

harvest

A NEWSLETTER OF THE BLUE RIDGE AREA FOOD BANK



Starting Over

A working grandmother is thankful for your help

page 4 & 5

An Unselfie Act

Share why solving hunger is important to you! Raise awareness with an "unselfie" photo.

page 7

BLUE RIDGE AREA
FOOD BANK

a member of
FEEDING
AMERICA



HUNGER
DOESN'T TAKE A

holiday

thankfully
neither do you.

REMEMBERING THAT OUR NEIGHBORS NEED US EVEN
MORE DURING THE COLD MONTHS, YOU'VE STEPPED UP WITH
TIME AND TREASURE TO GET NOURISHING FOOD

INTO THE HOMES OF
THOSE IN NEED
DURING THE HOLIDAYS.



*You embraced the true
reason for the season
and showed that*

together,
we can solve hunger.



For that, we are truly grateful.

You Gave More Than Food

Few traditions are more fundamental in our culture than giving food to someone in need.

Think about a time when a friend suffered some loss or hardship. How did you respond? Perhaps you delivered a casserole or some other comfort food.

It can be hard to know what to say or how else to ease someone's pain. But with hot food and a warm smile, no words are necessary. The expression in the eyes of the recipient reflects back to us the fullness of our kindness.

It's not really about the food. As Kathy, the working grandmother featured in our cover story, told us: "It's the welcome feeling that somebody cares about me."

That feeling is the essence of the gift you are making when you support the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. You are comforting people, including many, many children, who are stressed, worried and, yes, hungry from having too little food in the pantry and no money in the bank. You are saying to someone who may feel alone and marginalized, "I care about you."

A friend and volunteer at the Food Bank recently made the point that the Food Bank gives people hope – hope as a noun, as in a surge of optimism that lifts one up for another day. Those we serve, he said, too often rely on hope as a verb – as in wishing that somehow they will find the food they need to feed their children tonight.

Thank you for giving hope and comfort to thousands of families in our community. Your kindness is graciously accepted and so deeply appreciated.

Wishing you a happy and healthy 2014,



Michael McKee
Chief Executive Officer



2013-14 Board of Directors

JOHN A. DOWNEY

CHAIR
Blue Ridge Community College
Weyers Cave

LYNN MENTZER

VICE CHAIR
CFA Institute
Charlottesville

JOYCE L. COLEMAN

SECRETARY
Waynesboro Public Schools
Waynesboro

RICHARD C. MAYO

State Farm Insurance
Charlottesville

SUSAN M. MYERS

State Farm Insurance
Charlottesville

ROBERT J. SACK

Retired
University of Virginia
Darden School of Business
Charlottesville

RANDY SMITH

McKee Foods
Stuarts Draft

KAREN WIGGINTON

Sunnyside Communities, LLC
Harrisonburg

MICHAEL MCKEE

Chief Executive Officer
Ex-officio

EDITORIAL STAFF

RUTH JONES
Director of Communications

KAREN RATZLAFF
Chief Philanthropy Officer

TYLER HERMAN
Grants Manager

»» *Each time you see these icons, there's more to the story in an online video! Scan the QR code with your mobile device, or visit brafb.org to watch.*



See your donations at work

STARTING OVER

A grandmother finds relief for her family through our network

Thirty years after she first dreamt it, Kathy achieved it.

“I became a nurse,” 47-year-old Kathy said. She beamed as she spoke the words she’d wanted to utter since high school.

Before going back to school, Kathy worked at McDonald’s.

“Life happened,” Kathy said. She dropped out of high school her senior year, and later gave birth to a son.

Once he became a high school senior, she insisted they meet with an academic advisor at a community college. She explained to the advisor that her chance to have the career she wanted had passed but she wanted her son to choose a different path. The advisor challenged Kathy. *Why*

can’t you have the career you want now?

Kathy replied, “I only have a GED. I can’t get into college.”

On the contrary, the advisor explained.

Kathy didn’t hesitate. She took out student loans, enrolled in college and became a Registered Nurse a few years ago.

Life is happening, so to speak, for Kathy once again. In the short time that’s followed her graduation, she’s become primary guardian of her two young granddaughters, ages 6 and 8.

“They are the joy of my life. They’re wonderful little girls. But it’s still a big financial obligation,” she said. “Going back to school, I had to go into debt, so even though the girls are a big blessing, I wasn’t expecting to have this new responsibility.”

Kathy’s family falls between the cracks. Her income is too high to qualify for government assistance, like SNAP (formerly known as Food Stamps) but not enough to adequately feed her family.

“I had prior financial obligations before the girls came to live with



View this video >>
on our website.



Kathy tells her story

me. I still have a mortgage payment plus student loans,” she explained.

Kathy found help one day as she was traveling Route 11 in Augusta County, and saw a sign near the road marking one of our partner food pantries, Bethany United Methodist Church.

“I started coming and it made a big difference in my ability to provide other things for them that I couldn’t afford. Clothes or different kinds of

food items ... fresh vegetables and things like that,” Kathy said.

Living on a limited budget often means sacrificing quality for quantity, Kathy said. “You have to buy whatever’s cheap to help fill your stomach and that’s not healthy foods.”

But the food from the pantry allows them to maintain a healthier diet.

“They have a lot of produce, canned

vegetables, milk, cereal and meat. Being able to come here makes that extra 20 or 30 dollars I have for the week stretch. That’s gas to get to the girls’ appointments and money that I would need for supplemental groceries.”

Equally significant for Kathy is what the help represents. “It’s more than just providing food,” she added. “It’s the welcome feeling that somebody cares about you.”

“It’s more than just providing food...it’s the welcome feeling that somebody cares about you.”

The Food Bank and Food Pantries: Nurturing the Community Together

Families like Kathy’s are nourished because compassionate people work together.

Last year, millions of meals reached the tables of people in need because a far-reaching network—234 food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and community coalitions—worked with us to distribute food to 118,000 people each month.



Pantries like Loaves & Fishes, which provides food to more than 4,800 people each month in the Charlottesville area.

The pantry began as a faith-based ministry in a closet at Charlottesville’s Jackson Via Elementary School 10 years ago. In the first month, 300 people visited the pantry, and

the number of visitors doubled shortly thereafter. So much has changed since then. The pantry is now a non-profit, tax-exempt organization open four days a week, and occupying a 3,000 square-foot warehouse and office space in a small business plaza on the north end of Charlottesville. Shifts of volunteers show up each serving day to distribute food.

The pantry reached a milestone in 2013 when they distributed one million pounds of food that year for the first time.

We celebrate the exceptional work of Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry, as we do all our partner agencies, and appreciate their partnership in working together to solve hunger.



Watch the pantry in action

>> Learn more about Loaves & Fishes at cvilleloavesandfishes.org.

FOCUS ON GIVING



GIVING BACK IS FAMILY BUSINESS



above: John Nunley
PHOTO BY KEVIN BLACKBURN

“Hunger has been one of our top priorities for years. There’s nothing more basic than a need for food.”

That philosophy has driven the Nunley family — Dick, Judy and John Nunley, and Caroline Nunley Satira— to help thousands of hungry neighbors in their community and beyond. The family owns Better Living, a home furnishings and building supply company in Charlottesville and Albemarle County whose roots go back to 1893.

“If you know the community, you don’t have to go very far to see the need that exists,” explained Dick Nunley.

A keen awareness of the need prompted the family to support local organizations that help those struggling with hardship.

“We invest in organizations that are very efficient and that serve a defined need. That’s how we chose the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank,” his son, John, said.

A desire to give back to the community is no surprise given the history of the family business. It began as Charlottesville Lumber 120 years ago, and over the decades, the company has expanded its products and services.

Dick Nunley opened the Better Living furniture store in 1960, and the Better Living Foundation was established in 1966. When John joined the company in 1979, he became the fourth generation to have a hand in the family business.

A History of Philanthropy

For more than 25 years, Better Living has contributed annually to the operations of the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. They have also addressed many specific needs – refrigeration and freezers to accommodate the Food Bank’s growing distribution of produce and perishables, a gift to help purchase the Mobile Food Pantry truck used to distribute food in remote communities, building materials for a warehouse, and most recently they

helped to purchase a forklift designed to maneuver in tight warehouse aisles.

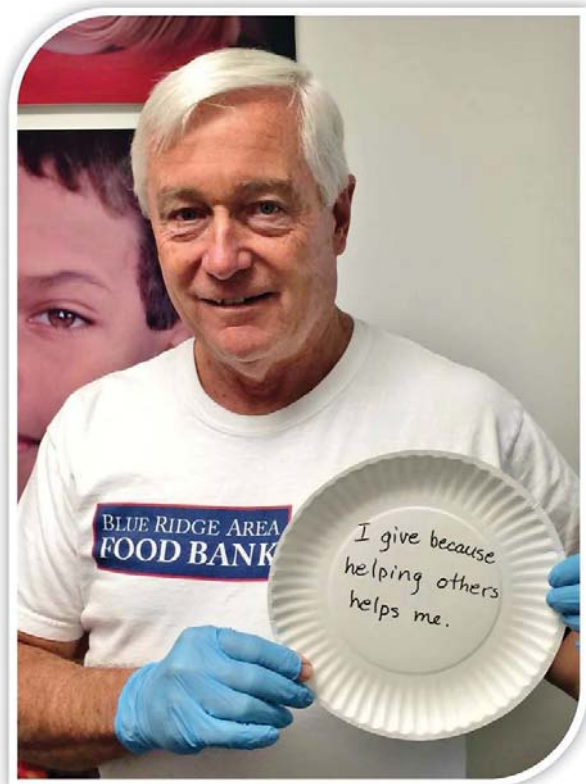
In addition, Dick and Judy Nunley contribute from their personal resources, as do John Nunley and Caroline and Jim Satira.

“Better Living and the extended Nunley family represent what is best about the Charlottesville community – a commitment to improve the quality of life for all, and to do so consistently, year after year, simply because it’s the right thing to do,” commented Michael McKee, the Food Bank’s CEO. “The company’s leadership in giving throughout the community is unmatched.”

In addition to generous support of the Food Bank, Better Living has made it a priority to alleviate hunger by supporting Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry, the Nelson County Pantry in Lovingston, Meals on Wheels in Fluvanna and in Charlottesville, the Salvation Army, and the Emergency Food Bank.

Snap an Unselfie

Use social media to share why solving hunger is important to you



Scott Wilson, Food Bank volunteer

SELFIE:

Named the Word of the Year 2013 by Oxford Dictionaries

Taking a photo of one's self and posting to social media has been hugely popular among celebrities and "regular" folks alike. While we all appreciate a good selfie, we're asking you to turn it into a less self-centered act.

Go ahead, snap that selfie. But take a photo of yourself holding a paper plate with a brief answer to one of the following questions instead:

- **Why is solving hunger important to you?**
- **How do you feel about people in your community going hungry?**
- **What would you say to others to encourage them to participate in the fight against hunger?**
- **Or, just write that you believe "Together, We Can Solve Hunger."**

Make your responses brief and easily legible. Then, post your unselfie on Facebook or Twitter. Be sure you've "liked" our Facebook page, and tag us in the photo.* On Twitter, use hashtag #unselfie and our handle: @BRAFB.

Your involvement will help us boost awareness of hunger among friends in your social network and increase support for families in need. Thank you for joining the #unselfie movement!

***Make sure the "share with" option is set to "Public" for this particular posting, even if your posts are normally only shared with your Facebook friends. Otherwise, we can't see your photo.**

THE FEINSTEIN FOUNDATION

\$1 Million
GIVEAWAY CHALLENGE

This Spring, we're joining the Feinstein Foundation to challenge Virginians to support hunger relief—and to help us serve more food to more people.

Here's how it works. Gifts contributed to the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank between March 1st and April 30th will be compared to the total dollars raised by participating Food Banks, nationally. Our total will determine how much of the \$1 million Feinstein giveaway we receive—the more you give, the more your gift will increase in value when matched.

The real difference is that your hard-earned dollars will go a little further in helping our neighbors in need. We hope you'll join us by giving this March and April so that together, we can solve hunger.

Add "For the Feinstein Challenge" on the memo line of your check so it can be counted. Visit www.feinsteinfoundation.org to learn more.

FOCUS ON
VOLUNTEERS
[student edition]

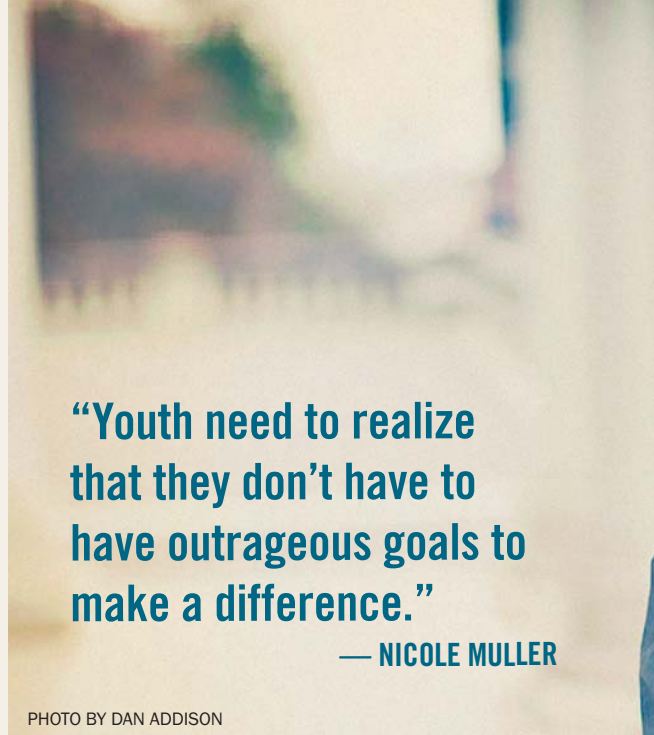
ON A MISSION

U.Va. student wins \$25,000 for Food Bank

Nicole Muller has been an advocate for people struggling with hunger since her high school days.

She was just 16 when she started a project called Neighbors-4-Neighbors in her Albemarle County community, asking neighbors to donate food for her campaign. Little did she know her project would eventually provide more than 660,000 pounds and \$55,000 for hunger-relief organizations around the nation and beyond. Nicole's crusade has garnered national exposure, from the support of Newman's Own Foundation, to being named one of Glamour Magazine's "21 Amazing Young Women" for her charitable work.

Now a third-year student at the University of



"Youth need to realize that they don't have to have outrageous goals to make a difference."

— NICOLE MULLER

PHOTO BY DAN ADDISON

Virginia, Nicole's campaign to eradicate hunger is still thriving. She recently submitted an application to win \$25,000 for her charity of choice through Bayer's One-A-Day Nutrition Mission grant contest. She was among four finalists to win the nationwide competition and chose the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank as the beneficiary.

"I was in disbelief as I knew that the odds of being only one of four grant winners weren't high," she said. "I was also ecstatic as I knew that \$25,000 would provide 100,000 meals."

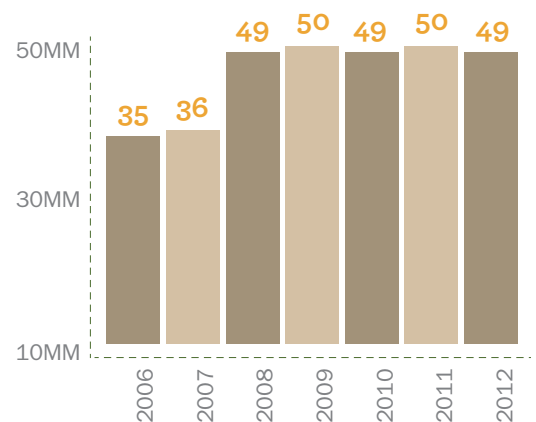
Nicole is driven to continue advocacy on the Food Bank's behalf because she is well aware of the need. She also dreams of a day when charitable food assistance endeavors are



49 MILLION STILL STRUGGLE WITH HUNGER DESPITE ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Hunger is still a big problem in the U.S. The USDA's research reveals that the number of people struggling with hunger is the same as it was in 2008, when the Great Recession began.

In the Blue Ridge Area, 1 in 10 struggles with hunger, 4 in 10 of whom are children.



FOOD-INSECURE AMERICANS



unnecessary because everyone can afford to buy the food they need.

She's already moved to the next project, organizing her annual food collection among Charlottesville area primary, middle and high schools scheduled for March.

"Youth need to realize that they don't have to have outrageous goals to make a difference," Nicole said. "They just have to take that first step. Think outside of themselves, volunteer anywhere. It only requires willingness to help."

JOIN NICOLE

If your school wants to participate, email Nicole at naybors4naybors@gmail.com.

College teams mobilize to fight food insecurity

Students at Shenandoah University (SU) in Winchester and Blue Ridge Community College (BRCC) in Weyers Cave are finding innovative ways to improve access to nourishing food in their communities.

Members of ENACTUS—a non-profit, entrepreneurial student organization—are going beyond the books to improve the quality of life for people in need.



BRCC ENACTUS students collect food donations.

The ENACTUS team at Shenandoah University developed a project last year to help families who could benefit from SNAP (formerly known as Food Stamps). Working with a couple of Food Bank volunteers, SU ENACTUS students are assisting in eligibility screening and enrolling individuals in SNAP while receiving course credit.

At BRCC, ENACTUS members have long supported hunger-relief initiatives for the Food Bank through events like Stuff A Truck, and most recently, Cans Can Fight Hunger, a food drive during which students collected more than 6,800 meals in one day. BRCC ENACTUS members have also hosted an Empty Bowl Dinner for seven years during the college's annual Virginia Hunger Symposium, generating thousands of dollars to help feed people in need. This year, ENACTUS members are tackling a new project, visiting local grocery stores to help us enhance our retail store donation program.

Thanks to the support of these ENACTUS teams, we're building programs that promote long-term food security for our community.



Have you thought about **YOUR LEGACY?**

Consider joining the community of people who want to provide charitable food assistance for hungry Virginians, well into the future.

If you have already made the decision to include the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank in your will, please let us know so we can say, "thank you!" If you want to remain anonymous, be assured we will respect your wishes.

For more information about bequests and other future gift options, visit www.brafb.org/plannedgift or contact Karen Ratzlaff at (540) 213-8404 or kratzlaff@brafb.org. All inquiries will remain confidential.

HUNGER HEROES

We are deeply grateful to the following Hunger Heroes for hosting events that have helped us provide relief to people in need. We're also thankful to everyone who supported these events with their time, food, funds and talent.



ALTERNATIVE GIFT FAIR 4,224 meals

A crowd turned out the day after Thanksgiving to contribute gifts to their favorite charities in the names of their nearest and dearest at the Paramount Theater in Charlottesville.



17TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS AT AUGUSTA STONE 25,800 meals

I Musici di Bono, Nathan Moore, Skylark, and Rhythm Road along with guests Richard Adams (event founder), Chris Wray and Berkeley Harner brought their outstanding musical talent together for this annual benefit concert. Special thanks to Pat Hunt and Sandy Greene for coordinating.



CLEAR CHANNEL WINCHESTER'S STUFF A TRUCK 10,000 meals

Clear Channel of Winchester partnered with Walmart to stuff our truck with food donations for the holidays. With the community's help, the radio group pulled in a record-breaking amount of food.



HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE 4,800 meals

NBC29, Lite Rock Z95.1, and The Daily Progress inspired Kroger shoppers to fill our food barrels in the Shenandoah Valley and Charlottesville just in time for the holidays.



HOMEBREW FOR HUNGER 21,700 meals

More than 60 home and craft brewers filled the Fifth Season Gardening Co. in Charlottesville and offered samples in exchange for charitable donations to the Food Bank.



HOOS FOR THE HUNGRY 9,150 meals

The University of Virginia made the holidays brighter for thousands of Charlottesville area families through their annual, campus-wide holiday food and fund drive.



PANERA BREAD PACKS THE BUS 12,500 meals

Blue Ridge Bread, the local Panera Bread franchise, packed a bus with food for the hungry at the grand opening of their new bakery-cafe in Lynchburg. They also collected money from patrons and matched their contributions to make a final donation of \$3,000.



SCOUTING FOR FOOD 85,600 meals

Boy Scouts across our region went on their annual hunt for food donations in the fall and brought back thousands of food donations left at resident doorsteps.



SHOP TO STOP HUNGER 8,400 meals

Four of Charlottesville's finest raced to stuff their shopping carts with food in 60 seconds during the first Shop to Stop Hunger supermarket sweep. Special thanks to Reid's Super Save Market for hosting the event and donating a bonus cart of food.



Watch the race

View this video on our website.



TWELFTH NIGHT CONCERT 23,650 meals

The choirs of Staunton Church of the Brethren and Olivet Presbyterian Church gloriously sang in a spiritual benefit Christmas celebration. Also lending their time and talent were an accompanying mini-orchestra and handbell musicians from Blue Ridge Christian School.



VALLEY BUSINESSES GIVE BACK

47,350 meals

Shenandoah Valley businesses partnered for their annual food and fund drive to bring meals to the tables of people living in the community where they live and work during the holiday season.



TRIPLE YOUR GIVING CAMPAIGN

4,252 meals

The Virginia Blood Services (VBS) gave blood donors the opportunity to triple their giving during the holiday season. VBS donated \$1 to the Food Bank for every participating blood donor and also hosted food drives at blood drive sites.



VIRGINIA HUNGER SYMPOSIUM

38,600 meals

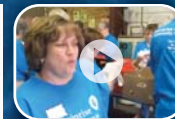
Students and faculty alike were moved to action through a host of enlightening and entertaining activities during the 7th annual Virginia Hunger Symposium at Blue Ridge Community College.

One Day: 300 Hours

AMERPRISE FINANCIAL TAKES TIME FOR SERVICE

Each November, Ameriprise Financial employees and financial advisors unite with Feeding America and its member food banks for a day of service, helping families in need ahead of the holiday season. In the last three years, the Ameriprise National Day of Service has grown to become Feeding America's largest partner volunteer event in the country.

On their most recent Day of Service, Ameriprise employees in the Blue Ridge area gave 300 volunteer hours as they readied juice packages for children enrolled in our afterschool programs and prepared food boxes for distribution to area families. In addition to taking time out to serve, the company has donated \$5,500, enough to provide 22,000 meals.



Why we volunteer

View this video on our website.

BLUE RIDGE AREA FOOD BANK

a member of
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

NON-PROFIT ORG
POSTAGE & FEES
PAID
BLUE RIDGE AREA
FOOD BANK

PO Box 937
Verona, VA 24482



BRANCH LOCATIONS

Shenandoah Valley Area Branch & Headquarters Office

PO Box 937
96 Laurel Hill Road
Verona, VA 24482-0937
P: 540.248.3663
F: 540.248.6410

Thomas Jefferson Area Branch

1207 Harris Street
Charlottesville, VA 22906-6415
P: 434.296.3663
F: 434.296.9621

Lynchburg Area Branch

501 12th Street, Suite B
Lynchburg, VA 24504-2527
P: 434.845.4099
F: 434.845.6153

Lord Fairfax Area Branch

1802 Roberts Street
Winchester, VA 22604-2342
P: 540.665.0770
F: 540.722.4217

GET INVOLVED

For more event details, visit our News and Events page at brafb.org, or call 540.248.3663 and press 0.

March 31 – April 11

8TH ANNUAL LEGAL FOOD FRENZY

Virginia lawyers will compete to raise food and funds during the **8th Annual Legal Food Frenzy**. This statewide competition between law firms provides thousands of meals to people in the communities they serve. You don't have to be a lawyer to participate.



April 12-13

MUSIC FEEDS US

April 12, 3 p.m., Trinity Episcopal Church, Staunton
April 13, 3 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, Charlottesville
Listen to classical music performed by a quartet of accomplished musicians in this spring benefit concert. Learn more about the performance on our website, in March.

April 13

MT. RUSHMORE DINNER

Enjoy a five-course meal with each course made by Charlottesville's top five chefs at The Space, 210 Water St. W. in downtown Charlottesville. Details and tickets at brafb.org.

May 10

STAMP OUT HUNGER

Mail carriers across the nation collectively provide millions of meals to families in need through this annual food drive. You can stamp out hunger in the Blue Ridge area by leaving non-perishable food donations at your doorstep on Saturday, **May 10**.



June 10

TASTE THIS!

Join us from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m., June 10 at the Pavilion at The Boars Head Inn to sample some of the best food and beverages Charlottesville has to offer. All proceeds from the event will benefit the Food Bank. To purchase your ticket and view a list of participating restaurants, visit tastethiscville.com.



September 2014

HUNGER ACTION MONTH

Go orange and join us in a national movement to raise awareness and alleviate hunger during the month of September. Visit our website in August to learn how you can participate.



Our New Look

We hope you enjoy the new look of our biannual newsletter! At a lower cost, we're still bringing you news about the good things you help us to accomplish. We'd love to hear what you think. Send your feedback to info@brafb.org.