

network news

The BRAFB
Agency Relations
& Programs
Team Newsletter

BLUE RIDGE AREA
FOOD BANK

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FEEDING
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Community Partnerships Key to Successful Client Nutrition Program

In June of 2015, Page One partnered with the Virginia Cooperative Extension and Rileyville Family and Community Educators to offer cooking classes for their clients and the community at large.

When Page One staff noticed certain food pantry items were being returned unused because clients did not know how to cook them or incorporate them into a meal, they decided to help their clients learn. "There is a whole generation of folks that we see that didn't know how to prepare dried beans, rice, or grits," said Page One Manager Lois Shaffer.

Lois worked with Kim Costa from the Extension Office to identify pantry staples and underutilized goods for class demonstrations, and together, they developed and launched the course.

Approximately 25 participants met each Wednesday for four weeks.



Their lessons included how to interpret nutrition information, follow recipes and prepare and cook foods. They received hands-on instruction, cooking utensils, cookbooks, and through the generosity of the Community Educators, graduates of the class were entered into a drawing for a new crockpot. "There is a great need in Page County: an older population, people with health concerns and special diets," said Costa.

The partnership will gear up again in 2016 to offer a course on diabetes and nutrition, and possibly a summer course on cooking with the fresh, seasonal produce.

If you would like to explore incorporating a nutritional program at your agency, please contact your Partner Services Coordinator.

Honoring Hunter Fauber, Verona Community Food Pantry

More than twenty years ago, Hunter Fauber began providing food for people in need from his garage. When news of his pantry spread, so many people began visiting that he could no longer operate from his small space.

With help from his church, Pleasant View Evangelical Lutheran Church, and his local Ruritan Club, he was able to reclaim his garage and move to a larger space in the Augusta County Social Services building. The group became an independent 501 (c)(3) in 2006. Currently, the pantry serves approximately 5,300 individuals and 1,960 households.

Hunter has spent every day helping to nourish hungry Augusta County residents. This is his legacy and his life's work.

Hunter turned 80 last year and decided to cut back his hours to two days a week. Full retirement may come soon.

We sincerely thank Mr. Fauber for his partnership with the Food Bank and his devotion to meeting the needs of his community. We are eternally grateful.

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Did You Hear?

Mimi Forbes, Director of the Rappahannock Food Pantry, was named Rappahannock Times' Citizen of the Year for 2015 for her work with the food pantry. **Congratulations, Mimi!**

Caring Choices

Throughout our daily lives we likely don't think about the luxury we have to choose exactly what we want — that perfect pair of corduroys for the winter months, the best snow tires, a favorite coffee flavor. We get to make choices constantly.



For our neighbors who struggle with food insecurity, fewer choices exist, especially in traditional pantries. Historically, these individuals received a box of pre-determined foods. Though lovingly packed, the goods were standardized for the average family. Today, growing health issues, dietary concerns, and taste preferences can mean many of those foods will go uneaten.

In response, lots of you have created opportunities for clients to have more choice in the items they receive. In

some cases, you have provided an extra table or shelf with goods from which families can have their pick. One Charlottesville pantry decided to go even further. Loaves and Fishes recently relocated, and in tandem with their move, adopted the client choice model. (See *Harvest* article, pg. 4)

The feedback from clients has been overwhelmingly positive, and the Food Bank is grateful for your efforts!

To learn more about setting up a client choice pantry, contact your partner services coordinator.

PROMOTING HEALTHFUL EATING

Thanks to a grant from the Genworth Foundation and our partnership with the Virginia Cooperative Extension, we are providing 62,500 pounds of fresh produce and nutrition education in the Lynchburg Area.

In one program, parents eager for new meal ideas and kids eager to get involved with food preparation learned and had fun with produce through a mini farmer's

market held at TC Miller Elementary School. The experience was positive for all.

To learn how to set up a Super Pantry with VCE staff at your agency, contact your Partner Services Coordinator.

