



Loaves & Fishes

“Helping Neighbors In Crisis Since 1996”

Newsletter May 2016

Immediately after the devastating May 10, 2015 tornado Van Community Ministries expanded its focus from assistance to low-income residents to include those affected by the storm.



We are grateful that we successfully met the challenge, but must acknowledge that it came at a cost.

At the same time generous friends from throughout the US donated for disaster recovery local giving for our general fund dropped. VCM expenses increased as we expanded our days of operation from 4 per month to 5-6 per week.



We received, stored, and distributed:

- more than \$10,000 in gift certificates
- 230,000 pounds of donated food and water
- household goods for storm victims.

As the lead agency for recovery our volunteer Case Managers reviewed and authorized help for 249 of the 254 affected families, distributing more than \$500,000 to

- Furnish temporary housing
- Pay insurance deductibles

- Pay for vehicle and home repairs
- Cover other expenses that helped rebuild households in our community

All of the above was accomplished without missing a single day of regular food distribution or using one penny of the disaster relief funds for our operations.



Now, a year after successfully helping Van begin its recovery, we are facing our own significant challenges

Facing their own financial issues, consistent donors have reduced their gifts. Our most generous grantor for food was forced to cut its support by 50% and another has been forced to withdraw all donations. This is at a time when the number of Loaves and Fishes clients has grown to **810**, with parallel increases in food costs, **currently \$2,000-2,500 monthly.**

Our current outlay of funds has become consistently greater than our income.

We are currently challenged to maintain our programs of:

- food for the hungry twice a month
- benevolences for those without other means
- backpack program - weekend food for at risk school children

and other help without increased partnership and financial support from the community we serve with either a **monthly donation** or a **one-time tax deductible gift**. Donations of non-perishable food items and aluminum cans are also appreciated. The office at 205 S. Maple is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9am – 1 p.m.

Tornado Relief 2015



Athletic rivalries were put aside as neighboring schools united to stand with Van in our time of need.



Radio stations KYKX, KMOO, 89.5 and KKUS 104.1 visited to deliver much needed donation.



East Texas Food Bank provided pallets of water, snacks, volunteers and storage space for food donations.



Volunteers spent countless hours organizing the mountains of donated items.



Van High School students created a tornado video that earned them \$800 from the Wood County Electric Coop which they donated to VCM.



The Wesley Pruitt band led one of the many benefit events for tornado relief.



The New Car Dealers of DFW delivered checks for more than \$50,000.