



Cohoes Rotary Club Program 2011-2012



Susan Lintner
Director of Agency and Program Services
Regional Food Bank of NE New York

November 16, 2011

Susan is happy to be sharing a meal at the Century House Restaurant, the club has donated 12 meals to the Regional Food Bank of NE NY as a result of our lunch meeting. She encourages the members to serve food at one of the food member agencies.

Ms. Lintner provided an overview of the Food Bank organization.

There are over 1000 member agencies within the NE Regional Food Bank, these include, soup kitchens, food pantries, and emergency shelters. The Feeding America program is a national network of food banks, there are over 200 food banks in the nation. Food banks will share with one another based on inventory and supply, food banks in the Midwest might have an abundance of cereal or other grain based foods and ship to food banks in other parts of the country. The NE NY Food Bank supplies 23 counties from Canada to New Jersey, approximately 1/3 of the land mass of NY State.

The food primarily comes from donations from the food industry. The Food Bank owns a farm in Knox, NY. It is donated land that was gifted to be used as an agricultural source to help those people in need. The group that runs the farm is called the Community Associated Agriculture (CSA), they provide 200,000 pounds of food from the farm annually.

Most of the members of the food bank are non-profit groups. The food is delivered to central locations and the agencies pick up the food they need. Agencies order the food they want, this increases food diversity for those served by the agencies.

The NE NY Food Bank distributed over 24 million pounds of food in 2010, it is the 18th largest food bank in the United States.

Ms. Linter discussed some of the highlights of the "Hunger in America Study." Locally, 467 agencies were interviewed, 352 household interviews. In 2010, 244,000 people received food at some point during the year. Some statistics were presented, the need based on race is proportional to the population. Many families are forced to decide between food, electricity or doctor appointments.

Ms. Linter discussed ways to expand food services to reach more people in need. The Kids Café is located in the Schenectady Boys and Girls Club. The children in the program participate in food ordering and food preparation. The premise of the program is to provide them with food preparation skills and knowledge that they can use later in life.

The Summer Food Service Sponsor program provides free meals when school is not in session. There are multiple locations throughout the area including, Albany, Fulton, and Montgomery Counties. Over 13,000 meals are provided each summer. The program brings meals to public places where children and families are present in large numbers.

The Backpack program teams with local schools to provide food to students in need. There are over 18 schools who participate in the program, including Cohoes School District. Students are provided backpacks with shelf stable food that kids can prepare on their own. It is approximately 2 days worth of meals. It is

meant to provide food over the weekend for children that do not have access to a kitchen or parents to assist in providing meals. The program provides backpacks for over 350 kids a week and serves 8 counties.

There are workshops for agencies that provide food including, budgeting and food preparation.

Ms. Linter spoke about what the Rotary club can do to assist the Food Bank. The three T's, time, talent, and treasure. They can always use volunteers and the various skills that certain volunteers can provide. Their major fundraiser is the Holiday Hunger Appeal, where they collect donations at Crossgates Mall. The proceeds are needed to supply truck drivers, cooks, 88 full time employees. There are a large number of volunteers with the Food Bank, without the volunteer manpower, the Food Bank would not survive. Some Rotary clubs "Adopt a Program", where a specific agency is identified and supported.

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