

SPRING IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER!



We look forward to community events once again and enjoying a visit with our neighbors. With the Farmers Fresh Market starting on June 15th, we will be hosting a **Spring Festival** to kick off the season of farming, gardening, and outdoor activities. There will be food, fun and games. Spring Festival Sponsorships are available for \$1,000 and your name will be listed on our web page, at the event and event advertising. **JOIN CENTRAL PENINSULA HOSPITAL IN SPONSORING THE SPRING EVENT!**

The **Silver Soup Supper** is all set to take place at the Soldotna Sports Complex on August 21. Ticket holders will receive a handcrafted bowl and soup accompanied by bread and dessert. There will be a live auction, silent auction and a chance to gather with neighbors for a common cause; feeding people. This is all based on the expectation we will be able to gather in August. **Contact Randi @ 741-2166 or randi@kpfoodbank.org for sponsorship information. JOIN CENTRAL PENINSULA HOSPITAL, CONOCO PHILLIPS, DOLIFKA & ASSOC., KDLL AND TOTE IN SPONSORING THIS FUN EVENT.**

Watch our website, kpfoodbank.org for updates as we firm up event activities.

Food insecurity and hunger challenges remain more prevalent than ever, but with the help of a caring community we will continue to meet the need until we are sure that no one is going hungry.



Fireweed

DID YOU KNOW? Fireweed symbolizes more than the Reds are Running? It symbolizes transformation! We have seen how a whole mountainside is transformed when the fireweed is in bloom.

A warm, nutritious meal from the Fireweed Diner is transformative in the way it helps people feel valued, energized and in control.

DISTRBTUTION OF SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD BAGS & PRODUCE BOXES CONTINUES



The Food Bank is grateful that the cities of **Kenai and Soldotna** are able to continue their partnership to distribute Cares Act funds in the form of food bags. Each bag contains 15 lbs of food, a weeks supply for 2 people. These bags contain a variety of shelf stable items such as cereal, peanut butter, jelly, fruit cups, and juice, with the Food Bank adding bread, and any fresh or perishable items that are available at the time.

This has been a huge boost for many.

The USDA Produce Boxes will also be continuing. This USDA Farmers to Families Program distributes the surplus farmers were left with because of the hospitality industry slow down to people who can use it. This wonderful program is distributing fresh produce and sometimes milk to hungry neighbors.

Thanks to a great amount of volunteer hours and the wonderful distribution sites that have made these programs successful.



Happy New Year! How great a feeling to be able to say goodbye to 2020. It was a year of challenges and pain for many people. Our neighbors needed the Food Bank at levels that have never been experienced in the 33 years of operation. We have heard from many people whose lives were impacted by the pandemic. Families that have never needed to access assistance now faced empty cupboards. Remote learning added pressure to family food budgets with children home all day. Our senior population had to self-quarantine for their health and needed deliveries to their homes. COVID-19 has impacted the lives of everyone, worldwide. That is the sad news.

Then there is the good news of 2020. Our community pulled together as never before. Caring for each other, sharing, donating, volunteering and reaching out in new and wonderful ways. The Food Bank has been able to meet and maintain the ability to provide food at historically high amounts. We have been able to continue to provide 4 times as many daily meals in the Fireweed Diner. The Food Bank has been able to engage in the supplemental food programs through the CARES ACT and USDA funding. None of this would be possible without a caring, generous and compassionate community. I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I was recently at a meeting where the community had gathered to discuss challenges and ways to continue to serve during the pandemic. The last person to share said this, "I know it sounds strange, but I feel optimistic," what profound words. I am making that my motto for 2021. We are not out of the woods yet, but I am feeling optimistic. Together, we will continue to nourish our community with food and care until the pandemic is but a story we will tell our grandchildren! Thank you for all your support.

Let's feel optimistic together. greg

At the Kenai Peninsula Food Bank incoming and outgoing food is weighed to ensure that there is minimal amount of food waste. This comparison offers a glimpse of the increased need of our neighbors in 2020. We were able to meet that need with the help of a compassionate community.

KPFB Distribution	2019	2020
Total Food	1,250,000 lbs.	2,200,000 lbs
Fireweed Diner	20,956 lbs	51,645 lbs.
Food Distributed for special grants and programs	165,000 lbs.	955,000 lbs
USDA Programs (TEFAP & CSFP)	339,768 lbs	440,749 lbs
Food purchased locally by KPFB	12,891 lbs	575,686 lbs

With the aid of the cities of Kenai and Soldotna Food Bags, Farmers to Families and special grants

Which not only fed our neighbors but had a big economic impact on our communities.

NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR OUR LITTLE FOOD BANK

IN THE NEWS: Ben Kessler of NBC News wrote a wonderful article about the impact of COVID and the USDA Produce Boxes.

AND,

We produced a short informational video that will be appearing on our website soon about what we have been doing over the past year.

ALSO,

The MJ Murdock Charitable Trust produced a wonderful film, "Serving on the Front Lines of COVID-19: Food Banks" which can be viewed by going to: <https://murdocktrust.org/2021/02/video-serving-on-the-front-lines-of-the-pandemic-food-banks/>

We visited Abby Ala at Ridgeway Farms and talked about the relationships between foodbanks and farmers in our area.

This film highlights the partnership we have with the Food Bank of Alaska and how we work together to ensure that everyone gets fed and no food goes to waste.

There will be links to these on our website soon.





It all started with one person seeing a need and figuring out a way to meet that need.

Linda Parker was the force in getting the Kenai Peninsula Food Bank started. She saw the need of food for families and individuals. And she noticed how the stores needed a place and way to donate outdated food. So

Linda started collecting food from grocery stores in her car and giving it to churches that would give to families and individuals in need. So there started the humble beginnings of the Kenai Peninsula Food Bank. Beginning in the Burton Carver Building to warehouse food, then moving to a warehouse at the back of Red Diamond Center. The offices were partitioned with cases of food and the stacks were so high, the rule was “cans on the bottom marshmallows on top.

This was where food was collected and money was raised for the Food Bank at it’s present location on K-beach.

In the early days, food was often distributed at the Kenai Peninsula College for hungry students and the general public.

While building the facility on K Beach Linda did not always know where the funds would come from to pay for materials or contractors. Somehow, she always found what was needed even if it was from her own hip pocket! Linda did not want food to be wasted so she founded the soup kitchen, now The Fireweed Diner, using donated perishables for soup ingredients.

The Food Bank of Alaska provided the first freezer, warehouse forklift and other items.

Without Linda’s vision and determination there would be no Food Bank as we know it today. Thank you Linda.

Linda left the Kenai Peninsula in the late 1990’s, she passed on November 15, 2020 in Chehalis, Washington.

We honor her legacy through food insecurity education and reaching out to our Kenai Peninsula neighbors ensuring that no one goes hungry.

“There is no higher religion than human service. To work for the common good in the greatest creed.” Woodrow T. Wilson

Alaska Waste

Alaska Waste generously donates refuse collection services to the Food Bank, and has ever since its inception, decades ago.

That’s over 30+ years of donated services which amounts to thousands of dollars to be utilized to support our mission.

I gave Dennis at Alaska Waste a call, and learned that he had worked in the Burton Carver Building for Peninsula Sanitation, and remembered the efforts of Linda Parker working her vision that “no one should be hungry on the Kenai Peninsula”, as the origins of the Food Bank were next door in a small donated space in that same building in the early 80’s.

Many food items cannot be sold beyond the certain shelf life, even if they are still edible and nutritious. Linda approached local grocers with an offer to rescue and distribute food through a local church and they agreed. Food was picked up, cleaned up and redistributed through a local church.

That was the beginning of the food rescue partnership that our local grocers have with the Food Bank, and other Peninsula non-profits. This partnership resulted in over 700,000 lbs of food rescued and distributed in 2020. Less than 2019 because of the health crisis, but impressive non the less. ~Randi~



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Kenai Peninsula Food Bank's Board Emeritus James E Fisher was an important part of the Food Bank family. He loved the mission of "No one deserves to go hungry" His daughter was quoted as saying "If my dad ran the world, everybody would have a place to sleep and food to eat" So many peninsula neighbors have fond memories of James Fisher, Senator Fisher and Jim. Sue Biggs recalls how much he love listening to her and Jack Will play music. "Jack and I played many times for the Soup Supper...either as a duo or with Food for the Soul. Jim would love to ask me to play the Orange Blossom Special for \$50 and he would egg others on to do the same. Then Jack and I would whip out the Special, and I would play it as fast as I could at the end...Jim would have the biggest smile on his face!!! He always dressed up for the Soup Supper and would wear his beautiful blue tuxedo!

Because he liked our music, he came to Christ Lutheran Church on Sunday evenings where we had an informal music service. We had a prayer time, and Jim would ask for prayer for the hungry and those who were in need. His compassion was so great for those less fortunate. He was a very sincere and intelligent man, well-read, who cared about his community, his country, and was a friend to all." Thank you, Jim.



Jim passed away on November 21st.

We strive to carry on his legacy of caring, community involvement and taking care of our neighbors.



Hutchings Auto Group



Hutchings & Lynden Save the Day

When rocks came tumbling down Calvin was loaded with Farmers to Families produce boxes to bring from Charlie's Produce to KPFB. The snow shifted on the Turnagain Arm and it pushed rocks off on to the road. With rocks covering the road, Calvin determined the safest way to continue was not touch the brakes. Thinking that all the loose rocks would cause him to skid, he drove right through.

The rocks took out the radiator and windshield. Fortunately, he was close to a place to pull off before the truck shutdown due to overheating.

Thanks to Hutchings Auto Group in Soldotna, the truck was towed into Anchorage.

Thanks to Lynden Transport, who went to the truck repair garage and offloaded the produce boxes and delivered them to the food bank in Soldotna. The produce was saved thanks to their quick response. The driver was not injured and the truck was repaired.



Thank you for the refrigerator truck! It will definitely help with food distribution

Thank you!

FOR HOSTING COMMUNITY FOOD DRIVES & FUNDRAISERS



407 lbs



Diamond Dance

Kenai Classical 122 lbs



fresh365

local greens and herbs, year-round
Nutritious, Fresh Salad Greens



Retired 1st Responders hosted food drives at all stations!



Students from the Montessori School made grocery bags from t-shirts. What a great idea!

girl scouts of alaska



823 lbs

Kenai Peninsula Realtors Association



River City Academy 107 lbs



177 lbs



Thank you!

FOR SUPPORTING OUR SUPPORTERS



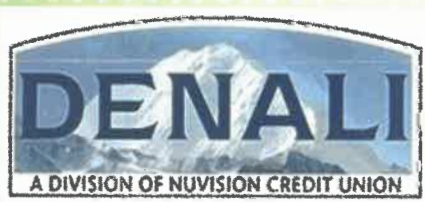
FOR HOSTING COMMUNITY FOOD DRIVES & FUNDRAISERS



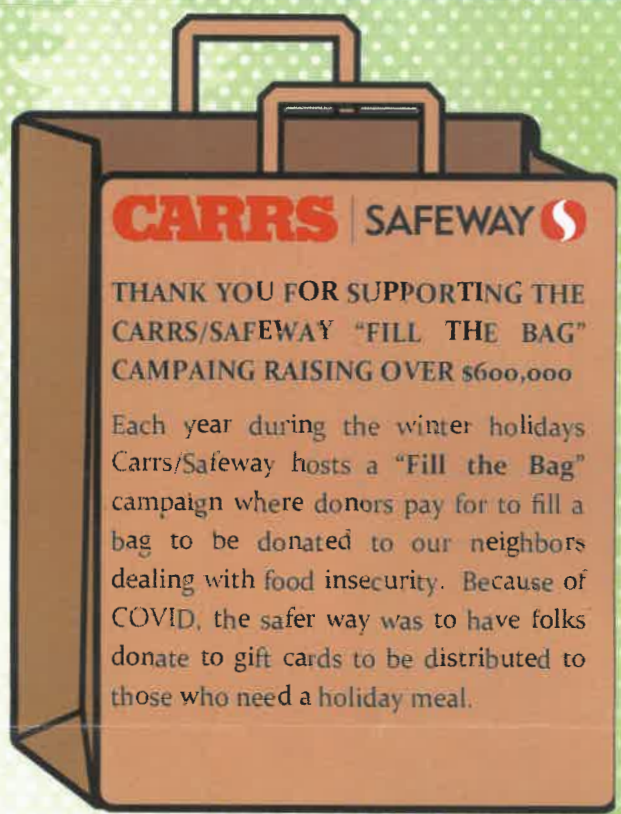
Raised over \$7,000,000 in the Cash for Cans campaign!



Angela Fowler presents checks from Alaska Oil Sales and Lyndsey family members.



Raised \$515.55 for the Food Bank



Thanks to the members of the IBEW for the gift of \$2,000!



CocaCola and Save U More teamed up to raise \$250.00



FOR SUPPORTING OUR SUPPORTERS

