



# THE BIG SCOOP

## Newsletter

## New Neighborhood Pantry in New River

We are excited to share that we are reaching more neighbors experiencing hunger and food insecurity in the North Valley, thanks to our new food sharing partnership with My Crossroads Christian Fellowship in New River. This expanded community pantry is possible because of our amazing volunteers, donors, partners, and leadership at My Crossroads Christian Fellowship. Together, we are making a difference.

“Fuel prices, mobility and lack of reliable transportation makes it difficult, sometimes impossible, for many neighbors to come to the food bank,” Leigh Zydonik, Foothills Food Bank executive director, said. “Our strategic plan is clear – to take the extra effort and go that last mile to deliver food and resources to neighbors in our service area. Partnering with My Crossroads Christian Fellowship Church with an expanded pantry is a positive step in that direction.”

The New River Community Pantry is open every Friday, 11:30am – 1:30pm at My Crossroads Christian Fellowship located at 42425 N. New River Road, New River. No proof of citizenship or income is required.

The pantry joins the Foothills Food Bank’s existing locations in Cave Creek and Black Canyon City in addition to a mobile market and micro pantries in local public buildings.

Thank you to all who support the Foothills Food Bank and Resource Center – you did this!



## LIFE STORIES

### DONALD & LYDIA

Donald and Lydia were living a good life in Montana, but were tired of the long, cold winters and stunted economy. They started dreaming of new opportunities and were soon packing their bags for Arizona. Donald had a strong work ethic and had a job waiting for him in Phoenix before they ever left home. Their future was bright.

Just a few years into their adventure, both were working good jobs and enjoying all that the Valley of the Sun had to offer. But when Lydia was hospitalized for several weeks and unable to return to her job, their story started to change.

Donald doubled down and worked hard to support them both. As the primary care giver for Lydia, and now the sole bread winner, the days were long.

When Donald received a harsh medical diagnosis of his own, he quickly learned that working full time, managing his own health care, and caring for Lydia was too much. Leaving his job was not easy, but he saw it as the only way to heal.

Savings didn’t last long enough, and they soon found themselves behind in rent and their cupboards were bare most days. “I checked the front door every morning for eviction notices,” Donald said.

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*My Crossroads Christian Fellowship Church volunteers, led by Sharon Bykerk (third from left), set up for a New River food sharing event.*



## A Note from Leigh

As a kid, my brother and I were fascinated by the Guinness World Records. We were in awe of the hotdog eating contest winners and the world's longest fingernails. Those records were a lot more fun than the records we're hitting today - heat, gasoline prices, inflation, and at the food bank, record numbers of neighbors who are feeling the squeeze. As of mid-June, we saw a 36 percent increase in client visits over the same period in 2021.

Thankfully, we have a plan and we have you.

Our plan, which we are working every day, is to help all neighbors access food and resources in the community we serve. It's difficult for many people to get to the food bank, so just last month we became partners in a new, permanent community pantry in New River at My Crossroads Church. Nearly 85 people were in line when we opened on our first day.

We are also hosting the community of Black Canyon City in our "Social Café." The café is found inside the Neighborhood Pantry and neighbors are invited to grab a cup of coffee; take care of business on our internet connected computers; play a game of cards or just relax in the air conditioning. Building a community of hope, sharing and support is unfolding every week in the community.

These project, and many more, are possible because people like you continue to come together in extraordinary ways to serve and because of donors whose generosity makes it possible. You inspire us to work toward a better, stronger, healthier community.

Together, we are making a difference.

*Leigh Zydonik*

Executive Director

# LIFE STORIES

## DONALD & LYDIA CONTINUED

He shared the stress and shame that he felt. "I had never asked for help before. I've worked and been self-sufficient my entire life but it came to a point where we had exhausted all options. We were at the end of our rope," he said.

They reached out to a St. Vincent de Paul pantry who provided much needed food and life-changing advice. "They suggested I call the Foothills Food Bank because of their resources and staff who could help us," Donald recalled. "It was the best advice ever."

The Foothills Food Bank & Resource Center staff responded by helping with rent and utility assistance through Maricopa County, as well as provided assistance with AHCCCS and other resources. The food bank resource manager also helped Donald find a job and Lydia started a new job that allowed her to work from home. According to Donald, the weight was lifted, and hope was restored.

"Having the Foothills Food Bank as a partner was a game changer," Donald said. "It was a very humbling experience, but we are so thankful for everything the team did for us. I learned a lot; to appreciate the simple things in life; to never be afraid to ask for help; and always keep the faith," he concluded.

Through the kindness of donors and support of our community, the Foothills Food Bank & Resource Center is proud to continue to assist members of our community as they strive to live a good and healthy life.

## HERE'S THE SCOOP



**North Valley Magazine Bestows Award**

The Foothills Food Bank was recently named Best Nonprofit by *North Valley Magazine*. "We are honored by the designation and are delighted that our volunteers and staff have earned the confidence of the community," Lory Olsson, president, Foothills Food Bank Board of Directors said.

Thank you to our community, and *North Valley Magazine* for the recognition.



**Foothills Focus Names Foothills Food Bank Best in the West**

*Foothills Focus* has named the Foothills Food Bank the Best Nonprofit in the Best of *Foothills Focus* 2022. The "best of" designation is awarded to the entity who received the most votes by the community.

"This is quite an accomplishment," Katie Muller, Times Media Group wrote. "This was very popular this year and the competition was strong!"

Thanks to our amazing volunteers, staff, and donors for propelling us to such a place of distinction.

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE



*These beautiful fish and loaves are actually masterpiece cakes, hand crafted by Deb.*

Deb B. is a Foothills Food Bank volunteer with boundless energy, compassion, and creativity. A relatively new member of the Volunteer Crew, Deb is a powerhouse in the warehouse every Tuesday and an eager grocery rescue relief driver a day or two a week. A surgeon for 30 years, Deb retired in 2021 and began volunteering at the food bank because she wanted to give back to her community.

“God puts you in a place where you’re needed,” Deb said, “and I believe that I’ve found my place.”

Deb credits her parents, who model lives of generosity and benevolence, for her

desire to help others.

“I plan my schedule and travel around my days at the food bank,” she said. “I don’t want to miss a day. I’m working with wonderful people doing work that is inspiring, humbling and such a blessing,” she concluded.

When not at the food bank, Deb finds great joy creating art in her kitchen. A baker and cake decorator for 20 years, she uses her steady hands to sculpt and decorate special event cakes, cookies and cupcakes for family and friends.

She also enjoys spending time with family, friends and her rescue dog, Khyla.

## HERE’S THE SCOOP

CONTINUED



**Eggstra Special Community Support Fluffs our Feathers**

In April, Carefree Coffee Roasters donated \$1000 to the Foothills Food Bank from the sale of homegrown fresh eggs.

Carefree Coffee Roasters’ owners, Maggie and Lars Hess, sell eggs that come from Maggie’s mother’s chickens. Kathy Hunt, Maggie’s mother, engages her grandchildren in the community service project by allowing them to perform many of the chicken chores, including feeding the chickens and collecting the eggs.

All proceeds from the families’ community service project benefit local nonprofits.



**Truckload of Love**

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints came through again! Most recently, they donated 20,000 pounds of pantry goods to the food bank. This is one of the largest single day donations to date. Thanks to local Church members LaWana Mills and Penney Miller who helped with scheduling and logistics. Because of this generous donation, there are many happy families in our community who are filling their cupboards this summer.

Pictured here is LaWana (left to right), Foothills Food Bank Executive Director Leigh Zydonik, Penney and Foothills Food Bank Operations and Donor Relations Manager, Michelle Reyes.



## CHANGING THE WORLD

### Bonnie S.

Bonnie S. has been a valued volunteer at the Foothills Food Bank for more than 15 years.

“It’s such a joy to be able to help others,” she says. “I wanted to put my faith into action, so I started volunteering at the food bank with my church group, and now 15 years later I’m still here.

**“There is no better exercise for your heart than reaching down and helping to lift someone up.” - John Holmes**

“We have the greatest group of volunteers, neighbors and leaders and I look forward to helping every week,” Bonnie concluded.

Bonnie’s smile and positive attitude is always a welcome sight. “We are fortunate to have Bonnie on our team,” Leigh Zydonick, executive director, said. “Her boundless energy, generous heart and devotion to our purpose is appreciated more than words can express.”

Bonnie and her husband have one adult daughter. They enjoy spending time together as a family and volunteering throughout the community.



## OUR MISSION

The Foothills Food Bank and Resource Center provides food, referral information and financial assistance to individuals and families in need within our service area.

### Cave Creek

6038 E. Hidden Valley Drive  
Cave Creek, AZ 85331  
(480) 488-1145

### Senior Market Day

Monday: 9am - Noon

### Food sharing

Tues., Wed., Fri.: 9am - Noon  
Thursday: 5:30pm - 7:00pm

### Donation drop off hours

Monday - Friday: 8am - 2pm

### Black Canyon City

34550 S. Black Canyon Hwy  
Black Canyon City, AZ 85324  
(623) 374-9441

### Food sharing

Tuesday & Thursday: 7:30am - 10am  
Wednesday: 9am - 11am

### Resource Day & Social Cafe

Monday: 10am - Noon

### New River Community Pantry

42425 N. New River Rd  
Phoenix, AZ 85086  
(623) 465-9461

### Food sharing

Friday's: 11:30am - 1:30pm

### Email:

Info@foothillsfoodbank.com  
(Your email will be redirected to the appropriate department.)

[foothillsfoodbank.com](http://foothillsfoodbank.com)

[f /foothillsfoodbank](https://www.facebook.com/foothillsfoodbank)

[/foothillsfoodbank](https://www.instagram.com/foothillsfoodbank)

### Leadership Team:

Leigh Zydonik, Executive Director  
Lou Argyros, Fleet & Facilities Manager  
Lynn Ballou, Data Analyst  
Robin Kilbane, Client & Resource Mgr.  
Tom Kilwein, Logistics Coordinator  
Jim Hemenway, Driver & Warehouse Assoc  
Julie Writz, Scheduler  
Michelle Reyes, Operations Manager/  
Donor Relations

### Black Canyon City

Nancy Wiederhold, Warehouse Associate

### New River

Sharon Bykerk, Warehouse Associate

## ADVOCATE FOR HOPE

Foothills Food Bank and Resource Center has a small but mighty staff who come to work with one purpose - to end hunger in our community. Operations Manager Michelle Reyes, the longest employed food bank staffer, helps lead the charge with compassion.

Michelle keeps the warehouse running like a well-oiled machine by managing logistics, inventory analysis, and distribution. She also oversees volunteer training in the warehouse, supports food drive efforts and maintains grocery rescue partnerships. It's a full plate, but Michelle takes in all in stride.



**"Do what you love, and you'll never work another day in your life."** - Mark Twain

"I look forward to coming to work every day," she said. "I love what I do, and want to make a difference. I want every volunteer, neighbor, and partner who I meet to feel welcome, appreciated and loved."

"Michelle's selfless commitment to our purpose is unflappable," Leigh Zydonik, executive director, said. "Everyone who is fortunate enough to cross paths with Michelle most certainly feels valued and treasured," she concluded.

A mother of three adult children, Michelle loves to read and spend time with her family and friends.



## Empty Bowls, Big heART's

Friday, October 14, 2022

In partnership with Sonoran Arts League

### 2022 Charitable Donation Form

Your gift makes a huge difference in the lives of children, families, single people, veterans, and seniors experiencing food insecurity and financial difficulties. Your donation stays in our community and provides support to our neighbors.

**Foothills Food Bank is a 501(c)3 non-profit. Your donation is 100% tax deductible and may qualify for the**

**Arizona Charitable Tax Credit. Our Charitable Tax Credit ID is 20514.**

**You may also donate online at [foothillsfoodbank.com/donate](http://foothillsfoodbank.com/donate)**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Donated \_\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

(Please make check payable to **Foothills Food Bank**.)

Or

Please charge my VISA \_\_\_\_\_ MC \_\_\_\_\_ Discover \_\_\_\_\_ American Express \_\_\_\_\_

Card number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code (3 digits on back of card) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail this form to: Foothills Food Bank, 6038 E. Hidden Valley E. Hidden Valley Drive, Cave Creek, AZ 85331**