



Newsletter

March 2023

Lakes Area United Way

We Are Seeking Vision Council Members! [Click here to register!](#)



Vision Council is a group of community members who come together to review applications and conduct interviews for agencies who have requested United Way funding for specific community-based programs. Through this process, Vision Council members come to understand community needs, learn about the impact that applicant agencies are making in the community, and make recommendations for how United Way funds should be utilized and invested to meet the needs of the Lakes Area. Recommendations for funding are brought to the United Way Board of Directors who, based on the Vision Council's suggestions, approve funding for next year.

**Community needs,
met by community dollars,
determined by community members.
THAT'S LIVING UNITED.**

What to expect:

- Vision Council Training will be an in-person training at 5:30 Tuesday, March 21, at the Lakes Area United Way office which is located in the lower level of Bremer Bank, 321 S. 7th Street, Brainerd.
- Upon completing orientation, Vision Council Members will select a day to complete program interviews and site visits the week of March 27th. Site visits will be grouped by program focus and geographic service area in Crow Wing, Cass, and Aitkin Counties.
- Depending on the selected day, Vision Council Members will review applications of 4-6 local programs applying for Partner Program funding, and conduct site visits* of those programs on the selected Vision Council Date. Following site visits, Vision Council Members score programs based on community need, program impact, and agency financial accountability. Site visits, scoring, and final funding recommendations will be facilitated by Vision Council Captains, who will then present final recommendations to the Lakes Area United Way Board of Directors.

*Site Visits will take place in-person in 2023 as appropriate. We understand not all programs may be able to facilitate in-person visits due to client privacy concerns, COVID-19 precautions, or because the nature of their services may be remote or in-home. In such instances, site visits may be replaced by in-person or remote interviews. Further, Vision Council Members will be required to abide by the masking and other applicable health guidelines of the programs they are visiting for the safety and respect of all involved.



**IN HONOR OF DR. SEUSS' BIRTHDAY,
MARCH IS DESIGNATED AS
NATIONAL READING MONTH -
A MONTH TO MOTIVATE AMERICANS
OF ALL AGES TO READ EVERY DAY!**

**Dolly Parton's
IMAGINATION
LIBRARY**

Enroll your child & give them
the gift of reading...**FREE!**

MARCH IS NATIONAL READING MONTH!

BRainerd's BIGGEST TRADESHOW

**BRainerd LAKES
HOME SHOW
& EXPO**

MARCH 24-25, 2023
ESSENTIA HEALTH SPORTS CENTER, BRAINERD

FRIDAY 12PM-7PM | SATURDAY 9AM-5PM

**Come and see us at the
Brainerd Lakes
Home Show & Expo!**

Friday, March 24 & Saturday, March 25

Keys *for* Community

An evening of music, comedy & improv

Sponsorships and Tickets



Grand Sponsor \$2,000

- VIP Stage-side table for 8
- Additional sponsorship recognition & benefits



Key Sponsor \$1,000

- Table for 8 near the stage
- Additional sponsorship recognition & benefits



Ensemble Table \$600

- Reserved seating for 8



Solo Ticket \$60

- One reserved seat

*A Selection of Hearty Appetizers
Included with all Tickets!*

featuring

DEUCES WILD
DUELING PIANOS

Thursday, May 11

6pm Social Hour

sponsored by Pequot Manufacturing

7:30pm Deuces Wild Dueling Pianos
at The Woods Gather on 3 Event Center



Lakes Area United Way

Key Sponsors:

Bremer Bank | Magnum Research
CLA (CliftonLarsonAllen)

For more information or to order tickets
use the QR code or visit unitedwaynow.org



Fighting Food Insecurity

Every March, Lakes Area Food Shelf participates in a state-wide, MN FoodShare Campaign sponsored by the Minneapolis Council of Churches. The Campaign runs between February 27 and April 9. It's the largest fundraising and food raising effort in 2023, and we invite you to participate.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits are expected to decrease for millions of recipients as early as March due to cuts in the 2023 Omnibus spending bill. This is expected to increase the number of people needing assistance with food security.

On the following pages we highlight some of our partner programs that work to reduce food insecurities in our local communities.



POP-UP PANTRY

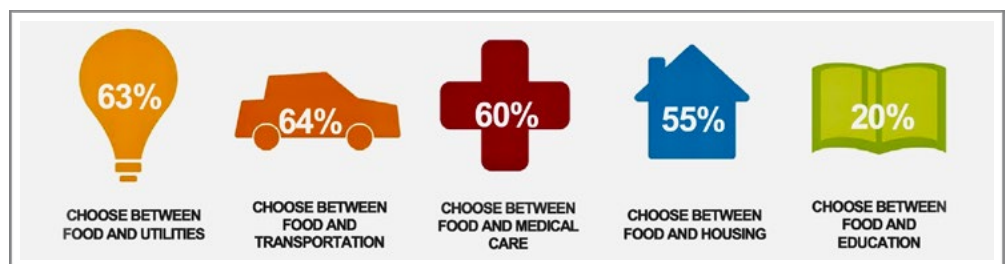
The Lakes Area United Way, together with many community volunteers, support Second Harvest North Central Food Bank to distribute food to families in need during monthly Pop-Up Pantry events at the West Parking Lot at Central Lakes College. Each month about 200 households receive food.

For a complete list of area Food Shelves and Pop-Up Pantry events visit secondharvestncfb.com/get-help/find-food/



The following statistics are from the Lakes Area Food Shelf Year-End Newsletter:

Do I Eat, Or...



- 10% of our friends and neighbors aren't getting enough to eat. Many of them are children.
- In 2023, USDA predicts a 10% increase in hunger worldwide due to crop failures and war.
- In 2022 prices for meats, poultry, fish and eggs rose 12.5%

Partner Program Highlight



Ending Hunger. Enriching Lives.

From July to December of 2022, 194,712 meals were packaged and distributed to local food shelves, shelters, community programs, etc. for FREE!

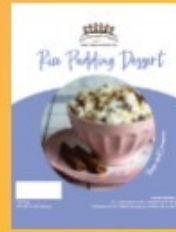
Volunteer with us in Nisswa! Pack Meals and Have Fun! Give 90 minutes of your time to do good for others!

outreachprogrambla.org



The Outreach Program of Brainerd Lakes

With the help of volunteers, we package 10 different meals



Partner Program Highlight

CLC FOOD PANTRY



**EAT WELL.
STUDY WELL.**

An average of 400 students per week use the services at the CLC Food Pantry.

In addition, much of the rescued food is shared with the Crow Wing County Food Shelf Coalition and is spread to all corners of the county to feed our neighbors.

www.clcmn.edu/clc-food-pantry



Flavors OF OUR Community

The Lakes Area United Way, in partnership with Lakes Area Food Shelf and CLC Food Pantry, is proud to announce a new initiative to fill local food shelves with culturally specific food and flavors. When these items are supplemented with fresh foods, they will create nutritious and meaningful meals. The next time you are walking through the grocery store consider purchasing these items and create a Pantry Pack to donate for your neighbors in need.

The following have been identified as a need in our community:



LATINX STAPLES

Dried Pantry Pack:

- 1 (16 oz bag) Dry Beans (black, red or pinto)
 - 1 (28 oz bag) White Rice
 - 1 (4.4 lb bag) Maseca Flour
- Place all items in a 2-gallon Ziploc bag*

Canned Pantry Pack:

- 1 (15 oz can) Corn, whole kernel
 - 1 (14.5 oz can) Diced Tomatoes
 - 1 (12 oz can) Jalapeño
 - 1 (16 oz can) Refried Beans
 - 1 (12 oz can) Tomato Paste
- Place all items in a 1-gallon Ziploc bag*

Spices Pantry Pack:

- 1 (2.5 oz) Cinnamon
 - 1 (0.6 oz) Cumin
 - 1 (2.5 oz) Chili Powder
 - 1 (3 oz) Garlic Powder
 - 1 (8 oz) Goya Seasoning
- Place all items in a 1-gallon Ziploc bag*

EAST AFRICAN

Staples Pantry Pack:

- 1 (16 oz bag) Dried Lentils
 - 1 (16 oz bag) Garbanzo Beans
 - 1 (16 oz bag) Red Kidney Beans
 - 1 (32 oz bag) Basmati Rice
 - 1 (10 oz bag) Dates
 - 1 (0.7 oz) Curry Powder
- Place all items in a 2-gallon Ziploc bag*

Continued on the next page



Flavors OF OUR Community

INDIGENOUS*

Staples Pantry Pack:

- 1 (24 oz) Corn Meal (whole grain, stone ground)
- 1 (6 oz) Dried Cranberries
- 1 (32 oz) Vegetable Broth
- 1 (16 oz) Sunflower Oil

Place all items in a 2-gallon Ziploc bag

** Foods in their most natural, whole form are of utmost importance in the Indigenous culture. When purchasing items for this pack, please do your best to select organic items (if possible) without additives (check ingredient list).*

INDIGENOUS* INDIVIDUAL ITEMS:

Native produced food items are often more difficult and more costly to access, so we are accepting the following items individually (not as a pack):

- Wild Rice (any size bag)
- Chokecherry Jam (any size jar)
- Pure Maple Syrup (any size bottle)

*** MUST be native harvested / produced (will be listed on label).**

**Donations may
dropped off now
thru April 7th at
these locations:**

- **CLC Food Pantry**
501 W College Dr, Brainerd
- **Bremer Bank - Brainerd**
321 S 7th St, Brainerd
- **Lakes Area Food Shelf**
29316 Patriot Ave, Pequot Lakes





For more information, visit:
[MyFreeTaxes.com](https://www.MyFreeTaxes.com)

File your taxes for free.

Get the assistance you need. Seriously.

MyFreeTaxes is the only free, national, online tax filing program offered by a nonprofit, because United Way fights for the financial stability of every person in every community. United Way is committed to ensuring that people can easily and accurately file their taxes for free and receive the refunds they deserve.

- MyFreeTaxes is mobile optimized so anyone can access MyFreeTaxes from their computer, tablet or smart phone.
- Most filers complete their taxes in less than an hour.
- MyFreeTaxes is completely free for federal and state returns.

Over 1.3 million people nationwide have used MyFreeTaxes, bringing over \$1.9 billion in refunds back to our local communities.

File your returns for free.

Your federal and unlimited state returns are all free.

Get assistance when you need it.

The MyFreeTaxes Helpline is staffed by IRS-certified 211 call specialists who are available to answer questions and help filers complete their return accurately.

Receive your maximum refund.

Our tax filing software guarantees 100% accurate returns, maximum refund, and top of the line security.





Lakes Area United Way

Partner Programs

We are proud to highlight our 2022-2023 partner programs which were selected by our Vision Council for the impact they have on addressing community needs! Funds raised throughout the 2022-2023 fiscal year support their work, in addition to our own Lakes Area United Way programs like Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library and GetConnected.

EDUCATION

helping people achieve their potential



Youth Mentoring



LifeTalks



Restorative Group Conferences

HEALTH

building accessibility to affordable and quality care



School-Based Dental Care



Participant Sponsorships



Family Home Visiting



Support Groups



Crisis Line And Referral Service



Community Advocacy



Alex and Brandon Child Safety Center

FINANCIAL STABILITY

promoting stability and independence



Emergency Services/ Pathways to Hope



Warming Shelter



Youth Build



Outreach Program



Youth Pack



Food Rescue



Food Distribution