



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2009

March Minnesota FoodShare Campaign

March is here, and that means one thing here at Channel One - it's FoodShare time! For the past 27 years, food shelves all across Minnesota have participated in the Minnesota FoodShare campaign. FoodShare is a program of the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches. In addition to the March Campaign, FoodShare works year round to educate the public about Minnesota's hunger problem and lobbies the state legislature and U.S. Congress to lend a compassionate and logical voice to poverty public policy debates that impact Minnesota families living in poverty.



Channel One 2009 FoodShare Goal - \$125,000 and 75,000 pounds!

Times are tight, and visits to the Channel One Supplemental Food Shelf are up 40 percent over the previous year. To keep up with the increased demand, we need your support. 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 12th 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 participating in FoodShare and the Feinstein Challenge this year. To get started simply visit the Channel One website at 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.



"America is the richest country in the world. And yet tonight, thousands of your neighbors will go to bed hungry. It may be your child's schoolmate who is undernourished and has difficulty learning on an empty stomach. Or it could be a co-worker, a working mother whose low-wage job doesn't make ends meet. Perhaps it's an elderly neighbor who has to make a decision whether to delay filling a prescription or buying groceries. The faces of hunger are as broad as the faces of America."

David Nasby, General Mills

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Cynthia's Corner

**Cynthia Shaffer
Executive Director**

When I was preparing to move to Minnesota, I Googled "Minnesota Nice." There was, of course, information describing truly nice behavior and open hospitality. But 'passive-aggressive' and 'behind their back' were two phrases also used frequently. I am proud to say that the Minnesota Nice I have experienced is one of open concern for those in need and a willingness to give so that others will have food.

Most everywhere I go these days I am asked how Channel One is doing and if we have enough food. I am happy to say that community generosity has enabled us to meet the growing need thus far. As a community dedicated to health and wellness, residents in this area realize that health starts with having enough to eat.

With continuing news of lay offs and closed businesses, the need for the basics; food and shelter, will continue to rise. As an industry, food banks have traditionally gauged the amount of food needed in a community by the number of people living in poverty, and use the poverty numbers contained in the most recent census. But that number does not include people recently laid off or the growing population of residents experiencing financial crisis from rising costs. So then how do we know if the need really is being met? How do we develop projections and plan for six months or a year from now? I don't have the perfect answer. In this uncertain economy, all we can do is continue looking for additional resources and distributing as much food as quickly as each community can receive it.

I could sum this up by referring back to the words of the famous but fictional character Scarlett O'Hara, "I have always depended on the kindness of strangers". (Make sure you read that with a southern accent.) Scarlett may never have experienced "Minnesota Nice," but this southerner is grateful for it.

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cynthia".

Hunger Study 2009

Channel One is proud to be participating in Hunger in America 2009, the fifth national Hunger Study conducted by Feeding America and its member food banks and food rescue organizations. The purpose of the study is to conduct extensive research into the distribution of food assistance services to low-income Americans through our comprehensive network of agencies. This research is one of the most in-depth surveys of its size assessing the hunger problem in America. The 2006 study amassed over 52,000 personal interviews with individuals who received food assistance as well as 31,000 social service agency employees.



The Hunger Study analyzes data collected from Channel One member agencies throughout Southeastern Minnesota and La Crosse County in Wisconsin, and compares our findings with data from agencies throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin and across the country. This comprehensive study allows us to better quantify the needs of our communities, and analyze the capacity of the charitable food distribution system to meet those needs. The Hunger Study has been cited as authoritative research results by the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, House and Senate Budget Committees, House and Senate Agriculture Committees, and the Senate Finance and House Ways and Means Committees in various public events and legislative hearings over the last few years.

Staff at Channel One are busy with every aspect of the hunger study, including coordinating volunteers who are assisting with the study and working with member agencies who have been chosen as sites where one-on-one client interviews are being conducted.

Save the Date!

Our fifth annual Empty Bowls event will be held on Thursday, October 15th, 2009. Mark your calendars - we hope to see you that day at the Rochester Art Center!

Spotlight on Channel One Volunteers

Last fall, Channel One began a monthly Volunteer Spotlight to recognize a volunteer individual or group that goes above and beyond in the fight against hunger. Whether it is stocking the food shelf, repacking product for distribution, checking clients into the food shelf, or helping with clerical work; we couldn't do it without our dedicated volunteers!!

The highlighted individuals or groups are acknowledged in the volunteer lounge at Channel One, the quarterly volunteer newsletter *The Volunteller*, and on the Channel One website. Outstanding volunteers who have been recognized thus far are Pam Treboske, Tina Brown, Jan Tangen, Tim Malone, Debbie Watson, Dick and Nancy Massaro, and Myron and Joan Bietz.

If you would like to nominate a volunteer to be highlighted in the Volunteer Spotlight, please contact Volunteer Recruiter and Community Relations Coordinator, Julie Christensen email her at juliechristensen@channel-one.org or call her at (507) 424-1705. And our need for volunteers is ongoing! If you are interested in joining our great group of volunteers, visit our website at www.helpingfeedpeople.org to learn more or contact Julie Christensen. Thanks for helping feed people in need in our community!



FoodShare Denim Day

Back by popular demand - *Denim Day*! Again this year, Channel One is offering a fun and easy way for businesses and other groups to get involved in Minnesota FoodShare. *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, you 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 \$125,000 fundraising goal for FoodShare. For more information or to request Denim Day stickers, please contact Jennifer Woodford at 507-424-1721 or jenniferwoodford@channel-one.org. Thank you for your support of Minnesota FoodShare!

Plant a Row for Channel One

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! Even if your garden consists only of ornamentals, or a planter on a balcony, please consider adding a few herbs. Herbs add nutrients as well as flavor to food.

It doesn't take much space to make a real contribution! The average harvest from a typical packet of seeds of a light vegetable, such as snap beans, weighs about 20 pounds. Dense vegetables, such as carrots, produce about 100 pounds. If you have space, please consider planting a row of your favorite vegetable this summer, and donating your extra harvest to Channel One. Fresh produce provides our clients with wonderful, nutritious options to choose when visiting the food shelf.

For more information on how Channel One can help move your extra garden produce into the hands of the people who need it most, call Vince McCoy at 507-424-1722.

Rockin to End Hunger

Recently, the owners of Rochester Ford and Toyota came up with a unique way to give back and support the Rochester area. They gave several departments at the two dealerships \$1,000 each, and told them to use the funds to help others in the community. Dennis Pitel heads the Parts Department at Rochester Ford, and he and his group decided to support Channel One with the funds they had been given. Rather than giving the money directly to Channel One, they used their initial \$1,000 and leveraged that to get sponsorships and donations for the Rockin' to End Hunger concert that was held on Sunday, February 8th at the North Star Bar in Rochester. Overall, the group raised just over \$3,000 for Channel One and over 500 pounds of food to help feed people in need. Thanks to all the staff at Rochester Ford and all of the sponsors for your support of this unique event!



St. John's Food Shelf - Above and Beyond

At a recent meeting of Southeast Minnesota food shelves, Channel One presented one our member agencies, St. John's Food Shelf in Wykoff, Minnesota with the first ever Above and Beyond Award. The Above and Beyond Award goes to a food shelf who goes above and beyond to help feed people in need.

The St. John's Food Shelf consistently rises above and beyond to help people who struggle with hunger in their area. The St. John's Food Shelf is open on the third Saturday of each month, from 9AM until noon. During that time, they serve approximately 130 households, and distribute approximately 5,000 pounds of food. All of their volunteers go the extra mile, assisting their clients as much as they can during their visit to the food shelf. Long time volunteers Elaine Compart and Ruth Grabau were presented with the award. Thanks to all the volunteers at St. John's Food Shelf - you really go Above and Beyond!

Second Annual Drive Out Hunger Golf Tournament

Mark your calendars - the second annual Drive Out Hunger golf tournament will be held on Monday, June 8th at beautiful Somerby Golf Club in Byron, Minnesota. Participants in the event will enjoy wonderful food and great company, in addition to the chance to play on a terrific private golf course, all for a good cause.

Individual golf registrations are available for \$175 per person, or sign-up a foursome for \$700. Sponsorships are also available, and increase your impact in the fight against hunger in Southeast Minnesota. To get involved as a sponsor, or to sign up to golf, call Jennifer Woodford at 507-424-1721.



Somerby Golf Club - photo by Aetos Images



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

