

# NOURISHING NEWS

FROM THE GREATER BERKS FOOD BANK

SUMMER 2015  
VOLUME 25  
ISSUE 2



a member of  
**FEEDING AMERICA™**

## Volunteer Recognition Picnic

Each year, we truly look forward to the opportunity to recognize and celebrate our fantastic volunteers – both those who volunteer at our facility as well as those who help at one of our 300 charitable food program partners. Truly, without their donated time and assistance, we could never accomplish the important work of our mission.

For many years, we honored our volunteers at an annual breakfast event. This year, we decided to take advantage of the ample outdoor space at our new facility and welcomed the volunteers to a fun-filled carnival themed picnic. 200 of our volunteers joined us on a beautiful late May afternoon for hamburgers, hot dogs, popcorn and sno-cones, as well as some much deserved recognition.

This event also offers us the chance to honor a few select volunteers who really make an ongoing impact. We were thrilled to present Sherry Scholl with the Volunteer of the Year Award. Sherry is a constant fixture at the Food Bank – whether it is packing food in the warehouse, helping with office duties, or assisting senior citizens with their monthly food tote pick up. We were also excited to present our Vicki Krick Above and Beyond Award to an amazing couple, John and Nancy Prann. Either John or Nancy (or both!) are here on an almost daily basis. John often hops behind the wheel of our “baby” truck to pick up daily donations at local retail grocers or helps out where needed in the warehouse. Nancy is our office assistant extraordinaire – performing data entry, filing records, or preparing mailers.

We sincerely thank all of our 1,000 plus volunteers who help us each year – you are truly a gift!



**Interested in becoming a new volunteer?**

Visit the Volunteer page on [berksfoodbank.org](http://berksfoodbank.org) to learn more and register!



## Summer Parrot Daze

Thank you to everyone who joined us on a beautiful Saturday in July for some amazing music (Jimmy and the Parrots rocked the crowd till late in the evening), great food, cool boat drinks and fantastic prizes (thank you donors!) at the Berks County Parrot Head Club's annual Summer Parrot Daze!

The motto of the Parrot Head Club is to “party with a purpose” – and they have done exactly that here in Berks County since 2002. Since that time, the Club has raised more than \$500,000 for numerous charitable organizations in our community. This summer's event for the Greater Berks Food Bank brought in over \$15,000 to help our mission of feeding the hungry!

We cannot thank the Parrot Head Club enough for the extensive time, energy, creativity and passion they put into this event. They truly are a bunch of fantastic people who love helping our community's charities!



## Please help the GBFB reach our “Bringing More to the Table” Capital Campaign goal!

Donations can be made via mail or on our website. Please note **“capital campaign”** on your check gifts or when making an online donation.



**\$3 MILLION**  
Our Goal

**\$2.3 MILLION**  
Already Raised

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If you have any comments or questions, please contact the editor.

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A copy of the official registration and financial information of the Greater Berks Food Bank may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999.

Registration does not imply endorsement.

## From the Executive Director

Ten months ago we moved into our larger warehouse, a building more than twice the size of our former facility. We have numerous visions and plans for our increased space that are all focused on Bringing More to the Table for the hungry.

We have been busy realizing the potential this new space offers. We now have the storage capacity to hold: 280 pallets of frozen foods; 150 pallets of refrigerated; and 70 pallets of produce. In the first 6 months of 2015, we acquired, stored and redistributed 300,000 more pounds, totaling 1.9 M pounds, of donated fresh, frozen and refrigerated foods (the most nutritious of foods) as compared to 2014.

Also, this space has allowed us to already engage 800 volunteers who provided 5,725 hours of help in our warehouse and offices. Our larger office space has also allowed us to hold 20 volunteer trainings; 10 food safety trainings for 167 of our members; orientations for new members; and staff trainings. Soon we will be piloting our "mobile pantry" after being awarded a \$50,000 grant from Walmart to purchase a truck for this new program. This will allow us to bring the freshest foods to people in every corner of Berks and Schuylkill counties.

We moved in quickly once we found the ideal building as we could not receive nor distribute any additional food in the former overcrowded facility. The need for food assistance is a daily struggle for over 100,000 people in our communities and now we can respond sooner and better than before.

As we continue to make great advances on new programs, we still have one last item we need help to accomplish - reaching our \$3 million Capital Campaign goal. If you have already made a pledge or a gift to our Capital Campaign, thank you. If you haven't yet made a gift, please consider making one today. Thank you.

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## Free, Fresh, and Nutritious

We are always striving to find new, effective means to get the amazing fresh produce donations we receive onto the plates of the hungry as quickly as possible.

Due to the vastly increased fresh and frozen storage areas at our new facility, we have been blessed with the ability to pursue and accept considerably larger donations of fresh produce as well as dairy items. This has created a "good problem" though for us - how to get the high volumes of nutritious, but perishable, products out to those who need it in a timely manner.

To help with this, our Agency and Volunteer Services Department came up with our new, Free, Fresh, and Nutritious program. At least a couple afternoons a week this summer, our agencies are encouraged to stop by the GBFB and stock up on the fresh items we have in stock. As always, all of the produce is supplied to our member agencies free of any costs (while 80% of the food we supply has no charges, the rest has a nominal shared maintenance cost which helps cover a small portion of our operating expenses). Because of this program, thousands of additional pounds of produce have been distributed for the hungry weekly!



Look at all the fantastic items available!

## The Big Cheese Project!

On a hot Saturday morning in June, more than 300 volunteers filled the gym at Penn State Berks to pack 100,000 macaroni and cheese meals for their hungry neighbors! The Big Cheese Project, a national initiative of Outreach, Inc., was sponsored, planned and coordinated locally by the United Way of Berks County. The United Way has always been a true partner in our fight against hunger and we appreciate this recent amazing show of support!



## Delivering More than the Mail

For the 23rd consecutive year, members of the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) conducted their "Stamp Out Hunger" Food Drive across the nation on Saturday, May 9. Locally, members of the NALC Branch No. 258 collected more than 50,000 pounds of food from their postal customers across Berks County to feed our hungry neighbors! A huge thank you to our local letter carriers!

The food collection helped keep the GBFB's warehouse stocked this summer, a time we often see an increase in demand.

Thank you also to all who donated food and contributed to the drive's success as well as to the more than 100 volunteers who helped pack all of the food!



## Agency Feature - Hope Lutheran Food Pantry

To accomplish our mission of feeding the hungry, the Greater Berks Food Bank needs front line partners willing to directly serve their neighbors in need. We have been fortunate to have an extremely active and caring partner in Hope Lutheran Church, which has helped feed their hungry neighbors in the northwest section of Reading with food supplied by the GBFB since 1997.

Every Tuesday morning, as many as 120 people line up at the doors of Hope Lutheran to receive food to fill their families' plates from the church's food pantry. Church Pastor, Mary Wolfe, says that a wonderful side effect of the pantry is that it has served as a center for goodwill amongst the neighbors. The church took this a step further last June when they began serving a Tuesday evening meal, called "Hope's Table," prepared with food also supplied by the GBFB. Typically, about 60 neighbors show up for a hot meal, and friendship, at the church.



Hope Lutheran has also been an important partner in the GBFB's efforts to distribute fresh and nutritious produce. This summer, in addition to the weekly scheduled food pantry, the church has held several additional produce specific distributions. At each of these distributions, Hope's volunteers have served as many as 200 families up to 6,000 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables! For many of these people, lacking resources and transportation, access to fresh produce is extremely limited or nonexistent. We truly appreciate Hope's willingness to go above and beyond to nourish their hungry clients.

In just the past year, the GBFB has supplied more than 260,000 pounds of food to Hope's pantry (valued at \$340,000) and another 6,900 pounds to their meal program (valued at \$11,400). We are so appreciative our donors' support has allowed us to so amply supply such an effective partner in the fight against hunger.

## We thank the following businesses, organizations and places of worship that recently hosted food and fund drives\*:

- 🍌 Atonement Lutheran Church
- 🍌 Cambridge-Lee Industries
- 🍌 Daniel Boone School District
- 🍌 Encompass Insurance
- 🍌 Godiva Chocolatier
- 🍌 Highlands of Wyomissing
- 🍌 Karate for Kids
- 🍌 National Assoc. of Letter Carriers, Branch 258
- 🍌 Nationwide Insurance
- 🍌 Reading Health System
- 🍌 Reading Lodge #549, F & AM
- 🍌 Reform Congregation Oheb Shalom
- 🍌 Riverchaser Entertainment
- 🍌 Royer's Flowers
- 🍌 Santander Bank
- 🍌 Spring Township Fire Dept.
- 🍌 St. Ignatius Loyola RCC
- 🍌 Sun Federal Credit Union
- 🍌 Wyomissing Church of the Brethern

**\* Food drives of at least 100 lbs. and fund drives of at least \$100 from 4/16/15 to 7/31/15**

## Scrapple Scramble



Nearly 80 golfers hit the links on June 5 at Willow Hollow Golf Course for Launch Dynamic Media's annual Scrapple Scramble Golf Outing. The Greater Berks Food Bank was thrilled to once again be named the charitable beneficiary of this outing!

The GBFB would like to thank the staff of Launch DM (pictured) for all the time, talent and energy they put into planning this FUN day. The team at Launch DM (which is a Wyomissing firm specializing in website design; interactive, print and social media; branding and more) raised \$6,000 to help feed our hungry neighbors!

## The Highlands at Wyomissing

We would like to thank the residents and staff of The Highlands at Wyomissing for the amazing support they recently provided us! A food and fund drive held earlier this summer resulted in more than 1,000 pounds of food and a check presentation of \$5,100! We also enjoyed providing a couple group tours of our facility to our new friends. Thank you Highlands!





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 www.berksfoodbank.org

About Our Organization . . .  
 The Greater Berks Food Bank, established in 1983, collects, purchases, stores, and distributes over seven million pounds of food annually to the more than 300 programs which feed the hungry in Berks & Schuylkill counties.

## Ways You Can Help...

Summer is winding down, the kids are heading back to school, and before you know it the holidays will be upon us! This year, we can help make your holiday shopping easy with the gift that gives twice!

**Make a gift to the Greater Berks Food Bank in honor of the special people in your life.** That same gift will in turn help place food on the plates of hungry local families. This gift tells your loved ones and friends that you not only care about them but also about our neighbors in need.

In honor gifts are also a thoughtful gesture for birthdays, anniversaries and other special occasions throughout the year.

To make an in honor gift, use the enclosed envelope and complete the "My gift is in honor of:" information. Or, make an online donation at [www.berksfoodbank.org](http://www.berksfoodbank.org) and enter the "In honor of" info when prompted. If you have a long list of gift recipients, simply mail us their mailing addresses along with your donation.

No gift wrapping needed! We will mail your honoree a gift letter notifying them of your thoughtful gift - the dollar amount of the gift will be omitted.

## Help us meet the match!

For the fifth year, a generous local couple (who wish to remain anonymous) has offered a donation match to support our important work. This year they will again match \$1 for every \$4 we receive from new donors – up to \$100,000 in new donations. This means they will personally donate \$25,000 to the GBFB if we raise \$100,000 from new donors! If you have never donated, please consider doing so today. Your gift will multiply because of the match! If you are a loyal supporter, please encourage your friends and family to donate for the first time to help us meet the match!

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