Challenge Plus Online Fundraising program. To find out more about how you can support Channel One through the Challenge Plus fundraising program visit [feedingamerica.org/challengeplus](http://feedingamerica.org/challengeplus).

### **Save the Date!**

***Letter Carriers Food Drive*** On Saturday, May 8th the Letter Carriers will conduct their annual food drive. Postal customers are encouraged to put food by their mailboxes in the morning, and your letter carrier will take it to the post office where Channel One will collect it.

***Fireworks*** For the second time, the 4th of July Fireworks will be a food drive for Channel One. Watch for details on how you can support Channel One with a gift before the event or where to bring a food item to the fireworks.

***Empty Bowls*** Our fifth annual Empty Bowls event will be held on Thursday, October 21st, 2010. Mark your calendars - we hope to see you that day at the Rochester Art Center!

### ***Northfield Food Shelf Receives Award From Channel One***

For the second year, Channel One presented the Above and Beyond Award to one of our member agency food shelves during our winter regional food shelf meeting. The Above and Beyond Award goes to a food shelf who goes above and beyond to help feed people in need. This year's winning agency was the Northfield Food Shelf that is run as part of the Northfield Community Action Center.

The Northfield Food Shelf serves over 1,200 clients each month. In addition to their food shelf, they offer a free, hot and healthy meal every Thursday night to Northfield residents. "The Northfield Food Shelf definitely goes above and beyond to feed people in need," said Scott Carpenter, Channel One Agency Relations Coordinator. "Judy Bickel who is the director of the food shelf does a great job with the support of wonderful volunteers. The Northfield area is lucky to have such a terrific resource in their area."

Congratulations to the Northfield Food Shelf and thank you for going Above and Beyond!

## ***Hunger in America 2010***

Last year, Channel One participated in a nationwide study about the state of hunger in America. Hunger in America 2010 found that hunger knows no race, age or gender. With an sharp increase in underemployment and unemployment in southeast Minnesota and La Crosse, Wisconsin, Channel One Food Bank and Food Shelf is serving a significantly higher number of people than we did just a few years ago. Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., a leading policy research firm, in partnership with Feeding America, conducted the research and compiled the data for Hunger in America 2010. The data is based on individual client interviews and agency surveys. These are a few of the statistics revealed by the study:

- ❖ The Channel One Food Bank provides emergency food for an estimated 81,500 different people annually.
- ❖ 40% of the members of households served by The Channel One Food Bank are children under 18 years old
- ❖ 36% of households include at least one employed adult
- ❖ 39% of clients served by The Channel One Food Bank report having to choose between paying for food and paying for utilities or heating fuel
- ❖ 35% had to choose between paying for food and paying their rent or mortgage

Channel One thanks each of the clients and agencies who took the time to complete the surveys, and to all of the volunteers who helped us administer the surveys. The information we gained will help us as we plan not only for services delivered today, but also in the future.

## ***Plant a Row for Channel One***

Nothing beats the taste and nutrition of fresh picked vegetables. Growing and eating from your own garden can improve your health, save you money, increase your sustainability, and decrease your carbon footprint. And most important, your garden can help a lot of people in need.



There are over 84 million households with a yard or garden in the U.S. If every gardener plants one extra row of vegetables and donates their surplus to local food agencies and soup kitchens, a significant impact can be made on reducing hunger. Plant a Row is a program which encourages gardeners to plant one extra row of vegetables and donate their surplus to local food banks and food shelves. No matter how little space you have to plant an additional row of vegetables for giving, you can grow a great contribution!

For more information on how Channel One can help move your extra garden produce into the hands of the people who need it most, contact Channel One Food Resource Coordinator Vince McCoy at 507-424-1722 or [vincemccoy@channel-one.org](mailto:vincemccoy@channel-one.org).



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**Channel One Food Bank and Food Shelf is a proud member of the following organizations:**

