



FOOD
For Lane County

FOOD *for* THOUGHT

SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER



JENNIFER VOLEM

FOOD FOR LANE COUNTY

770 Bailey Hill Road
Eugene, OR 97402
(541) 343-2822

MISSION

To reduce hunger by engaging our community to create 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.

VISION

To end hunger in Lane County

Editor: Denise Wendt

Design: Amy Renée Design

N IS FOR NUTRITION EDUCATION

Jennifer Volem loves her job, whether she's teaching young children how to make a healthy snack or showing adults how to prepare a meal using foods they get from a FOOD For Lane County partner pantry.

"I love cooking and gardening and eating whole foods," she said. "It's fun to share my passion with the community. It's a wonderful way to connect."

Jennifer is a nutrition educator with OSU Extension Service in Lane County. Through a partnership with FFLC, she is teaching classes in nutrition and cooking to youth, individuals and families who participate in FFLC programs.

"Nutrition education is integral to food security," FFLC Programs and Education Director Carrie Copeland said. "Knowing how to prepare the foods we have access to opens up so many more food options and allows us to choose the most nutritious foods possible."

When Jennifer arrives at her teaching site for the day, she sets up her portable kitchen complete with everything she needs — utensils, cookware, electric skillets and ingredients she gets from FFLC.

Participants come to her classes with a variety of life experiences and skills. The opportunity to share those skills with each other, to be valued and heard is empowering.

"Food brings people together," she said. "People enjoy making and eating food together and sharing stories. When people talk about food, they talk about who they are and where they're from. I feel fortunate to be a part of those conversations and get to know our community through that lens."

Learn more about FFLC's Nutrition Education Program at foodforlanecounty.org/nutritioned.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: DAVID FRANK • GORDON & JEANNE HALL • MARJIE ENSEKI

FRIENDS VOLUNTEER TOGETHER

FFLC recently spoke with David Frank and Marjie Enseki and Gordon and Jeanne Hall. David, Gordon and Jeanne are retired UO faculty. Jeanne and Marjie are retired elementary school teachers. The four friends enjoy volunteering together once a month for FFLC's Food Rescue Express (FREX) Program. FREX collects food from a variety of sources and repackages that food for distribution to families and individuals in our community who are food insecure. The program also prevents thousands of pounds of food each year from going to the landfill. FFLC Kitchen Supervisor Graham Kroese manages the FREX Program.

FFLC: Why do you volunteer?

Gordon: I think it's important. It's something that's easy to do. It's something I think everybody should do to help the community. I just think we're doing a small part.

FFLC: How does volunteering in the kitchen connect you to FFLC's larger mission?

David: At the end of our volunteer sessions, Graham will say that we were able to pack a ton of food and that will feed X number of people. And then you have that number ringing in your ear as you're driving down 13th Street and seeing people who are without shelter and may need food and that we may have contributed to the betterment of people who need food in the community.

Jeanne: It shows me how working together can make a difference and anybody can contribute. Yesterday we were bagging beans, and those black turtle beans were bought specifically with a grant because there was a need for more

culturally relevant food. It helps us to see beyond ourselves. It's just so easy to do. We just show up and we know that everything's going to be organized.

Gordon: It's amazing to me what we can do as a team. We see that big bag [2,200 pounds] of beans to start with. And then, because there were so many volunteers last night, we went through the whole bag in an hour and a half. That's what makes it worthwhile to me, that we can do so much more together than we could do as individuals.

David: We also enjoy meeting other volunteers. There are often high school or college students doing social service and other people from the community. You strike up a conversation, and it's just fun to meet someone new.

Jeanne: I always have a good time. It's such an easy and well-organized way to make the biggest impact on families that need food in Lane County. I think it's such a worthwhile organization to support. *(continued on back page)*

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It's amazing to me what we can do as a team. That's what makes it worthwhile to me, that we can do so much more together than we could do as individuals. -Gordon Hall

Gordon: I think it's pretty clear how FFLC meets the needs for food-insecure people in Lane County. I mean, we're helping prepare food, and people are hungry. Our service is very direct. We pack food into bags, people get those bags and they can use the food. It's very easy to do, and the impact is obvious and immediate. I'm just happy to do it. I just think it's a good thing to do. Anybody can do it.

FFLC: *Even UO professors.*

Gordon: Well, you know, there is something to that. I'm a psychology professor. I'm doing research at 30,000 feet, so something like this gives me something very practical to do.

Jeanne: I was an elementary school teacher for 20 years and then almost 20 years in higher education teaching teachers. And Marjie was also a teacher. So we saw firsthand what food insecurity does to families. To me it really helps to give back and do something that I know will help those families who need some food right now.

FFLC: *David and Marjie, I know that you are also financial donors. Why do you choose to support FFLC in that way?*

David: Marjie and I have always thought that the most direct way to get food into the mouths of people who are hungry is with a financial donation.

Marjie: We support several different organizations. But the highest amount we give to one organization is FFLC. Just because being able to eat is such a basic need.

David: And that figure —one dollar equals two meals — is striking to me. We know that the dollars are going to help feed people. When we see neighbors who are without food, when they should have food, we are committed to trying to help. And that is the mission of FFLC.

Marjie: I really appreciate how FFLC has adapted and innovated over the years. I just think FFLC is always looking for ways to be of more service to people, to make it easier for people to get food, and to make it easy for agencies and grocery stores and the university to provide food that's left over that would otherwise go to waste.

David: FFLC is seeking to make the gathering and the distribution of food to people who need it more efficient and effective.

In 2023, volunteers donated 53,480 hours in support of FFLC programs. We have volunteer opportunities for all ages, abilities and interests. To learn more, go to foodforlanecounty.org/volunteer or call (541) 343-2822.

WAYS TO DONATE



DONATE ONLINE

foodforlanecounty.org/donate



MAIL GIFTS

770 Bailey Hill Road
Eugene, Oregon 97402



CALL

(541) 343-2822

FOLLOW US



OUR PARTNERS



Printed through a generous contribution from:



FOLLOW THE JOURNEY OF A CAN!

STOP 3:

Our trucks pick up your donations and bring them to FFLC to be sorted by volunteers.

3



Did you know our drivers pick up donations from grocery stores and community food drives five days a week?

STOP 7:

Partner pantry volunteers stock shelves with your donations. FFLC distributes over 8 million pounds of food each year, mostly through food pantries.

FFLC partners with 150+ organizations to distribute food throughout Lane County, including pantries, meal sites, housing communities, schools and shelters.

STOP 4:

Volunteers carefully go through your donations at our Bailey Hill warehouse.

4



STOP 5:

Cans and all other available food are entered into FFLC's online system so that our partner agencies can see what's available.

Food donated to FFLC is inspected, date checked and sorted. Every year, over 1,000,000 pounds of food will pass through the hands of our volunteers before we are able to distribute it to our partner agencies.

7



STOP 8:

Families can "shop" at a food pantry, choosing the foods they like. Most pantries are entirely run by volunteers.

We have volunteer opportunities for people of all ages, interests and abilities. Call (541) 343-2822 to learn more, or go to foodforlanecounty.org/volunteer.

STOP 2:

Drop your donations in a food drive barrel.

2



Did you know you can always drop donations off at FFLC?

STOP 5:



5

STOP 6:

Partner agencies place their bulk orders with FFLC. FFLC staff at our West Broadway warehouse ready their order for pick up or delivery.

6



STOP 1:

Purchase a few extra cans at the grocery store, or grab them from your pantry at home.

1

GRAB A CAN!

Tuna, peanut butter and canned tomato products are a few of our most wanted food items. For a full list visit: tinyurl.com/fflneededfoods

DINNER IS SERVED!

Families from Florence to McKenzie Bridge, Junction City to Cottage Grove, enjoy food from FFLC – food that you donate and fund. Thank you!



A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: THE POWER OF FOOD



Food is more than just sustenance. Food brings people together, breaks down barriers and creates bonds that transcend differences. Whether it's sharing a meal with loved ones or participating in a cooking class with neighbors, food has the remarkable ability to create connections and build relationships.

The power of food is demonstrated through FFLC's partnership with OSU Extension Service in Lane County to deliver nutrition education. This collaboration empowers individuals and families with the knowledge and skills they need to make healthy and nourishing meals. By teaching cooking skills, sharing nutritional information and promoting the benefits of fresh produce, we are addressing hunger while fostering a sense of community.

And who better to speak to connections forged through food than FFLC program participants and the dedicated volunteers who give their time in support of FFLC programs. Each year thousands of individuals, groups and friends gather together to prepare, package and deliver food to our neighbors who need it most.

Everyone deserves access to healthy, nutrient-rich food. And FFLC is committed to providing access to food and offering supports so that our community has the tools they need to live healthy lives. Together, through the power of food, we feed our bodies and souls and create a more vibrant community for all.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Stein, Executive Director

CHEFS' NIGHT OUT RAISES MONEY FOR LOCAL HUNGER RELIEF

Thank you to our sponsors, guests, volunteers and food and beverage purveyors who came together to make Chefs' Night Out a huge success. Thanks to our generous sponsors and to the purveyors who donate their time and expertise to the event, all ticket purchases directly support FFLC's mission to create access to food. Since its inception, Chefs' Night Out has raised more than \$2.5 million for local hunger relief.

Thank you to these generous sponsors!



NW Natural • KVAL 13 • New Country 93 • Parties To Go

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Empty Bowls Sale

May 3 • 4:30 - 7:00pm

The Market Alley at 5th Street Public Market

Summer Plant Sale

May 10-11 • 10:00am - 4:00pm

Youth Farm

Letter Carriers Food Drive • May 11

KVAL Can Do • June 5 • Fred Meyer W. 11th Ave

For more info, visit foodforlanecounty.org/events, email info@foodforlanecounty.org or call (541) 343-2822.