

Food insecurity in Green County

Loyall speaks to Greensburg Rotary Club

From page 1A

The number of people in Green County who are food insecure is staggering. In the statistics from FAKH, almost one in five people in Green County do not have access to enough nutritious food for an active, healthy lifestyle.

That means about 2,200 people in Green County struggle with affording food that allows them to live healthy lives. Most of us have

seen the sticker shock when we go to the grocery store, especially the price of nutritious food which seems to be much more expensive than a lot of junk food that people buy just so they have something to eat.

Green County's food insecurity rate is higher than the average in Kentucky which is at about 17%. The average across the country stands at about 14% of people who are food insecure.

The numbers vary

from month to month as medical emergencies, unexpected vehicle expenses and job issues affect the rate.

But the really sad part is that food insecurity affects a higher percentage of children than adults in Green County. About 450 children in Green County, according to hunger stats, face food insecurity on a daily basis.

In addition to the Summer Feeding Program, there are several ways that people may fight the hunger needs in Green County. The Green County Senior Center is open Monday through Friday and serves meals for folks who are age 60 and older.

"Besides providing good, hot meals for people, we also give them opportunities to gather," said Center Director Cathy Milby. "This means they get to stay at home longer because they can congregate and participate in various activities."

Milby said that the center usually serves anywhere from 25-35 people each day, Monday through Friday, but they can add numbers each day to the people they are serving.

"We open at 7:00 a.m. and people usually start coming in not long after that," Milby said. "Usually, the people leave after lunch, but we are open until 3:00 o'clock and sometimes people stay around and play games after they eat," Milby said.

She also added that while it is suggested that people donate on the days they eat, it certainly does not mean that they must do that.

"We don't ask for money," Milby said.

Another source is the Farmers Market on Green River that provides Green County students with free Kids Bucks that allows the students to shop for foods they want to eat from the vendors. The Kids Bucks are made possible with donations from various clubs, organizations and individuals. The market is open now each Thursday from 3:00-5:30 p.m. at the Cattlemen's Pavilion, located at 2385 Campbellsville Road.

The Green County Food Pantry serves about 300 families each month with USDA foods received from FAKH, and foods that have been donated and/or purchased by the food pantry. The food pantry is open each Thursday from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

Additionally, the food pantry receives "Senior boxes" each month that are specifically for senior citizens and are income restricted but many people in Green County will qualify for the boxes as well as the USDA foods as income guidelines have risen recently.

"A single person with an income of \$1,995.00 per month may receive a senior box," said Linda Judd, Green County Food Pantry Director. "The income for the USDA foods is \$2,461.00 for a single person."

Income restrictions go up accordingly as

the family size increases.

"I wish more people would check with us," Judd said. "I hate to think that there's a family in Green County who doesn't realize that they qualify to come to the food pantry."

Judd, and her crew of volunteers at the food pantry, know that they depend on the generosity of many people to offer their services each Thursday.

"I believe the food pantry is vital to the county," Judd said, "and our food pantry requires people giving to it in order to help people."

Judd mentions several ways that people can help. She said that when they have a fundraiser, it would be beneficial to just help spread the word about it.

"Right now, we have a fundraiser going on with Tidal Wave in Campbellsville," she said. "People can purchase car wash certificates that are normally \$30.00 for just \$10.00 and with Father's Day coming up, that would be a great gift."

There are other ways that people help. Some school clubs and organizations have food drives at particular times of the year. Some churches include the Green County Food Pantry in their budget each year. There are individuals in the county who give from time to time. Checks may be mailed to Green County Food Pantry, P. O.



Photo by Clevis Jeffries

Green County 4-H Youth Development Extension Agent Sue Ann Loyall was the guest speaker at the Greensburg Rotary Club Tuesday, May 12. She delivered a PowerPoint presentation about 4-H, including the various local 4-H clubs, projects and activities, special interest programs, summer camp, and community involvement.



Volunteers fill the carts that are being prepared for distribution at the Green County Food Pantry. Food insecurity is a problem for about 2,200 people in Green County. While the food pantry serves about 300 families every month, many more people qualify for the service.



Joey Bush, a volunteer at the Green County Food Pantry, sorts cases of food to be distributed to Green County residents.



According to Linda Judd, most families receive a grocery bag of frozen foods when they visit the Green County Food Pantry.



Volunteers are needed each week to double bag the sacks that have been donated. Linda Judd, the food pantry director, said that they are always in need of grocery bags.

Photos by Dale Curry

Box 124, Greensburg, KY. Still others, provide plastic bags to the food pantry to be used for distributing the food.

Even though Judd says that currently she has a good number of volunteers to work on Thursdays, there is always a need for people who can work from time to time when the regular volunteer is out. People who are interested in that are encouraged to call the food pantry at 270-405-3247 and leave contact information. Other sources to help alleviate food insecurity include the Blessing Boxes that a few churches have in their parking lots. Some churches in the county have very small food pantries to help with emergencies. No one wants anyone else in Green County to be hungry, but many of us know people who struggle with putting food on the table. Make sure they know about all the resources that are available.

Cruising the Square GREENSBURG, KY



Cruise the Square was scheduled for the second Saturday of the month April through October But June's Cruise has been moved to 5 pm ct June 20 since the second Saturday of June is during the Green County Fair



All vehicles and bikes welcome Vintage vehicles and new models



Food Trucks - Raffles and Giveaways - Merchandise



(Photos from Cruise-In held on Saturday, May 9th)

For more information contact: (270) 405-4144