Volunteer Finds Purpose, Healing at the Garden

When Mike Sanchez came to FFLC’s Churchill Community Garden, he had two requests for garden manager John Ely: “I want to get dirty and plant some stuff.” So Ely put him to work. Six months later, Sanchez is still going strong.

“I’m 90% blind, so most of the time I get on my knees to work,” said Sanchez, who lost his vision to diabetes three years ago. “I can’t see different things so it takes a while for my eyes to focus and find out what it is.”

In addition to working the larger garden, Sanchez tends his own plot.

“I grow carrots, onions, beets, kale, radishes, broccoli, cauliflower. All that good stuff. I love cooking. Raw, cooked, steamed. I love all vegetables! My dad was a sharecropper in California, so I grew up in vegetables. Going to the garden makes me feel at home.”

“I never thought going to the garden could be so fulfilling,” said Sanchez. “It’s done so much for me. It’s my sanctuary. It keeps my mind straight. It’s good therapy for me. It makes me happy. Working in the garden makes me feel more confident and healthy. They were able to take me off insulin for a while because my body was doing so good.”

Sanchez brings his daughters and grandsons to the garden sometimes. “They see what I do and the smile on my face,” he said.

During the slow winter months Sanchez goes to the garden on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, but he can’t wait for spring when he can go every day.

“I want to plant everything and just watch it grow. I can’t wait to get busy again.”

This time of year, garden manager Ely and his volunteers are winter gardening, putting in mulch and preparing winter beds. Cauliflower, kale and cabbage are the garden’s wintering vegetables.

Learn more about FFLC’s three gardens and how to get involved. Call (541) 343.2822, go to foodforlanecounty.org/gardens or email gardens@foodforlanecounty.org.
Food for Thought

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Our Vision
To eliminate hunger in Lane County

Our Mission
To alleviate hunger by creating access to food

We accomplish our mission by soliciting, collecting, rescuing, growing, preparing and packaging food for distribution through a countywide network of social service agencies and programs, and through public awareness, education and community advocacy.

Printed with a generous contribution by:

Giving Where You Live

FFLC relies on diverse funding sources to sustain hunger relief efforts year-round. We are grateful for the financial support we receive from individual donors, events, drives, SCAN-a-Coupon, business donors, private foundations, donor-advised funds and more. Thank you to these donors for powering our hunger relief efforts in Lane County.

Thank you to Café Yumm! for donating $10 for every online donation made in December and to everyone who gave generously to this challenge.

Thank you also to

Albertsons
Chambers Family Foundation
Evergreen Hill Education Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation
Herbert A. Templeton Foundation
Murphy Company
Safeway
Umpqua Bank
Wal-Mart Foundation

Learn and Grow With Us

Mark your calendars for these upcoming events at FFLC’s Gardens! Plant Sale proceeds benefit FFLC’s Gardens Program. For more information, go to foodforlaneCounty.org/gardens, call (541) 343.2822 or email gardens@foodforlaneCounty.org.

Fruit Tree Pruning Techniques
Saturday, February 22 • 1-4pm
The Youth Farm • 705 Flamingo Avenue, Springfield

Seed Starting and Greenhouse Growing
Saturday, March 15 • 1-4pm
The Youth Farm • 705 Flamingo Avenue, Springfield

FFLC Spring Plant Sale
Saturday, April 5 • 10am-5pm
The GrassRoots Garden • 1465 Coburg Road, Eugene

FFLC Summer Plant Sale
Saturday, May 17 • 10am-5pm
The Youth Farm • 705 Flamingo Road, Springfield
Still Our Favorite Party

24th Annual Chefs’ Night Out
Tuesday, April 8 • 6:30pm – 9pm
Hult Center for the Performing Arts

Tickets on sale now!
(541) 682.5000 • hultcenter.org
Hult Center Box Office

General Admission $65
After March 15th $75
VIP Early Entrance $90

Join us April 8 for Chefs’ Night Out. All proceeds benefit hunger relief in Lane County, and the culinary feast is not to be missed — two great reasons to party with us. All food and beverages are generously donated by an amazing cast of participating restaurants, caterers, wineries and breweries. Bill McCullum of Billy Mac’s Bar & Grill in Eugene is a crowd favorite. McCullum has participated in every Chefs’ Night Out since its inception in 1991.

“It’s shocking to see how many people are hungry. The need never goes away,” said McCullum. “I like to help the community where I can. I’m blessed to be in this business, to serve a good product and help people, and to see that what we do makes a difference.”

Bon appétit, Lane County!

FFLC Awarded 4-Star Rating

Charity Navigator is the nation’s largest and most-used evaluator of charities, helping philanthropists of all levels find charities they can trust and make informed giving decisions. Charity Navigator’s rating system examines two broad areas of a charity’s performance: its financial health and its accountability and transparency. Charity Navigator was singled out in 2006, 2007 and 2008 by Kiplinger’s Financial Magazine as “One of the Best Services to Make Life Easier” and in 2011 as one of the “20 Financial Innovations You Can’t Afford to Ignore.” So we think it’s pretty cool that Charity Navigator has once again awarded FFLC its highest rating of 4 stars! We represent the top 2% of the 7,000 charities rated in the United States!

Learn more at charitynavigator.org.

Letter to Readers

You were so generous over the holidays. I just want to say thank you from the bottom of my heart. When we lost a weekend of the Letter Carriers Food Drive to snow, you donated so much food the second weekend that we still raised almost 163,000 pounds of food. Thank you!

You organized almost 200 food drives in November, December and January. Wow! In October, November and December we were worried that we didn’t have enough food to distribute. Our food supply was the lowest we’ve seen in years. But thanks to your generous donations we now have an adequate supply of healthy food. We couldn’t be more thrilled.

Six hundred of you became first-time financial donors, and many of you increased your donations. Thank you! Again and again I am impressed and grateful that Lane County cares about people who are hungry. I see people pitch in the best way they know how, whether that’s volunteering or donating money or donating food. There’s always a way to participate, and we at FFLC are so appreciative because we could not and we do not do this alone. Thank you.

Beverlee Hughes
Executive Director
Creswell: Small Town, Big Heart

Like so many small towns across Oregon, Creswell has seen a rise in the need for emergency food. Many families struggling to make ends meet find their way to the Creswell Food Pantry, one of 28 pantries that rely on FFLC for food.

Susan and Kurt Blachnik have managed the pantry since November 2012.

“We both work full-time,” said Kurt. “I have my own plumbing business and Susan is a nurse. Between the two of us, we put about 160 hours a month at the pantry. That’s just what it takes.”

In October the Blachniks and their fellow volunteers moved from a 500-square-foot location next to the VFW Hall in Creswell into a new, 2,000-square-foot vacant auto shop. The additional space allows them to serve more families more efficiently.

Celina is a 35-year-old mother of three and visits the pantry.

“I’m usually here at the end of the month. I get mostly produce. The people here are so friendly. They’re here to help us. I don’t feel embarrassed or put down. I’m just thankful they’re here.”

Dale, 72, has been coming to the pantry for about four years.

“I’d have to give up driving if I couldn’t use this service. I can’t afford food and driving both. It really makes a difference. I’m on a very limited budget. This helps a lot.”

Learn more and find out how you can help at foodforlanecounty.org.

So Many Drives

During the holiday season many businesses and groups stepped up to organize food drives. In the month of November alone drives brought in a jaw-dropping 32,266 pounds of food!

Thank you to everyone who donated food over the holidays. Here are just a few to whom we want to give a special shout out. We know there are a lot more of you not listed here. Please forgive us and thank you!

Thank you to everyone who donated food and funds through Albertsons Turkey Bucks Drive and Safeway Holiday Bags. Thank you to Boy Scout Troop #100 whose first ever food drive brought in over 500 pounds of food and raised $1,000 from parking cars at a University of Oregon football game. A record 1,349 people turned out on a very chilly Thanksgiving morning for our fourth annual Turkey Trot — a benefit for FFLC and St. Vincent de Paul. The event raised $6,745 for the organizations and all money was used to distribute food. A big thanks to Eclectic Edge Racing, all of our volunteers and all the participants. Our annual Stuff the Bus food drive — a partnership with LTD, Walmart, KDUK and Bicoastal Media — brought in an impressive 8,046 pounds of food, $357 in direct donations and $8,000 to date from Walmart’s Volunteering Always Pays Program. Thank you to Ninkasi for hosting Pints for a Cause and donating 25% of all pint sales to FFLC on December 19. Thank you to 5th and 6th graders at The Village School who raised $650 for the FFLC Gardens Program during their walk-a-thon. Thank you to everyone! You’re amazing.
Thank You for Helping Us Win A Van!

Our Toyota is on its way! On October 19, 2013, you helped FFLC win a 2014 Sienna from Toyota’s 100 Cars for Good Facebook campaign. In January we received word that our car was built in Indiana and is on its way to Oregon!

Toyota’s 100 Cars for Good program gave away 100 cars to 100 nonprofits. FFLC was one of 2,500 nonprofits that applied for the program. Toyota narrowed that down to 250. You voted for your favorites on October 19, and we won! Thank you!

Lane County is a big place, and we plan to cover a lot of ground with our new vehicle — delivering food to seniors, visiting food pantries and other partner agencies and coordinating cooking and shopping classes throughout Lane County. Visit us on Facebook to see pics of the van when it arrives!

Thank you for voting for FFLC! More info at apps.facebook.com/carsforgood.

You Can Help

The need is great. We are distributing food as fast it comes in the door — between 160,000 and 170,000 pounds of food a week through our countywide network. Your donations of food, funds and time help keep that food moving. We couldn’t do what we do without your generous help. Not involved but want to be? Call us at (541) 343.2822, go to foodforlanecounty.org for ideas or email info@foodforlanecounty.org.

Donate to FFLC

DONATE ONLINE
foodforlanecounty.org/donate

MAIL YOUR GIFT
770 Bailey Hill Rd
Eugene, OR 97402

CALL
(541) 343.2822

A Is for Apple Sauce

FFLC distributed its first jars of fresh, unsweetened apple sauce this fall, and we’re pretty excited about it. The apple sauce is the third product to be produced especially for FFLC for distribution through our countywide network to families facing hunger.

“We’re thrilled to be able to make this product available,” said FFLC Food Resource Manager Deb McGeorge. “It’s naturally sweet, so there’s no added sugar. It’s loaded with flavor, nutrients and antioxidants. And you can use it as an alternative to butter, margarine or oil when baking. We’re proud to put our name on it.”

Thank you to the many volunteers who braved the rain and cold to pick apples for us. Thank you also to these generous partners for making this naturally sweet product possible.

The BoxMaker • Campbell Real Estate • Emerald Fruit & Produce Co. Inc. • GloryBee Foods • Green Solutions Printing • Harrisburg Harvesters • King Estate Winery • Linn Benton Gleaners • Olshen’s Bottle Supply • Oregon Food Bank • Sweet Creek Foods • Wild Rose Orchards
Fresh Is Best

César E. Chávez Elementary School in Eugene partners with FFLC to distribute fresh produce and more once a week through FFLC’s Produce Plus Program. Produce Plus provides fresh fruits and vegetables to Lane County residents who cannot always afford such high-quality, nutritious food.

“When this opportunity came up, I jumped on it. We definitely have the need,” said 4J Family Resource Coordinator Alicia Longoria, who coordinates the program at the school. Eighty percent of César Chávez’s 456 students qualify for free or low-cost meals.

“I think it’s a very good thing to encourage families to cook more fresh food,” said Charu Pasternak, a Chávez parent and first-time Produce Plus shopper. “Next time I’ll bring my son so he can pick some of the fresh produce.”

“Families love it,” said Longoria. “They’re very grateful for the help.”

Produce Plus currently operates at nine sites in Eugene and Springfield. To learn more about the program or to volunteer, contact Karen Roth at kroth@foodforlanecounty.org or (541) 343.2822.

We want to live in the kind of community where people take care of each other. Knowing how many of our neighbors face hunger, and knowing how lucky we are to have something to give, how could we not step forward to help? Partnering with FOOD for Lane County makes it possible for us to have a strong impact."

Penny Campbell and Rick Colby of Eugene
Donors since 2012
Leadership Donors since 2013

Become a Monthly Donor Today!

Donating monthly is one of the most effective ways to support FFLC. Regular monthly donations help donors balance their annual giving throughout the year and provide FFLC with a steady source of financial support. Donate $84 or more a month and join FFLC’s Leadership Circle. Complete and mail this form using the enclosed envelope, call (541) 343.2822 or sign up online at foodforlanecounty.org/monthlydonor.

Yes! Sign me up as a NEW Monthly Donor.
I am currently a Monthly Donor. Please increase my monthly gift to $__________
Name(s): ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
Phone(s): (_____) ____________________ (_____) ____________________
City State Zip
I prefer to make automatic monthly donations (please select one of the following):
Check with first monthly gift enclosed or My blank voided check is attached
Credit Card: VISA MasterCard
Card #: ____________________________ Exp Date: ________________
I authorize FFLC to transfer the following amount on the 3rd or 18th of each month. This authorization will remain in effect until I notify FFLC, at any time, that I wish to change my contribution.
$10 $25 $50 $84* Other $__________
*Donate $84 or more a month and become a member of FFLC’s Leadership Circle.
Signature (required): ____________________________ Date: __________
You may acknowledge my gifts in FFLC publications.
Make Some Noise!

The Farm Bill includes critical funding legislation for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps), which is vital to FFLC’s mission. At press time, the Farm Bill was being voted on by the Senate. The House Conference Committee voted and approved a decrease of $8.6 billion in funding for food stamps over 10 years. The Senate was expected to support the cuts and approve the entire Farm Bill. This SNAP cut will impact 14,473 participants in Lane County. If you would like to receive information about issues that affect low-income Oregonians, join our advocacy email list. We’ll notify you when legislators are about to make important decisions that will impact hunger in Lane County.

Contact FFLC’s Kara Smith at (541) 343.2822 or ksmith@foodforlanecounty.org.

Driving Hunger Out of Lane County

We picked up food from more than 200 drives in November, December and January. That’s amazing! Food and fund drives engage the community in our mission of alleviating hunger in Lane County. Thank you to the following groups and organizations for raising $500 or more or for collecting 500 or more pounds of food since our last newsletter. You keep the food moving!

Albertsons • Bertha Holt Elementary School • Body of Light Family Chiropractic • Boy Scout Troop #100 • Chvatal Orthodontics • Corridor Elementary School • Crossfit Intensity • Daniel Gordon • Danish Brotherhood Lodge #348 • Dollar Tree • Eclectic Edge • First Congregational Church • First United Methodist Church • Fred Meyer • Fun with Fermentation • Hawes Financial • Home Federal Bank • Hummingbird Wholesale • 96.1 KDUK • Lambda Chi Alpha • Lane Rural Fire and Rescue • Linda Kyhn • Oregon Community Credit Union • Oregon Medical Group • Oregon’s Ugliest Sweater Run • Overtime Grill • Pipeworks Software • Republican Women of Lane County • Richard and Sandra Quigley • Roto Rooter Plumbing • Royal Caribbean • Safeway • South Eugene High School • Summerfield Estates • Thurston Elementary School • Thurston Middle School • US Post Offices Eugene and Springfield • Valley River Center • Walmart

Crop Donation Tax Credit

Many farmers want to donate crops to charitable organizations such as FFLC but can’t afford the additional costs of harvesting, transportation and storage. Farmers that donate to a food bank often do so at a personal loss. That’s why FFLC and Oregon Food Bank are asking Oregon lawmakers to reinstate and improve a tax credit for farmers who donate crops, plant starts and livestock to charities.

A crop donation credit for farmers is critical to getting more fresh food to fight hunger, reduce food waste and help support Oregon growers.

If you would like more information regarding FFLC’s work on this bill, contact Kara Smith at (541) 343.2822 or ksmith@foodforlanecounty.org.

Dutch Luv
February 14th

Bring in 3 or more cans of food and get a 16-ounce drink FREE!

SCAN a Coupon Today

FFLC’s SCAN-a-Coupon program is one of the easiest ways to give where you live. Please SCAN today at one of these local merchants.

Market of Choice • Down to Earth • The Kiva • Friendly Street Market • Gray’s Garden Centers • Ray’s Food Place • Red Barn Natural Grocery • Capella Market Sundance Natural Foods
Upcoming Events

**Dutch Luv Food Drive:** February 14 at all Dutch Bros locations
**Governor’s State Employees Food Drive:** February 1-28
**Lane County Home and Garden Show Food Drive:** March 7-10 at the Lane Events Center
**Spring Plant Sale:** April 5 at The GrassRoots Garden
**Chefs’ Night Out:** April 8 at the Hult Center
**Empty Bowls Sale:** May 2 at The Dining Room
**National Association of Letter Carriers Food Drive:** May 10
**Summer Plant Sale:** May 17 at The Youth Farm

*More info and events online: foodforlanecounty.org/events*

**24th Annual Chefs' Night Out**
April 8, 2014 • 6:30pm-9pm
Hult Center for the Performing Arts

**Tickets on sale now!**
*Hult Center Box Office • (541) 682.5000 • www.hultcenter.org*
**General Admission:** $65 • After March 15th: $75 • VIP Early Entrance: $90

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