

Food Rescue reaches Million Pound Milestone

The Food Rescue mobile food rescue program celebrates the collection and distribution of one million pounds of food to Northwest Michigan food pantries, shelters, and community meal programs.

September 6, 2011 was an amazing milestone as Food Rescue of Northwest Michigan; a mobile food rescue program celebrated the collection and distribution of one million pounds of food to Northern Michigan food pantries, shelters, and community meal programs.

The millionth pound was rescued from Gordon Food Services and distributed to the Salvation Army. "GFS Marketplace is honored to be a small part of this great success story." said Tricia Kirby, GFS Marketplace Store Manager. "We love food and, we love serving our community and so does Food Rescue. That makes our relationship very special."

Major Bruce Jennings of the Traverse City, Salvation Army Corps said, "The food we receive from Food Rescue helps us provide 90-130 cooked lunches three days a week. It provides substance to the meals and provides food for community members who need assistance. Jennings added, "The partnership with Food Rescue is very important. It means we can devote time to other needs in the community and not have to find a source or the resources for food. It helps us to put our resources into other areas like utility assistance, rent assistance and other necessities. We look forward to a long partnership with Food Rescue."

"On behalf of Food Rescue, I say 'thanks a million' to our food donors, food pantries, food distribution sites and supporters." said Bruce Byl, Food Rescue Advisory Board Member. "It is one thing to say thank you for a meal, but how do you adequately say thank you for the 1 million meals collected. This is truly an amazing milestone that has such a positive impact on needy families. Providing fresh foods to supplement the non-perishable goods generally distributed is essential to providing nutrition and maintaining the good health of the community."

Food Rescue began in October 2008 with one goal in mind - Put Good Food to Good Use. Prior to the Food Rescue program the area's grocers, farmers, wholesale distributors, resorts and restaurants had few options but to send their soon to expire fruits, vegetables, meat and dairy products to the area's landfills.

Food Rescue began with one truck, a handful of donors and served Grand Traverse County. Today, Food Rescue serves Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Antrim, Kalkaska and Benzie Counties and is helping Manistee County develop a pilot program. The donated food is delivered free of charge the same day to food pantries, shelters, community meal programs and other food distribution programs to immediately head to the dinner table of families and individuals in need.

The Food Rescue program has helped Father Fred save approximately a quarter of a million dollars since 2008, says Norm Bamberg, Operations Director of the Father Fred Foundation. “We can now use those funds to sustain and strengthen our programs. Food Rescue is a win...win program that brings businesses, agencies and community members together to feed the hungry.”

“The response from the Northwest Food Coalition’s 47 food pantries, community meals and baby pantries in the 5 county area has been overwhelming in praise of Food Rescue and the bounty of food they have been able to supply. Over 23,000 people a month receive assistance through the pantries and Food Rescue’s efforts help meet that need. We are so grateful to the donors and the program. Keep up the Great Work! ” said Val Stone facilitator of Northwest Food Coalition.

George Powell, Food Rescue Advisory Board Committee Co-Chair said “Ensuring that good food not go to waste while good people go hungry is reflected in the dedication, support and commitment of the Food Rescue volunteer advisory board committee, staff, food donors, volunteers, foundations, businesses, churches, organizations and individual donors. We could not have made this milestone and touched so many lives without these partnerships.”

“For every dollar donated Food Rescue can provide food for 3.5 meals”. Powell adds, “When you can generate the resources for a healthy meal for under .30 cents, it is a great investment in the health and well-being of our community neighbors and children when they need it most.”

About Food Rescue of Northwest Michigan

Food Rescue of Northwest Michigan, founded in October 2008, is a program of Goodwill® Industries of Northern Michigan whose mission is the collection and re-distribution of soon-to-expire fresh foods from available sources (e.g., grocery stores, restaurants, caterers, bakeries, farmer’s markets, etc.) to people in need through the area’s food pantries, shelters and community meals programs.

To find out more about Food Rescue of Northwest Michigan or to make a contribution visit www.FoodRescueNW.org, by mail 2279 South Airport Road West, Traverse City, MI 49684 or call 231.995.7723