

¿Que Pasa?

Pajaro Valley Loaves & Fishes Newsletter

Fall 2006

Letter from the (New) Director

A life-long Watsonville resident, I grew up in the St. Patrick's Parish and vividly recall packing and distributing holiday food boxes at Loaves and Fishes as an elementary school student. While serving as an AmeriCorps volunteer at Second Harvest Food Bank in 2005-06, I reconnected with Loaves and Fishes. I was impressed by the warm, welcoming atmosphere and the commitment to compassionate service among the staff and volunteers.

With Phil Fisher's departure this summer, I was very pleased to accept the opportunity to serve my hometown community as the director of Loaves and Fishes. I am privileged to work with Maria, our kitchen manager/cook, Eiko, our pantry manager, and our Board of Directors. They each bring remarkable energy, talents, and dedication to our work.

While maintaining a primary focus on our kitchen and pantry programs, my goal as director is to enhance our programs to more completely fulfill our stated mission "to assist people in the Pajaro Valley with nutritious food, education, and referrals in cooperation with other agencies." I am drawing on my graduate studies and my experience in community education to develop nutrition education programs for our clients. I am also working to enhance our ability to provide our clients with referrals to other needed programs and services.

I have already had the opportunity to meet and get to know many of our clients, volunteers, and supporters, and look forward to meeting many more of the members of this remarkable Loaves and Fishes community in the coming months. I thank you for your support and invite your continued partnership in our hunger relief efforts. Together, we are making a difference in the lives of the hungry people of the Pajaro Valley.

Brooke Johnson

Thank you, Bob! Muchas Gracias, Roberto!

We extend a special thank you to our Board President Bob Montague for serving as interim director for the month of June. Bob, your dedication and level of service to Loaves and Fishes are truly inspiring!



Brooke Johnson & Eiko Nishihara

Reaching Out to Our Community

Director Brooke Johnson and Pantry Manager Eiko Nishihara staffed a table at the Health and Social Services Fair held at the Watsonville Plaza on July 21, providing hundreds of community members with information on the services available at Loaves and Fishes.

Empty Bowls, Full Bellies

Join us for the third annual Empty Bowls – An Artful Dinner to Fight Hunger event, Saturday, October 21st at Pajaro Dunes. This festive event brings together the local art community, Loaves and Fishes, and our supporters in our shared commitment to hunger relief in the Pajaro Valley. The evening will include a simple yet elegant meal featuring savory soups prepared by our cook Maria Gonzalez, a spirited live auction, and good company. Each guest will select a souvenir ceramic bowl created by a local artist as an expression of his/her commitment to the fight against hunger in our community. Many other fine items will also be available for purchase through the auction and raffle. This popular event sold-out the two previous years, so purchase your tickets now! The ticket price is \$50 per person. To purchase tickets, send your check to Empty Bowls 150 Second Street Watsonville CA 95076. For more information, call 831-722-4144.



Loaves and Fishes, now in our seventeenth year of service, is working to build a sustainable organization with expanded community involvement and a broader base of financial support. Your support of our annual fundraiser enables us to feed and serve those in need throughout the year.

Board of Directors adds New Member

This July, we were fortunate to add a sixth member to our Board of Directors, **Dave DeBoer**. Dave brings to the Board expertise in finance, marketing, and management from his career in the railroad and intermodal transportation industry, as well as volunteer experience as a produce dock manager at Second Harvest Food Bank. At the Food Bank, Dave met our volunteers and staff and was impressed with the quality of our services. He joined the Board to help strengthen the business side of our organization and assumed the office of Board Treasurer in September.

Dave joins a talented and dedicated Board of Directors, full of tremendous energy and diverse professional experience: President **Bob Montague**, retired farmer, banker, and appraiser and long-time Loaves and Fishes volunteer; Secretary **Liz Phair**, caterer and long-time community volunteer;

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Acknowledgment

This issue of *Que Pasa* was funded in part by a generous donation from an anonymous donor.

We thank you for your support!!

Willy Elliott-McCrea, Executive Director of Second Harvest Food Bank; **Corrine Flanagan**, registered nurse; and Janet Mahoney, Director of H R Staffing and Planning for Driscolls.

Do you know someone who would be an asset to our Board of Directors? We are particularly interested in Board members who are well-connected within the Pajaro Valley community; are representative of the Latino community; and/or can offer legal, agribusiness, or fundraising expertise. Contact us for an application or more information at 831-722-4144/loavesandfishes@cruzio.com.

Volunteer Spotlight

Teresa Herrera



(far right) with her children Marta & Francisco, Brooke Johnson and Eiko Nishihara in the Loaves & Fishes pantry.

Many volunteers contribute their energy, time, and talents to our pantry and lunch programs, enabling us to fulfill our mission to feed and serve those in need. Loaves and Fishes is so fortunate to have a few very dedicated community volunteers who join us in our hunger relief efforts five days a

week. Teresa Herrera is one of our most dedicated volunteers. Says Eiko Nishihara, pantry manager, “Teresa comes everyday, and is always prompt. She helps me in the pantry, talking to clients, preparing the pantry bags, and stocking the pantry.” Teresa also volunteers at Second Harvest’s “Food for Children” distribution at Loaves and Fishes. We appreciate her hard work, positive attitude, and warm smile.

Wish List

- New tires for our truck.
- Funds for Building maintenance painting and small repairs

Volunteer Wish List

Would you like to get actively involved in the fight against hunger? Do you have resources that you could contribute to Loaves and Fishes?

We need:

- Kitchen helpers
- Head kitchen meal planner, preferably with experience, to work in the kitchen this winter during Maria’s maternity leave
- Handyman (haul food, stock pantry, grounds maintenance, and facility repairs.)

Please let us know if you can help; we appreciate whatever level of support you can offer. Call us at 831-722-4144, or send your donation to us at 150 Second Street, Watsonville CA 95076. Thank you!

Help feed, support, and serve our community!

Three siblings patiently wait for lunch at Loaves and Fishes, on a summer afternoon.

Join us in the fight against hunger. Every \$1 donated provides 1.3 meals for the hungry people of the Pajaro Valley. Please consider increasing the amount of your donation, if you can. An additional \$5 per month will provide 46 more meals throughout the year to those in need. We have enclosed a donation envelope for your convenience.

Thank you for your support.



YES! I want to join Loaves and Fishes in the fight against hunger in Pajaro Valley, with a donation of:

- \$15 \$25 \$35 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____

Do you know someone who would like to get this newsletter? Add them to our mailing list here.

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