

The Story:

Solving hunger today for a hunger free tomorrow.



WINTER NEWSLETTER 2021

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***You Provide a
Food Safety Net for
Local Seniors***



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Dear Friend,

The focus of the [Brazos Valley Food Bank's](#) (BVFB) Winter Newsletter is always seniors.

When I reflect on 2020 in terms of Brazos Valley seniors, there is much to share. Seniors almost single-handedly operate, as volunteers, the many food pantries we support throughout the Brazos Valley. Despite the risk of COVID, these volunteers made sure the food pantries remained open. We are forever grateful.

A large percentage of our monetary donors this past year — and every year — are also seniors. I was fortunate to talk with many of you over the phone, where almost everyone expressed a wish that they could have given more.

I think of retired professionals helping with new initiatives like delivering food kits (e.g. QKits) to those who needed to quarantine but at the same time had no food in the pantry.

And lastly, I think of a population already facing obstacles from a fixed income. COVID exasperated their situation — they relied on food programs but needed to isolate to stay healthy. The work that the food pantries and BVFB did to ensure that food was distributed in the safest ways possible, is something I am extremely proud of.

Please take the time to read on. The most important messages lie within the words of the people who were helped, as well as those like you who chose to help.

Gratefully,

Theresa Mangapora
Executive Director

You're Bringing Anita Hope

"It's difficult for me to buy healthy food on my income," Anita says of her financial situation. "At the end of the month, what little money I get is gone."

Like many older adults in our community, Anita struggles to make her budget stretch to afford even basic expenses, like groceries. Since her husband, Santana, passed away and she retired, Anita relies on a small, single fixed income.

She worked in nursing for many years and knows how important good nutrition is to the health and well-being of all, but especially folks her age. Unfortunately, the healthiest items at the store tend to be among the most expensive.

Your ongoing support means countless seniors can access quality food through the [Brazos Valley Food Bank's](#) partners and programs. Anita lives at LULAC Oak Hill, which provides a weekly bag full of food to senior neighbors in College Station who are facing hunger.

"It helps a lot," she says.

As a mother of four, grandmother to seven and great grandma of six, Anita has built her life and raised her family here. Neighbors like you, bringing her joy and nourishment, means she can worry less, take care of herself and remain hopeful that soon she will be able to gather with family safely again in the future.

"Thank you for giving the Food Bank the opportunity to help us!" Anita says on behalf of herself and her neighbors. "I love what y'all do."



ANITA

Linda Is Committed to Hunger Relief

After retiring from her job as an elementary school teacher, Linda Ford decided to enroll in seminary to be ordained as a deacon in the Episcopal Church. She needed volunteer hours to complete her training and immediately thought of [BVFB](#).

"The food bank is really good about telling you why you're packing that box and where it's going," Linda says. "It's going to a real person."

She and her husband had volunteered in

different capacities at the Brazos Church Pantry, one of BVFB's partner agencies, for many years and understood the scope of hunger in our community. With the pandemic's economic impact, Linda knew her help was needed now more than ever. Her heart goes out to those who were struggling before COVID-19 and her neighbors who are facing hunger for the very first time in their lives.

That's why she expanded her commitment to hunger relief by delivering Qkits, which are special packages of food for people who are in quarantine. She says sharing meals in this way has lifted her spirits during this uncertain time.

"The Food Bank does wonderful work and necessary and needed work," Linda says.

Our work would not be possible without dedicated people like Linda. Thank you for your commitment to hunger relief here in our community!





RICKY AND HIS WIFE, DONNA

Senior Neighbors Give Thanks for You

Ricky worked as a truck driver for Blue Bell Creameries for nearly three decades. Unfortunately, when he went in for his annual physical a few years ago, he received terrible news: Ricky was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease.

He hasn’t been able to work since. His wife, Donna, is retired from her job in housekeeping, and the couple’s only income is now Social Security.

That’s why they’re so glad they found out about the [Brazos Valley Food Bank](#)’s Mobile Food Pantry that visits their Brenham community. The fresh produce they take home from the monthly distribution supports their health, while providing peace of mind.

“It’s been a great help!” Donna says. “It helps make the money stretch.”

Since COVID began, Ricky and Donna have been strictly quarantining,

spending most days doing puzzles and word games together in the house. They will go out for the Mobile Food Pantry though, because of the many precautions taken – volunteers wearing masks and gloves, the distribution being drive-thru only, and limited person to person interaction. All of these safeguards make them feel protected.

Donna knows the Mobile Food Pantry is only able to deliver healthy food in this safe way because of you, and she’s truly grateful you choose to give.

“Thank you for all your help!” she says.

“We’re very appreciative,” Ricky adds.

Your gifts are a lifeline to older adults here in the Brazos Valley.

Did You Know?

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2020:

Qkits delivered by staff or volunteers: 263 

- Health District screens COVID patients for hunger
- BVFB supplies the food/coordinates volunteer, contact free delivery
- 7 days-worth of food given

Food Boxes delivered by Crowdsourcing Rescue (CSR) volunteers: 87 

- Need for food delivery paired with volunteers willing to make deliveries
- BVFB assembles the food boxes
- Local food pantries allow volunteers to pick up boxes from them

Food Hotline calls answered by BVFB staff: 130 

- Needed a Food Pantry (75%)
- Needed a CSR delivery (10%)
- Interested in enrolling in SNAP (5%)
- Other (5%)



BRAZOS VALLEY foodbank

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