

Surplus food provides meals

By Stephanie Sisson
Oregon Daily Emerald

Five nights a week, a van from Food For Lane County picks up about 1,000 pounds of food from more than 20 Eugene sites.

The program, called Food Rescue Express, specializes in prepared and perishable foods from restaurants and other food services. The food collected provides meals on a regular basis for 35,000 people in Lane County.

"We're doing two wonderful things: We're stopping hunger, and we're ending waste," said Ellen Knepper, assistant director for Food For Lane County. "Hunger and waste are totally incompatible."

The program provides food for 65 nonprofit agencies, all of which serve Lane County residents. The agencies include shelters, soup kitchens, foster care programs, halfway houses and services that provide emergency food boxes.

"The Food Rescue program is a response to a growing need and a recognition of the potential for waste in the prepared foods industry," Knepper said. "What we recover is surplus food — food that has been cooked, but not served."

After the food is collected, it is transported to Kelly/da Vinci Middle School. Volunteers at the school package the food into family-size units for three to four people. The food is then taken to the Food For Lane County warehouse, frozen, and then distributed.

Knepper said eight volunteers are needed for the collecting and packaging process. Food is collected Tuesday through Saturday, and is packaged from 7 to 11 p.m. "We really put the word par-



ANDY TULLIS for the Emerald
Dan Norton arrives to pick up the University's excess food that Food For Lane County will freeze and help distribute.

ty back into work party," Knepper said. "We have a good time. There is such a sense of accomplishment to start out at ground zero, and average 1,000 pounds a night. ... You work hard for four hours, and you can really see what you've done."

Since its creation 10 months ago, Food Rescue Express has collected 207,240 pounds of food.

"We anticipated the first year would be a start-up year, and we'd make 100,000 pounds," Knepper said. "Well, as you can see, in less than a year we're over 200,000 pounds, and probably in the coming year we have the potential to go up to 300,000."

Four of the collection sites are part of the University: Carson Hall, Hamilton Hall, University

Inn and the Casanova Center.

Knepper said the vegetarian food collected from the University sites fills a special need.

"Many clients look for vegetarian food and have a difficult time finding it," she said. "It's opened up whole new areas of service."

Collecting food from restaurants and redistributing is not only legal, but is encouraged. Knepper said a law passed in 1989 called the Good Samaritan Act alleviates the food donor specifically from liability as long as the donation was made in good faith.

To volunteer or to find out more about Food For Lane County, call 343-2822.

Exhibit documents domestic violence

By Meg Dedolph
Oregon Daily Emerald

More than 500 battered women and children fled their homes in Lane County last year, according to statistics from Womenspace. This month, some are getting a chance to tell their stories through drawings and collages displayed at the Lane County Courthouse.

The exhibit is part of the "We Will Be Safe" campaign observing Domestic Violence Awareness Month, which runs through October.

Shaped like a large house, the exhibit displays

not only art from children and mothers, but photographs of the children and information on domestic violence.

The children's drawings and paintings, done in Womenspace's children's program, are accompanied by explanations such as the one beneath a painting of a house.

"The seven-year-old paints a heart hovering over the roof," the accompanying card reads. "She wishes for a home where the love is inside the

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