



A Quarterly Publication from the  
Food Bank of Northwest  
Louisiana

# FOOD FOR

# Thought

Fall 2020 Newsletter



## DEBBIE FINDS HELP

Debbie has been a massage therapist for 17 years. She's always had a job. But with the COVID-19 pandemic, she was forced to stop working, she faced an unfamiliar situation.



"The clinic was shut down to protect us from illness," she said. "They plan to reopen, but no one is sure when that will be. It could be months or the clinic may not reopen at all."

Debbie has already been without an income for months, and that's been hard because she supports herself and her 13-year-old son, Zack.

"Life has been chaos since the pandemic," she said. "In the beginning of the shutdown I wasn't sure about anything...least of all food."

With no job and no income on the horizon, Debbie knew she needed a little help. So she turned to the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana for assistance.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana has been distributing food to those in need every day. For Debbie and Zack, the Food Bank was a lifesaver.

"The food we've gotten has been an absolute blessing," Debbie said. "I don't know what we would have done without it. Since I'm out of work, there's just not enough money for food."



*Honor your friends and neighbors this holiday season – give a gift with lasting impact with a “Hope” honorarium holiday card.*

Your honoree will receive a special custom made holiday card acknowledging your gift to the Food Bank in their honor. Your donation enables our Food Bank to provide food to community by supporting our programs. Your gift is tax deductible.

### How does it work?

1. Send us your contribution (Minimum \$15 donation per card; price includes postage and handling). You may pay by check and/or cash, or by credit card.
2. Email, mail, or fax a list of those you would like to honor by December 14th and we will do all of the work for you.
3. The Holiday “Hope” card will be personalized with your name and/or your company's name. The “Hope” card will be mailed to the recipient in time for the holiday season. *(continued on page 3)*





**Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana**



**FOOD BANK OF NORTHWEST LOUISIANA  
2019-2020 Board of Directors**

**Executive Committee:**

**Marc Price**  
*Chairman*

**Trey Smith**  
*Vice Chairman*

**Lamar Pugh**  
*Treasurer*

**Julie Blewer**  
*Secretary*

**Jaf Fielder**  
*Past Chairman*

**Board Members**

- RaShad Bristo
- Ken Krueger
- John McNeil
- Greg Robinson
- Margaret Shehee
- James Stegall
- Traci Washington

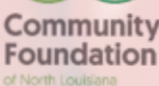
**Executive Director**

Martha Marak

You can visit the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana online anytime at:

**[www.foodbanknla.org](http://www.foodbanknla.org)**

*Check out our website to learn more about events, volunteer opportunities, to make safe, secure online donations and to learn more about the Food Bank.*



# Letter

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



On behalf of the board of directors and staff of the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana, I would like to thank our community, churches, business and everyone that has contributed to the mission of the Food Bank.

Our generous community has supported the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana to provide the much needed assistance during a very difficult time with Covid-19 and Hurricane Laura. The Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana has supported the food needs of over 150 partner non-profit and benevolent organizations, churches, soup kitchens and homeless shelters. We want to express our deepest thanks to the community for coming together to fight hunger.

The struggle to put food on the table tends to increase during the summer months for our neighbors in need. Most school lunch and feeding programs are suspended during this time and families, many of whom are already struggling to make ends meet, are forced to spend of their income on groceries. Our distribution has increased by 36% from March through August 2020 from last year.

We are especially grateful for the individual donors, churches, businesses, foundations and organizations from every part of the community that partner with us in the fight to end hunger.

With gratitude,  
Martha

*Martha Marak*



***Our new facility is looking great! We plan to move by the end of 2020!  
Our new address will be 285 Mt. Zion Road in Shreveport.***

**USDA Nondiscrimination Statement  
Civil Rights Requirements**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the **USDA Program Discrimination**

Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## TURKEY TROT 5K RUN AND FUN RUN

Register today for Sportspectrum's 33th Turkey Trot 5K run and Fun Run on Thanksgiving Morning, November 26, 2020. Come out and start your Thanksgiving morning with friends and family. Read below for more information on the event. Event proceeds provides food to the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana.



### We need event Volunteers and Sponsors:

**Volunteers** – We need 20 volunteers to help register race participants on Thanksgiving morning from 7am – 10am. Please contact Lucy Hines at (318) 675-2400 x 100 or email [adminassist@foodbanknla.org](mailto:adminassist@foodbanknla.org)  
**Sponsorships** - For sponsorship, please contact Auburn Brasher at 318-675-2400 x 111 or email [development@foodbanknla.org](mailto:development@foodbanknla.org)

### Turkey Trot 5K Entry Information:

[www.sportspectrumusa.com/calendar/](http://www.sportspectrumusa.com/calendar/)  
 Entry Fee: Pre-registration is \$20 by Nov 1st  
 \$35 Race Morning

### Half mile children's Fun Run:

Entry Fee for Kids 1.5 mile fun run \$15.00 includes Long Sleeve Race Shirt (ages 10-under)

### Location:

Stoner Boat Launch at Clyde Fant Parkway and Stoner Avenue in Shreveport

### Awards:

All pre-registered participants will receive an official 2020 Turkey Trot t-shirt. No trophies will be awarded.

### Post Party:

Stay after the race for fun, music, and refreshments. Food and beverages will be provided by our sponsors Clark's Tailgate Catering-Jambalaya, Great Raft Brewing, Coca Cola, Ozarka Water. Just come out and have some fun!

### For more race information go to:

[www.foodbanknla.org](http://www.foodbanknla.org) or  
[www.sportspectrumusa.com](http://www.sportspectrumusa.com)



## VIRTUAL SCI-FI TRIVIA NIGHT FUNDRAISER SCHEDULED

Saturday, October 17, 2020, the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana and Coastal Connection will host the 2020 Virtual Sci-Fi Trivia Night Fundraiser. We are excited to share our first-time event with those who are in our community and beyond!



Participants in this fun event will let their imaginations run wild--choosing a team name, creating costumes, decorating their personal locations and testing their Sci-Fi knowledge for this "far-out" event. Sign-on for the event is 6:30 pm, costume and decoration judging at 6:45 pm and trivia begins at 7:00 pm. Best costume, decorations, team name will win awards as will high scoring teams for the evening!

Your philanthropic support will benefit the local school backpack program and Caddo Parish School Food Pantry Program.

Registration for team of up to 10 participants is \$300.00 Add on a Brainiac (help with a question) for \$10.00 limit 2.

Register at [www.foodbanknla.org](http://www.foodbanknla.org)  
 For more information call us at 318.675.2400 ext. 111 or [development@foodbanknla.org](mailto:development@foodbanknla.org).  
 Sponsorships are still available.

### Hope Card

*(continued from page 1)*

Please be sure to send in your contribution and list by Monday, December 14th in order for us to have them mailed on time to your families and friends.

Please mail to:

Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana  
 2307 Texas Avenue, Shreveport, LA 71103

You may fax lists to 318-675-2440.

Call us at 318-675-2400 ext.100 for more information.

Relax and enjoy the holiday season knowing your gifts will touch your family and friends in a very meaningful way--- by helping the food insecure families and children of Northwest Louisiana.



# FOOD BANK RESPONSE TO COVID-19

## *Pounds of Food Distributed*

Over 5,189,364 pounds of food was distributed in Caddo, Bossier, Webster, Claiborne, Red River and DeSoto Parishes between March – July 2020 for COVID relief, a 33% Increase over the previous year.

### **76 Mobile Distributions**

Locations: Blanchard, Benton, Bossier Parish Community College, Cotton Valley, Coushatta, Greenwood, Haynesville, Homer, Ida, Keithville, Mansfield, Mooringsport, Plain Dealing, Ringgold, Serepta, Shreveport, Springhill, Shongaloo and Vivian.

### **Meals Provided**

Over 15,000 Emergency Boxes  
57,355 Children's Meals

### **Volunteers**

8,231 hours given to the Food Bank of NWLA

- Assisted with local and rural Mobile Pantry Distributions
- Sorted and Packed Food Boxes
- Delivered Children's Meals and Emergency Boxes
- Set up Food Drives
- Outreach Phone Calls
- Clerical work



## *Food Bank Facts*

As a hunger-relief organization, the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana acquires, stores, and distributes food and other essential items to low income children and individuals through 150 community non-profit and faith-based organizations within Caddo, Bossier, Webster, Bienville, Claiborne, Red River and DeSoto Parishes. These organizations consist of homeless shelters, soup kitchens, residential centers, churches, pantry programs, and schools. We save these agencies millions each year by providing free and low cost food and products.

## **OUR PROGRAMS INCLUDE**

### **Food and Emergency Distribution:**

In our last fiscal year, we distributed 11 million pounds of food with a value of \$17,283,785 to more than 75,000 children, women, men, seniors, homeless, disabled, unemployed and underemployed individuals living below the federal poverty level in the seven parishes of northwest Louisiana.

### **Disaster Relief:**

As a disaster responder, we provide immediate assistance to our member agencies, pop-up and faith-based shelters and other individuals. During the 2015 and 2016 spring flooding, we distributed over \$250,000 in food, water and supplies to disaster victims. Most recently, we have provided over \$275,000 in food and water to the Food Bank in Beaumont Texas and \$30,000 in water to the Puerto Rico Food Bank.

### **Senior Box Program:**

Each month we deliver a box of pantry staple foods to over 1,000 low income seniors throughout our seven parishes.

### **Mobile Pantry:**

Perishable and non-perishable food are distributed to rural clients on a monthly basis.

### **Kids Cafe® After School Meals:**

Through a partnership with the Volunteers of America's Lighthouse Program and FDDOC Winner's Circle, hot meals and nutritional education are provided to hungry children in after-school programs.

### **BackPack™ Program:**

Chronically hungry children are provided with a weekly backpack of food to take home for the weekend and holidays. Each 7-10 pound bag includes items such as cereal, milk, fruit juice, and pop-top canned food.

### **Summer Food Service Program:**

Nutritional breakfasts and lunches are provided for hungry children that have no access to free food during the summer months when school is not in session. Food is distributed through summer programs such as Boys and Girls Clubs and faith-based summer programs.

### **K.I.D.S. (Kids in Distressed Situations):**

A national program that distributes new clothing and toys to children in need.

## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

- Pack food boxes for Senior Program*
- Help administration with clerical duties*
- Organize a food drive or virtual food drive*
- Deliver senior food boxes monthly*

Contact Lucy Hines for information on volunteering with the Food Bank, 318-675-2400 ext. 100 or [adminassist@foodbanknla.org](mailto:adminassist@foodbanknla.org)