

Vernonians Care

Vernonians – individuals, businesses and civic groups - once again showed their concern for others during this holiday season by generously donating to the annual Vernonia Cares Holiday Food Box drive. Cares continued its tradition of providing clients with the ingredients for a complete holiday meal. On December 19 fifteen volunteers assembled the two hundred boxes; Vernonia Cares Food Bank gave 180 holiday food boxes to the community on December 20. Those boxes provided over 600 people with the groceries for their Christmas meal, all thanks to Vernonia's community support of this special project.

This year's campaign was augmented by a competition between local businesses and school groups. Pam Weller, Cares board member and manager of the Vernonia and Clatskanie branches of Wauna Federal Credit Union, started the special drive to gather components of the holiday box by challenging her staff and credit union members to donate mandarin oranges and hot cocoa packets. The Vernonia Post Office responded by collecting cranberry sauce; True Value Hardware gathered gelatin and US Bank's Vernonia Branch sought boxed stuffing and coffee. Vernonia Middle School collected pudding mix and the Leadership Class red gelatin. In addition Grace Family

Fellowship, the Groshong Family, Lynn Shaw's second grade class, Boy Scout Troops 201 and 860, Vernonia Community Preschool and Tobie Finzel also helped gather donations. All the extra donations reduced Vernonia Cares' need to purchase these items.

The campaign garnered an unexpected bounty of food box items:
 Stuffing – 88 boxes
 Cocoa mix – 61 boxes containing nearly 600 individual servings
 Cranberries – 53 cans
 Mandarin oranges – 122 cans
 Pudding – 170 boxes
 Gelatin – 204 boxes
 Coffee – enough to provide 1 cup of ground coffee for each holiday box

Amalgamated Sugar of Portland once again donated a sufficient quantity of five pound bags of white sugar and two pound packages of brown sugar to sweeten each holiday box. Cash donations from individuals, and groups and businesses enabled the purchase of turkeys and other canned goods. Holiday Sponsors this year were: Sentry (check stand giving), Vernonia Lions Club, Natal Grange, Jake Wolfe and

Trucking, Banks Pharmacy, Vernonia Muzzle Loaders, Vernonia Realty, Vernonia American Legion Post 119, R & R Motors, Bridge Street Mini Mart, Vernonia Ridge Riders, Holce Logging, Vernonia PEO, Fall Creek Woodworking, Hancock Forest Management, Vernonia Volunteer Fire Association, and Meyer Auto Body.

A special thanks goes out to Casey and Josette Mitchell and family for driving to Portland to pick up the sugar and to Winco to pick up the turkeys.

Vernonia Cares is deeply grateful to all who contributed to this community endeavor.



Clockwise: Students at the Vernonia Community Preschool delivered food they gathered. Isabel and Jim Klipfeld received their turkey for their holiday food box from Cares volunteer Tobie Finzel. Members of Boy Scout Troop 860 collected and delivered food donations. Cares Director Sandy Welch accepted a \$500 donation from Toni Barton representing Bridge Street Mini Mart. Boy Scout Troop 201 also collected food donations.



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