



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER •

Fall 2008

Need For Channel One Services At All Time High

It is difficult to watch the news on television, listen to the radio or pick up a newspaper without hearing or reading about the difficult economic times facing our country today. At Channel One, you do not need to do any of those things to know that times are tough. All you need to do is visit the Supplemental Food Shelf or any one of Channel One's ninety agencies and you will see very visible reminders that times are tight. The Supplemental Food Shelf had over 1,325 new households register since the beginning of the year. And overall we are seeing a 16% increase in the number of household visits to the Food Shelf. "It's really difficult right now," says Susan Siegle, Client Services Director at Channel One. "Clients are indicating that they are having to make really tough choices about where to spend their limited incomes. The increase in costs at the grocery store and at the gas pump are eating large chunks of people's budgets. And there is much concern about the high increase in heating bills that has been forecasted for the upcoming winter months."



At first glance, the challenge facing us in the fight against hunger is daunting. With challenges like these facing members of our community, can anything we do make a difference? Yet we know it does. At Channel One we distributed over 5.4 million pounds of food during our last fiscal year, in partnership with the 90 agencies who operate 163 programs that feed people in 13 counties in Southeastern Minnesota and La Crosse County in Wisconsin. Without that support, many families would find themselves in total crisis.

Our success is owed not only to our agency partners, but also to those individuals who work so hard on our behalf. Each year Channel One has over 2,200 volunteers who provide almost 21,000 hours of service. That's the equivalent of almost eleven additional full-time employees! And those volunteer numbers do not include the thousands of people who support Channel One in other ways - donating food during food drives, participating in an event that benefits Channel One or advocating for hunger relief efforts.

Yes, times are tough. But working together, we can - and do - make a difference in the fight against hunger. Thank you for your continued support of Channel One!

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Cynthia's Corner

**Cynthia Shaffer
Executive Director**

As I sit here trying to write this letter, I have so much on my mind it's hard to focus on one topic. I suppose all my thoughts do have a common thread; the economy and the instability it has caused. But wait, before you roll your eyes, give a heavy sigh and think, "I've heard this ad nauseam," stick with me. I promise not to get too doom and gloom.

While Channel One has experienced unprecedented numbers of people seeking food assistance, we have also made progress towards accomplishing our strategic plan. We have partnered with new charitable organizations increasing our ability to distribute food, greatly improved the efficiency of the warehouse thus increasing product movement out into the community, increased our overall pounds received by the organization, doubled the amount of food donations being made available to our state and national network and improved our ability to accurately track client statistics with a new database. In addition to these many successes, Channel One staff has been able to continue to meet the challenges of rapidly escalating needs while remaining flexible and responding quickly.

Today is my first anniversary with Channel One and life in Minnesota (or the frozen northland as my family refers to it) and my, how time flies. Perhaps it is because it's my anniversary, or maybe it is the fact that the world is so unstable that my ponderings keep leaning towards the good that is all around us.

On the personal side, I think about having the love and support of my family and growing number of friends. I think how great it is to see deer outside my window (understanding of course that may change if one runs in front of my car) and sleeping with the windows open in the fall. And I'm glad I still have a sense of humor, for it has lowered my blood pressure during many stressful times.

But thinking beyond myself, I think about how great it is that Channel One exists for the increasing number of people who need help. Thank you for all you do to support our work here at Channel One!

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cynthia Shaffer". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

Channel One Participates in Inaugural Hunger Action Month

September 2008 was the debut of Hunger Action Month. Previously recognized as Hunger Awareness Day, Feeding America has moved toward a month-long effort to make greater impact with the public on the issue of hunger. This year Channel One and Feeding America were thrilled to partner with country music star Phil Vassar in the fight to end hunger during Hunger Action Month in September. For this inaugural nationwide campaign, Phil Vassar created a special version of his song "Prayer for a Common Man" with members of the renowned gospel choir, the Fisk Jubilee Singers. A portion of the proceeds went to benefit Feeding America and its member food banks.



Channel One celebrated Hunger Action Month in several different ways. Thanks to Zion Lutheran Church in Stewartville, Advance Chiropractic in Rochester and the Minnesota-Dakota Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses for holding food drives. Also, special thanks to students of Mayo Medical School and the associated AMA student chapter who conducted the 21st Annual Harvest Classic 5K roadrace.

On the local level, from food drives to concerts, volunteer outings to advocacy work, there's something everyone can do. We urge you to take action now against the problem of hunger in America. You **can** make a difference. Please join us now in the fight against hunger, and be sure to mark your calendars for Hunger Action Month in September 2009!

Special thanks to the following groups for holding food drives this fall in support of Channel One:

***Olmsted County - County Attorney, Property, Records and Licensing,
ITS and Corrections Departments***

Multicultural Learning Center

Churchill School

Advance Chiropractic

University of Minnesota - Rochester Campus

**One in eight Americans is unsure from where their next meal will come.
You may be interacting with these people everyday and not know it.
Please watch your mailbox for Channel One's holiday mailing.**

***Please give what you can,
hunger is a choice no one should have to make.***

***Empty Bowls
Presented by
Eastwood Bank***

Join us on Thursday, October 16 from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Rochester Art Center for the fourth annual Empty Bowls event.

Empty Bowls is a nationally-known fundraising project that started in a high school art class in Michigan in 1990. Since that initial project, communities have raised millions of dollars to fight hunger on a local, national, and global level.

The 2007 Channel One Empty Bowls event raised nearly \$36,500 to support the hunger relief work of Channel One. With your participation, we will have an even more successful event in 2008!



A sea of bowls awaits you at Empty Bowls

Please plan now to attend! Your ticket includes a simple meal of delicious soup and bread and a handcrafted bowl of your choice for you to take home. Pre-purchase tickets are \$10, or \$15 at the door. We also have family tickets available for \$30 in advance or \$35 at the door. Family tickets include a meal for two adults and up to four children, and two handcrafted bowls.

One hundred percent of the proceeds benefit hungry people in our region. To purchase tickets, log on to our website at www.helpingfeedpeople.org, or call 507-424-1721. See you on October 16th!

***Think Like a Boy Scout and Be Prepared!
Annual Scouting for Food Drive Coming Soon!***

This year's Scouting for Food Drive will take place throughout the Gamehaven Council of the Boy Scouts of America on Saturday, November 15th. On that day, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Venturers, Explorers and adult leaders will be walking door-to-door in their communities collecting food for Channel One.

Questions about the Boy Scout Food Drive? Want to hold your own Food Drive? Contact Julie Christensen at Channel One, juliechristensen@channel-one.org or 507-424-1705.

America's Second Harvest Changes Name

In 1994, Channel One became a Certified Affiliate of Second Harvest National Food Bank Network. Since then, we have been a proud member of this important network of the nation's food banks. In September 2008, America's Second Harvest became Feeding America. This new name best conveys the network's mission — providing food to Americans living with hunger.



Despite a 30-year legacy of fighting hunger, America's Second Harvest has been confronted with low awareness among the general public, and a broader misunderstanding of domestic hunger. Knowing that true, monumental progress can be made when the public is fully engaged in their cause, they researched how to best inspire people. They found that the name America's Second Harvest was limiting and that a new name was needed to quickly and clearly convey their mission.

Their new name, Feeding America, directly conveys that as a network we are providing access to food for people who need it. It also communicates the positive power of food to be a catalyst in people's lives. In essence, "feeding" serves as a double meaning—both providing food and enriching lives.

Volunteer in the Nutrition Nook at Channel One! Our Nutrition Nook is located in our food shelf and needs volunteers to help educate our clients on basic food safety, portion sizes, reading labels, and other nutrition information. Volunteers working in the Nutrition Nook will promote certain food items by distributing food samples or recipes. All training and materials will be provided.

Interested? Contact Julie Christensen at juliechristensen@channel-one.org or 507-424-1705.

Venison Donation Program - Important Updates!

This fall the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, is launching a revamped program that allows Minnesota deer hunters to donate deer to food shelves and feeding programs, including Channel One. In addition to providing an excellent source of protein to people in need, this program helps reduce local deer populations. Most of the changes in the program focus on how the venison is processed. In the past, most of the meat would be ground. Now, the meat will only be processed in whole muscle cuts, including roasts, chops, steaks, and stew meat.

To Donate a Deer

Hunters must have their deer processed at a Minnesota Department of Agriculture-registered meat processing plant that has agreed to participate in the program. Registered processors in our area are: R Four Meats in Chatfield; Buck Ridge Meats in Millville; and Litschers Meat Processing in Rushford. All hunters looking to donate a deer are strongly advised to contact the processor before bringing in a deer to make sure they are still able to handle the animal. Again, it is important to note that hunters are not allowed to donate venison directly to a food charity - they must work with an approved processing plant.



For additional information, visit the Channel One website at www.helpingfeedpeople.org.



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Channel One **Food for Thought** is a quarterly publication of Channel One Food Bank & Food Shelf, a 501(c)3, non-profit organization whose mission is *"to help feed people in need."* If you receive multiple copies of our newsletter, please share the copies with others and contact us at 507-424-1721, so we can reduce the number of copies. If you have moved, please let us know so we are able to update our mailing list or remove your name. **Thank you!**

Board of Directors: Deb Wilkinson, *Community Volunteer*, President; Stan Groff, *Steele County Human Services, Retired*, Vice President; Barbara Huus, *Olmsted County Public Health, Retired*, Secretary; Denise Kelly, *US Bank*, Corporate Officer; Anne Ager, *RSM McGladrey*; Harold Burden, *Hormel Foods*; Mark Fosse, *Dunlap & Seeger, P.A., Attorneys at Law*; Andy Murray, *Retired Food Industry Executive*; Dan O'Neil, *Mayo Clinic*; Debbie Ottmar, *IBM*; Fr. Tim Reker, *St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church*; Steven Rucinski, *Fastenal*.

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

