

Registration Deadline Nears for Holiday Grocery Boxes at Vernonia Cares

Vernonia Cares Food Bank (VCFB) is offering Christmas holiday grocery boxes to low income households within the Vernonia community. Registration opened November 12 and will close Thursday, December 12, 2013. The boxes will be available for pick up Dec. 20 to pre-registered households. They are projected to contain the basic groceries for a Christmas meal. "Our target recipients are households which fall within the USDA eligibility guidelines, said Vernonia Cares Director Sandy Welch. "That is \$1,771 gross income per month for single person households, plus \$620 per month for each additional person in the households. However, anyone who is a Vernonia resident and does not have the groceries for a Christmas meal is eligible to apply for this special food box."

Applications may be obtained from Vernonia Cares Food Bank, which is open Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. VCFB is located within the American Legion Hall at 627

Adams Avenue. If recipients are unable to come by the food bank, a form may be requested by calling the food bank at 503-429-1414 and leave clear mailing information. All applications must be received by December 12. Again, only pre-registered households will be eligible.

"At this point, we are planning to provide this service to about 200 local households and are pleased with the funds arriving to support it. The project costs about \$5,500 so all contributions are greatly appreciated," Welch emphasized. "This project has been strongly supported by this community in the past and I'm looking forward to that same support this year. I'm so glad we are able to brighten people's Christmas through these groceries. What's Christmas without, at the least, a Christmas meal together?" asks Welch.

"Turkeys are still available at stores and, if brought to the food bank between now and Dec 20, will be stored frozen and then distributed near Christmas," states Vernonia Cares

President Rosie McCoy. There are also drop sites at Wauna Credit Union, US Bank, Grace Family Fellowship Church, True Value, both the Middle School and the High School leadership classes, TaBetha Groshong's home, and the Post Office for the non-perishable groceries. "Each item donated is one less we must buy," says McCoy.

Vernonia Sentry, a strong supporter of VCFB, makes it simple to donate within their store. Through check-stand giving, patrons can designate \$30 which will be used to buy the groceries. Individuals, businesses and civic organizations interested in supporting this worthwhile cause, whether through food or funds, may contribute directly at the food bank site on Tuesday or Thursday, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Checks may be mailed to Vernonia Cares Food Bank, PO Box 126, Vernonia, OR 97064. Receipts for these tax deductible donations will be sent upon request.

OHS Gets Highest Ranking from National Group

The nation's top charity watchdog has awarded Oregon Humane Society (OHS) its highest possible ranking for the sixth consecutive year, an honor accorded to only 3% of the nation's nonprofits. Charity Navigator's coveted 4-Star rating is given to nonprofits that demonstrate the highest level of fiscal management and a commitment to accountability and transparency.

"This 'exceptional' designation from Charity Navigator differentiates OHS from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worthy of their trust," said Ken Berger, President of Charity Navigator, the nation's leading independent charity watchdog. Charity Navigator annually evaluates 6,000 of the nation's largest charities, yet only 3% have maintained a 4-Star rating for six consecutive years.

"We know people can pick and choose the charities they want to support, which is why we work hard every year to earn the public's trust," said Sharon Harmon, OHS Executive Director. "We rely entirely on donations and hope animal lovers will support us during the holiday giving season." The top rating for OHS was based, in part, on Charity Navigator's determination

that 86% of every dollar spent by OHS goes to programs helping animals.

To learn about OHS services, visit www.oregonhumane.org

OHS is not affiliated with any national animal organization (such as the Humane Society of the United States or the ASPCA) and receives no tax dollars to operate the Northwest's

oldest and largest humane society. OHS found homes for more than 11,000 pets last year; investigated 1,100 animal cruelty complaints and brought humane education programs to more than 16,000 Oregon youths. OHS operates a state-of-the-art animal shelter and medical center at 1067 NE Columbia Blvd. in Portland.

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reflecting the spirit of our community

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