



Food for Thought

3518 SW Genesee Street, Seattle, WA 98126

Winter 2004

(206) 932-9023

Three Projects One Community: Transforming Lives

This past weekend witnessed hundreds of our community showing support for the historic Cooper School's transformation. The once abandoned middle school morphed before our eyes from a hopeless structure to a celebrated historic property and future home of permanently affordable artists in residence; as well as an arts performance venue.

Cooper School is but one of three projects that bring together the potentially unlikely partners of the Delridge Development Neighborhood Association and the West Seattle Food Bank. Dedicated to the proposition that some of our neighbors require a 'hand up' rather than just a 'hand out', the collaborative effort named Three Projects One Community, an ambitious \$27 million capital campaign, stands at 91% of its financial goal.

Croft Place was the first project to break ground on Delridge and stands at 50% completion, ready to house 21 large families including the formerly homeless. Cooper is underway with a fantastic launch by diverse stakeholders including community neighbors, artists, the city of Seattle and the State of Washington; not to mention virtually all of the areas foundations.

In September we will launch the third and final project to crown the trifecta. Our permanent West Seattle Food Bank and Resource Center will rise at the corner of 35th and Morgan SW to serve 2,000 families and counting per month. Emergency services will be supplemented with family safety net needs including violence prevention, health, housing and employment referral.

Two years ago these three ambitious projects seemed like a pipe dream even from my inside position as a West



Steve Daschle, Board President of Delridge Neighborhoods Development Association, and Martha Kongsgaard, one of the 3 co-chairs of the three projects - one community campaign, get ready to "bash the wall" at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Historic Cooper Cultural Arts Center.

Photo by Kerry Hughes.

Seattle Food Bank board member. This week with your help we stand on the brink of a dream come true. In the words of Martha Kongsgaard, our campaign co-chair 'it's about food, housing and the arts'. Please take the challenge to bring our collective ambitions home. Visit www.onecommunitycampaign.org and make a pledge for a legacy gift that will enable us to celebrate our future.

Together we will transform lives; not only for those in need but for all of us.

Community Support: The Life of the Food Bank



Dan Blevens from Plymouth Poultry, Brian Weigelt from Plymouth Poultry, Ray Allen of the Seattle Super Sonics, Jeff Litton of Plymouth Poultry and Chris Coman from Plymouth Poultry all delivered 400 turkeys purchased by Ray Allen for the West Seattle Food Bank. They all spent the afternoon unloading turkeys and distributing them to clients.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead's words clearly reflect the spirit of this community. Twenty-four years ago, a group of caring people in West Seattle began volunteering their time to coordinate food collection and distribution. Thus the Junction Community Food Bank was born. Over the years the Food Bank has changed names, grown bigger, and expanded capacity to serve the area. This small group made an impact and that impact continues to increase. Today this organization serves over 500 families every week, but the West Seattle Food Bank has dared to dream that we can have an even greater impact on the lives of the families we serve. The reason we can be so bold: so many individuals in this area know the importance of community support.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT continued on back page.



Food For Thought

The other day a woman I have known for several years told the story of how she first came to the West Seattle Food Bank (WSFB). She was working full time and supporting her young daughter, but the company she worked for went out of business. She was laid off and immediately started seeking employment that would support her and her daughter. After a few months of frantically looking for work while trying to pay rent, pay utilities, and buy food, she ran out of money. Unable to make ends meet, she became desperate. Her young daughter begged her to go to the store for food, and she had to explain to her daughter that she did not have any money to buy food.

Eventually she decided to visit the West Seattle Food Bank. She came home with bags of groceries and told her daughter she had gone to the store. Her daughter was elated! Finally there was food in the house. After a few visits to the food bank, the woman began volunteering while continuing to look for employment. Eventually she was hired part time at the food bank when a position became open. Later she moved on to a position as a director at another food bank. She has now been working in the field for over 16 years and helping others who face the same problems that she has overcome.

This story illustrates the plight of many of the families we serve. On average, families visit WSFB 8 times in a year. Many, many families use this service as a result of a crisis such as a job loss or a serious illness. By bringing together multiple services under one roof, we will ease the burdens on families who are struggling. This is the reason that the Food Bank and our many partners in this community have been working so diligently to provide a new home for this organization and other agencies that can help our clients. When families are in crisis, they need strong support of many different kinds, from food and shelter to assistance with unemployment insurance and job referrals. One organization can not do it alone, but many organizations, collaborating effectively, can provide a strong safety net to help families survive crises and move forward and develop to their full potential. The partnerships developed through the three projects (one community campaign will allow families and individuals in this community a way to meet their basic needs and find ways to thrive.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT continued from front page.

In 2004 the West Seattle Food Bank (WSFB) distributed over 800,000 pounds of food, responding to over 7,625 individuals in the West Seattle area who requested food. None of this would have been possible without the generous donations of time, food, and money that come from West Seattle's giving community. Local grocery stores, coffee shops, and bakeries continue to provide excellent bread, pastries, dairy products, and produce to the people of West Seattle. Various churches, schools, and businesses have organized food drives that continue to be an important source of non-perishable items for the Food Bank. Individuals drop by on a daily basis with donations ranging from one bag to entire trunkloads. The gift's size doesn't matter; donations are always needed and appreciated.

The latter half of 2004 brought some very special donations.

- In August the Stocker Foundation donated \$10,000 for the purchase of food and supplies for our families in need.
- The very end of August brought a surprise donation of \$26,250 by the renowned actor and comedian Robin Williams and his wife Marsha. This donation was the proceeds from three sold-out performances at the Showbox theatre.
- In November Ray Allen of the Seattle Super Sonics donated over 400 turkeys and spent an afternoon at the West Seattle Food Bank, unloading and distributing the turkeys he kindly purchased with Plymouth Poultry. (See photo.) Clients, volunteers and staff were thrilled to meet Ray, and very thankful for the turkeys. Due to his generosity, as well as kind donations from other sources, we were able to distribute turkey to every client during November.
- In December Plymouth Poultry and its employees donated over \$2,500 and 100 turkeys. Nucor Steele and its employees donated over \$2,500 and over 2,300 pounds of food. Jackson and Morgan, PLLC donated \$4,000 to support this community. The Schwab Fund for Charitable Giving; Rainier Investment Management Fund; The Prudential Foundation; and Courtesy Accounting, Software, and Tax Services all donated \$1,000 or more to support neighbors in West Seattle.

To all who have supported this organization, please know that your contribution has helped hungry children in this community, senior citizens deciding between food, medications, utilities, or property taxes, and many others. Thank you!

Wish List

- ◆ Diapers
- ◆ Baby formula
- ◆ Paper & plastic bags
- ◆ Protein items
- ◆ Ensure
- ◆ Pet food
- ◆ Soap & toiletry items
- ◆ Copier paper
- ◆ Printing of quarterly newsletter

Mission Statement

West Seattle Food Bank is committed to eliminating hunger in our area.

We do this by:

1. Securing and distributing quality nutritional food to clients
2. Educating clients about good nutrition
3. Increasing public awareness of hunger in our community
4. Coordinating community services for clients
5. Assuring continuity of services to clients through a convenient, accessible location.

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Staff

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Manager of Operations
Tom Billings
Operations Supervisor

Newsletter

Debby Gardner

Food Bank Hours:

Monday: 9 a.m. -3 p.m.
Tuesday: 9 a.m. -3 p.m.
Wednesday: 9 a.m. -7 p.m.
Thursday: 9 a.m. -3 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m. -3 p.m.
or by appointment