



GREAT FALLS COMMUNITY
**FOOD
BANK**

"Gathering together to nourish our community."

Food for Thought

A PASSION FOR FEEDING THE HUNGRY



The Vineyard team prepares for their Saturday feeding session

When Kathy Sanders of Vineyard Church was first asked to help feed the hungry in Great Falls, her immediate reaction was a hard pass. Now, thirty years later, she realizes overcoming her initial reticence to helping those in need was one of the best choices she's ever made.

"I just thought 'I don't think I can handle seeing people

in dire straits – all that suffering. That's not for me,'" Sanders said. "But I finally went in and I was hooked. It was nothing like what I pictured, and actually, it's been a real blessing. It's now my passion."

The charity veteran said what fuels that passion is the people themselves. "Most of them are so sweet and grateful. It just makes me happy to know I am helping – and we know we are helping people in real need."

Sanders, Vineyard Pastor Rick Mazaira, and a group of dedicated volunteers who work Vineyards' Mercy Ministries Food Pantry feed upwards of 30 families a week from their church. Sanders said the norm used to be about 10 families a week but since COVID-19 struck, that number has nearly tripled. The pandemic has also forced the Vineyard volunteers to change the way they distribute the food, meaning Kathy is no longer face-to-face with the people she's serving. "I do miss seeing the people but I think our new way of handing out the baskets is much more efficient," she says.

Sanders said Vineyard would be hard-pressed to adequately feed these families without the Food Bank.

"Oh, it wouldn't be good to ever lose the Food Bank," she said. "We wouldn't be able to give the quality and variety of food – it would just be bread and sweets with the



Kathy Sanders has been shopping at the Food Bank for nearly 30 years

occasional veggie and fruit but it would be very slim pickings." Sanders said she relies on the Food Bank for pasta, fruit, cereal, ramen, broth, vegetables and canned chili.

Feeding the hungry has become a family affair for Sanders, who recently celebrated her 50th wedding anniversary with her husband Bill. Her late mother spent countless hours in Silver City, NM taking care of the hungry and Kathy has enlisted the help of both her daughter and college-age granddaughter in feeding folks in Great Falls. Kathy's own community involvement doesn't stop with feeding the hungry. She's also a foster grandmother at a local elementary school, another one of her great passions. "I just love those little kids to death," she said. "I think they do more for me than I do for them."

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– Kathy Sanders, Vineyard Church

Sanders estimates she works about 30 hours a week on her feeding program. When asked about what motivates her on the tough days that everyone faces – when her back is hurting or she isn't feeling particularly inspired, Sanders simply shrugs and says "Necessity. Because it has to get done and I'm the one to do it." And just how long does Kathy Sanders see herself feeding the

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Board Member's Message



Cori Smith, Principal of Whittier Elementary School.

Having served on the Food Bank Board of Directors for nearly five years and acting as a school principal for another five, I see firsthand the crucial role the Food Bank plays in our community. In fact, I can't even imagine my staff and I educating our young students without the food bank!

It isn't uncommon to see some of my students come to school hungry or worry about having enough food at home. And the gratitude and relief they express is a touching-yet-stark reminder that for many in our community, food isn't always available; hunger is real; and the food bank is essential. When you see tears of relief as a Thanksgiving dinner is provided - a dinner that would not have happened without the Food Bank, you are thankful for the wonderful opportunity to have a positive impact on the lives of our students and families!

Ensuring our students are not worrying about their next meal means they can concentrate on learning and we can concentrate on teaching. The Food Bank and its Backpacks4Kids program not only gives many children the chance to break the cycle of poverty through education, it also improves our classroom environment, which aids ALL our children. School breakfast and

lunch is only provided Monday through Friday. The Backpacks4Kids program is food for the weekend and much appreciated by students and families. These are distributed each Friday at dismissal.

With this in mind, I would like to thank all of you who have helped us feed the hungry. I have had the pleasure of serving on several charity boards over the years and have always been astonished at how generous Great Falls is. The Food Bank offers a great place for citizens to exercise the power of community. As we experience hard times, it is amazing to see the support that people provide to help their neighbor. Many of these folks have been or are currently beneficiaries of the Food Bank. The cycle of helping others when you can, and accepting help when you have the need makes for a strong community.

As a long-time board member of the food bank, I want to assure you that your donations—be it food or money—are being used wisely and proficiently. From an annual audit to stringent financial procedures, we are diligent that your donations are used exactly as you intended. Thank you! 🍎

Executive Director's Message



Shaun M. Tatarka, Executive Director

COVID-19 had few silver linings but when one looks at the amazing support the Food Bank received during this horrendous time in our history, we can't help but be grateful and even joyous to know we are living in an extremely generous community.

In the month of April 2020, as fear and uncertainty were about to peak, we received a record amount of cash for that time of year. Cascade County residents concerned about their neighbors stepped up to make sure people down on their luck during COVID had enough to eat. This was gratifying to those of us at the Food Bank but certainly not surprising. This county has a long history of people taking care of each other and this was no exception.

As I begin my sixth year serving as the executive director of the Great Falls Community Food Bank, and ninth with the Food bank, I continue to be amazed by the generosity of Great Falls and Cascade County residents. Even in these extremely uncertain times, we saw extreme kindness from so many. As a result, we were able to continue to meet our mission during the pandemic onslaught.

For the second year in a row, we had to cancel CANTastic, our major fundraiser that supports our vital Backpacks4Kids program, (which feeds elementary school children during weekends and holidays). The Food Bank asked many major supporters to make their annual contribution without

receiving the normal public acknowledgement that comes with CANTastic. Every donor we asked came through for us, certifying their concern for our disadvantaged children.

A large chunk of our increased output was thanks to diligent, caring workers at our Great Falls Public Schools who rallied to feed the hungry during the school shutdown. Dozens of teachers, administrators and volunteers set up makeshift food pantries at their schools to feed children who were accustomed to being fed breakfast and lunch during school hours. Our traditional packs of food normally used to administer our Backpacks4Kids program were also being distributed at these and other pantries. So we owe a huge thanks to all of you who have contributed to the Backpack program.

As we move forward, I would like donors to know they have put their local food bank in a sound financial position. As the pandemic winds down, we are stronger than ever before. We were fortunate to even get a few things fixed and updated on our aging building, which not only houses the Food Bank but also the County's Meals on Wheels program and FISH, a pantry that feeds those in need.

In addition to our gratitude to our generous donors, I would like to add a big thank you to all those who feed the hungry in our community. People like Kathy Sanders of Vineyard Church, our cover story subject, are genuine day-to-day heroes and we cannot thank them enough. In the war on hunger, we supply the weapons, and together, we have proved that in difficult and uncertain times, we can continue to meet our shared mission of offering a hand up to our most vulnerable neighbors. We are honored to serve our fellow citizens and will continue to nourish our community. 🍎

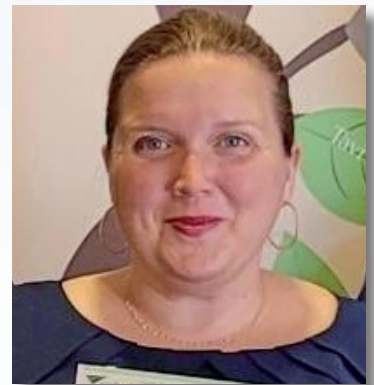
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hungry in Great Falls? "Until I am no more," she said.

Vineyard is one of nearly 70 agencies served by the Great Falls Community Food Bank. You can donate to Vineyard's hunger program by sending a check to:

Vineyard Church
C/O Mercy Ministries Food Program
1617 6th Ave. N.
Great Falls, MT 59401 🍎

Employee Spotlight



The Food Bank is pleased to introduce **Cristin Chappo** as our new Administrative Assistant. Cristin joined us in April and has already made a big difference with her outgoing personality and hard work.

Ms. Chappo comes to us from Sacramento, where she worked as a Judge's clerk for more than 20 years.

"I enjoy being a part of something bigger than myself. I find it fulfilling to help in the community of Great Falls that I am now a part of and I am happy to be involved in such a giving organization."

Cristin is the proud mom to three dachshunds. In her spare time, she enjoys the great outdoors with her dogs as well as reading and hanging out with all of her new Montanan friends.

Cristin replaces Roxanne Herron who returned to the military after a year at the Food Bank. We wish her well! 🍎

Feed the Hungry; Reduce Taxes

For the past 15 months, our community (and the world) has faced a period of exceptional stress. Thanks to the ongoing commitment of our supporters, the Great Falls Community Food Bank has been able to weather this storm, ensuring that some of our most vulnerable neighbors were spared the additional hardship of increased food insecurity during this time. To ensure that the Food Bank is again in a position to serve our community through the next storm, we wanted to share a little information with you about a special incentive in Montana for making gifts to the Food Bank's endowment.

Great Falls Community Food Bank has established an endowment fund at Montana Community Foundation (MCF) for the permanent benefit of our organization's vital work to feed the hungry. Even better, qualified contributions to this endowment will enable donors to take advantage of the Montana Endowment Tax Credit (METC) – a direct credit toward your Montana state tax liability. Individuals can claim up to \$10,000 in METC annually or \$20,000 for couples filing jointly, and business donors are eligible for up to \$10,000 as well.

If you make a gift of \$2,500 or more to help ensure a strong and vibrant future for the Food Bank and could benefit from receiving a direct credit on your Montana taxes, this is an excellent opportunity to consider. Here is how it works:

The state of Montana considers certain types of “planned gifts” from individuals such as charitable gift annuities, deferred charitable gift annuities, charitable trusts, and gifts of paid-up life insurance to be donations that qualify for the METC. Your contribution is made directly to the Montana Community Foundation and set up as a planned gift that will provide future benefit to the Great Falls Community Food Bank Endowment.

Charitable Gift Annuity- Donors receive lifetime income payments in exchange for their contribution. Doing a charitable gift annuity (CGA) can be a simple and effective option to meet both your charitable and financial needs.

- Receive tax benefits in the year of the donation, including the METC, to apply to your state taxes and an itemizable deduction on your federal taxes.
- You will immediately begin receiving a fixed amount of annual income in the form of an annuity payment. The income payments will continue for the remainder of your life and/or a joint annuitant's life (such as a spouse).
- After the final annuitant dies, the balance remaining in the CGA will be transferred to the Food Bank Endowment and provide a lasting impact for our organization, forever.
- Contributions of \$10,000 or more can be used to fund a CGA.



Deferred Gift Annuity- If receiving annual income in exchange for the gift is not important or necessary, then a deferred charitable gift annuity (DGA) contribution is an excellent and highly popular option to qualify for the METC.

- The start date of the annuity income payments is deferred out years into the future, typically to a date just prior to the donor's life expectancy, which is the maximum deferral period allowed by the state of Montana.
- In doing so, this provides you with the greatest tax benefit for your gift by yielding the most METC and largest itemizable deduction.
- The DGA is held intact in your name for 5 years, a waiting period required by the state, during which time it is invested with the intention that the balance will grow beyond the original gift amount.
- Once the waiting period is over the DGA can then be closed out and the balance transferred to the Great Falls Community Food Bank Endowment for our organization's benefit.
- Contributions of as little as \$2,500 can be used to set up a DGA.

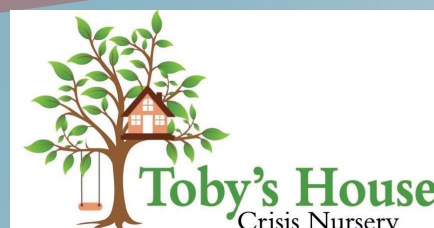
Both planned gift vehicles are easy to set up and offer tax-efficient and impactful strategies for donors to help meet their financial and charitable goals. Plus, they provide enduring support for the important work the Great Falls Community Food Bank does to keep vulnerable members of our community fed. As with all major financial decisions, we encourage you to check with your financial planner before making a planned gift.



To learn more about how you can support the Great Falls Community Food Bank through our endowment fund at the Montana Community Foundation and take advantage of the tax credit and other benefits, please contact Shaun at the Food Bank who will put you in touch with the experts at MCF.

Welcome New Agencies

The Food Bank is pleased to announce we have added four new agencies to our partner list. We are proud to assist these fine agencies with their missions of serving the community.



Great Falls Community Food Bank
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Great Falls, MT 59401
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GREAT FALLS COMMUNITY FOOD BANK



“Gathering together to nourish our community.”



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To donate online, visit: greatfallsfoodbank.org

What is the Insert?

Included in this newsletter is a pre-printed insert for the 27th annual Montana Shares raffle. This is your chance to support the Food Bank and become eligible for great prizes. Montana Shares is a partnership of non-profit organizations working to build better communities across Montana. Contributions to member groups are made through Montana Shares each year during statewide workplace giving campaigns. All donations to the raffle support Montana Shares in its efforts to help the Food Bank and other nonprofits diversify fundraising and raise public awareness.

We urge you to make your donation today and help support this great organization. Through Montana Shares, the Food Bank is able to raise additional funds through workplace giving.

If you would like to donate to Montana Shares, please be sure to fill out the form(s) and send to Montana Shares, PO Box 883, Helena, MT 59624. Please make your check out to Montana Shares.

Ameriprise Financial  Be Brilliant.

David Milkovich, MBA
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