



VOLUNTEER VIEWS & NEWS

REGIONAL FOOD BANK

MARCH 2015

This newsletter is dedicated to the volunteers of the Regional Food Bank. You help us provide much-needed food and other supplies to people in need. Thank you!



In the Spotlight: Margie Morelli

In January, Margie Morelli celebrated her five-year anniversary of volunteering with us here at the Regional Food Bank! Wondering why you never see her in the warehouse? That is because she has been in our office recording the hours donated by all the volunteers! Margie has helped us total over 246,000 volunteer hours over the past five years and has tracked close to 50,000 unduplicated individuals who have given their time and talents to the Food Bank. We could not have completed this colossal task without her help. Thank you, Margie!

Monday Night Shifts Now Available

In February we added a third Volunteer Coordinator to our ranks to expand volunteer capacity. With John Schlepp now fully trained in all things volunteer, we are happy to announce we now have Monday night shifts available on a regular basis. We look forward to welcoming new people to the fold with the addition of this new night of service.

Volunteers Help Set New Records

In 2014, record numbers of volunteers helped us reach record levels of service.

11,975 different people donated 59,781 hours of service, which is equivalent to 29 full-time employees.

With that help we distributed 32,268,254 pounds of food, which is enough to provide 26,890,211 meals.

Ice Dams Close Volunteer Ramp

The harsh winter has affected all of us in one way or another, and our volunteer ramp is no exception! Ice buildup has put the ramp off-limits for the past few weeks, causing us to eagerly await the huge icicles either falling off or melting. In the meantime, if you volunteer with us evenings and weekends and find the usual volunteer entrance blocked, follow posted signs to find the temporary entrance on our distribution dock, which is also on the back side of the building. Thank you!

Our Volunteer Wish List

- Adult groups (age 18+) of 20-40 people to sign up for three-hour shifts in our Salvage Sorting Room
- Outdoorsy folks of all ages to sign up for shifts at our Farm
- Volunteers to sign up for summer shifts to help us keep up with work when other volunteers are on vacation

Can you help? Contact us at volunteers@regionalfoodbank.net or 518-786-3691, x234 or x268. Thank you! ☺

Mac & Cheese Bowl Thanks

This year's Mac & Cheese Bowl netted \$47,000 for hunger relief. That's a lot of noodles and cheese! We appreciate all the people who volunteered for and attended this event. It was a delicious way to raise money for the Food Bank.



Never Too Early

We are thinking spring out at the Farm. Pushing snow with the tractor is just not the same as plowing the fields. Our greenhouse is being made ready to begin our planting season. Seed packs are arriving, and planting soil and seed trays are ready to go. All we need is you!

If you are interested in planting seeds this spring, please contact Farmer Laura at lauram@regionalfoodbank.net, and she will fill you in on the details and answer any questions you may have.

P.S. The greenhouse is always a warm place to work no matter how cold it is outside! [Location: 132 Ketcham Road, Voorheesville, NY 12186]

Birthday Parties at the Farm

One of our volunteers shared this inspired idea with us:

FYI...My daughter had her birthday at the Patroon Farm last May. Laura had the girls plant seeds, and she taught them all about the farm and what they do there. All the kids brought canned goods for a food drive. The kids had an awesome time and were invited back to pick the veggies they planted. I am planning to do this again this year. I tell you this as Laura said it was the first birthday party they had at the Farm and thought there should be more. It's a great way to advertise the Farm and your mission.

Interested in learning more? Reach out to Laura at lauram@regionalfoodbank.net.

International School Meals Day: From the U.S., Central African Republic to Syria

February 26, 2015; Examiner.com

<http://www.examiner.com/article/international-school-meals-day-from-the-u-s-central-african-republic-to-syria>

On Thursday, March 5, we can all celebrate International School Meals Day. Food for education matters whether here in the United States or in lands far away.

It is the right of every child in the world to have school meals. It is our responsibility as citizens to make sure they do. School meals have played such a vital role in history.

In the United States school meals help to fight hunger. Robert Campbell, a policy analyst for Feeding America says, "When school is in session, more than 21 million children rely on free or reduced-price school lunch programs every day, which guarantee them at least one nutritious meal."

Far less children, though, receive school breakfast and summer meals. Congress has to close the hunger gaps that exist in our school feeding. They can do so with the Child Nutrition legislation that will be crafted this year.

Focus on Nutrition

We employ a Nutrition Resource Manager and two 'Just Say Yes to Fruits and Vegetables' Nutrition Educators to promote healthy eating and lifestyle choices at our member agencies. This nutrition trio offers workshops, food demonstrations, and other technical assistance to help sites provide nutritious food to the people they serve and encourage people on limited budgets to make healthy food choices.

Volunteer How-To

Visit the volunteer section of our website at www.regionalfoodbank.net to see the current schedule. Fill out an online volunteer form if you are new, or send us an email if you have volunteered before and want to check on open shifts. Wait to hear back from us to make sure the shift is still available. It may take a day or two for us to reply as we are often in the warehouse. Thanks!

As you get older, you will discover that you have two hands, one for helping yourself, the other for helping others.

-Audrey Hepburn