Annual auction is a big success!

Thanks to many stars in our community, the 24th annual “Take a Bite Out of Hunger” benefit auction raised a near-record $237,000 in support of food bank programs. The total includes ticket sales ($25,000), event sponsorship ($17,500), item sales ($96,500), and Fund-A-Need ($98,000). The money raised from Fund-A-Need is designated for our $272,000 annual food budget. These are funds that we can use to supplement food donations across our main programs: walk-in food bank, Home Delivery, Packs For Kids, and North Seattle College.

Customer took a long journey to our door

It’s a long way from Novosibirsk in Siberia to Seattle. And if you follow that path as Rita Levitskaya did during her rich and eventful lifetime, it can be a journey of many decades.

Rita is a University District Food Bank customer and friend who lives now in an apartment just off Lake City Way in North Seattle. Every Wednesday morning Food Bank volunteers deliver a box of fresh food to her door, for which she is deeply grateful, because she can no longer manage the trip to the food bank store on Roosevelt. What she does with those vegetables and grains is simply magical, drawing from her Russian cooking heritage.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6
Dear Friends,

It has been a little more than three years since we’ve moved into our new home on Roosevelt. Not a day goes by when I don’t think about the amazing potential that has been made possible by our new food bank. The potential to include more customers in our work, the potential to find new food donors, the potential to bring new partners on site to help support our customers’ needs, and even the potential to grow some of our own food on our rooftop farm. This potential has helped us continue down a path that builds a hunger free Northeast Seattle.

Enormous potential has also been created by working in a purpose built facility and not the warren of basement rooms we had at the church. With less time and energy dedicated to the basic mechanics of food bank operations, we’ve used this extra time to develop new programs. These programs provide food to communities that cannot easily visit our main location. As of this summer, we now operate two offsite pantries that reach customers where they are, at North Seattle College and at Magnuson Park.

Our pantry at North Seattle College began modestly with the start of the Fall Quarter 2018. By Winter Quarter, we were consistently reaching 250 customer families every week. More than 80% of these customers were students of whom 50% reported regularly running out of food during the month yet 90% of these same customers were not already accessing a food bank, ours or any other. We were an important new resource in a safe space. And this year, our pantry has expanded to a bigger room on campus and expanded to include a permanent presence for United Way’s Benefits Hub, a program designed to help reduce the financial barriers of college.

With healthy food and other critical supports now in reach, the potential created by a college degree becomes more real for so many students.

Our pantry at Magnuson Park began only a few months ago with the opening of new housing provided at the park by Mercy Housing Northwest. We had already been working with the City of Seattle and other community partners on the issue of food security for the many residents at the park and with the opening of the new Mercy Housing Northwest housing we finally had everything we needed to make a pantry happen. So, in collaboration with the University Family YMCA, Mercy Housing Northwest, and Solid Ground, and some very dedicated new volunteers, we have opened a pantry that every week provides the residents on campus access to healthy food.

The potential created by reliable access to healthy food means improved learning for youth and better health for everyone.

The potential created by these off site pantries for our customers is truly immeasurable. The potential to complete a college degree successfully. The potential to go to school on Monday ready to learn. The potential for food to promote not destroy health. The potential of more time to spend as a family.

Your investment in our work helps ensure that the potential we have in our food bank is potential that is shared across our entire community.

In peace,

Joe
Auction: A big thanks to everyone who helped

FROM PAGE 1

and Magnuson Park Community Food pantries. The final event total should top $245,000 once we receive employee matching donations.

Like the work of the food bank, the auction requires many people working together in order to run smoothly. Thanks to our auction committee, Brooke Anderson, Leah Ball, Cathy Petito Boyce, and Joy Mooney, who showcased their creativity and work ethic to make the event a success.

Thanks to our event partners Cameron Catering, Stokes Auction Group, St. Demetrios Hall, Tenakee Films, and emcee Frank Harlan who all played a vital role on the night.

Special thanks to the auction item donors and sponsors listed on page 4 and 5. Please frequent their business or thank them if you can. They along with generous attendees are the reason the auction continues to be a success.

We’ll miss Montlake Market, a key partner

Montlake Boulevard Market, one of our grocery rescue partners, is closing their doors due to 520 expansion at the end of December. It will be missed. Annually the store donates 16,000+ pounds of groceries to the food bank, mainly dairy, prepared foods, and fresh produce.

A supermarket has been located on the Montlake property since 1936. Lynn Greunke, whose family has owned the current market since 1979, values the partnership with the Food Bank.

“The relationship that we’ve established with the Food Bank over the last several years has been a benefit to both us and the community,” she says. “It’s been a great experience.”

Lynn took over managing the market from her father four years ago. She saw firsthand hunger in the community and wanted to help. She reached out to the food bank and we started picking up groceries twice a week, Tuesdays and Fridays.

Montlake Boulevard Market donations, especially premade sandwiches and salads from the deli, are valued by our customers. On any given week 10 to 20% of food bank customers don’t have regular access to a kitchen. Additionally, the market consistently donates milk and yogurt, dairy items that we typically buy to supplement donations.

Lynn doesn’t know what the future holds. Her family is trying to find another location in Montlake, but is open to starting a new business. It will be a success whatever the endeavor because Lynn knows how to run a business well and treats customers, vendors, and donation partners the same, with respect and a smile.
Thanks to all of our auction donors!

203 Degree Fahrenheit Coffee
2Bar Spirits
A la Mode
Adamanent Cellars
Aesthetic Laser Center of Seattle
Alaska Airlines
Allegretto Vineyard Resort
Alma Rosa Winery & Vineyards
Ambre Blends
Analema Winery
Anthony’s Restaurants
Antonio Salon
Archer & Olive
Argosy Cruises
Ba Bar
Baer Winery
Barbara Roller
Bavarian Meats
Beecher’s Homemade Cheese
Beehive Salon
Bendistillery
Betsy and Doug Wheeler
Beyondski.com Snowsports Academy
BioWilly’s Beans
Bloomer Estates
Book Larder
Brittany Kelly
Burgermaster Restaurants
Buty Winery
Cappy’s Boxing Gym
Carole Cabe
Caspar Babypants
Catherine Englehart, DC, PS
Cathy Petito Boyce
CeCe Sullivan
Charlie Burdell and Ryan Durkan
Chateau Ste. Michelle
Chico Hot Springs
Chuck’s Hop Shop
Cityeyeworks
Claudia Sandler and Bill Levin
Clipper Vacations
Clive Pursehouse and Gwynne Junkin
College Inn Pub
Copperworks Distilling Company
Coral Shaffer
CorePower Yoga
Greenwood
Curt Milton
D&E
Dan & Siobhan Whalen
Daniels Broiler – Prime Steaks & Seafood
Darlene and Jared Moses
David and Millicent Ollee
David and Debra Cabe
David Ollee
DeLaurenti
Dick’s Drive-In Restaurants, Inc.
Dino Haak
Dogwood Play Park
Dunham Cellars
Eat Local
Eat Seattle
Ed & Judy Dougherty
Eileen Dornbush
Elements Massage Green Lake
Elizabeth Kennedy
Elizabeth Lowell
Elm Coffee Roasters
Ember Goods
Emily Kim
Emily Leveque
Emily Seeley
Erin McNern from Bakery Nouveau
Escape Scene
Ethan Stowell Restaurants
Eureka! Seattle’s University Village
Eyes on Fremont
Finriver Farm & Cidery
Flastick Pub
Frank’s Oyster House & Champagne Parlor
Fran’s Chocolates
Full Pull Wines
Fusion Hot Yoga
Georgetown Brewing Company
Greg Doerge
Guardian Cellars
Heartwood Provisions
Heavy Restaurant Group
Henry Wedelstaedt and Buzz McCollough
Heritage Distilling Company
High Class Brass
Holland America
Holly Marklyn
Honest Biscuits
Hyatt at Olive 8
Impact Bioenergy
Irene Holroyd and Patrick Perkins
Isenhower Cellars
Ivar’s and Kidd Valley Restaurants
Jackie Patterson
Jane Lowell
Jeff Sconyers and Deb Godfrey
Jess and Mary Levine
Jet City Improv
Jim and Holly Johnson
John Howie Restaurants
John Norden
John Petito
John Zupa
Joseph & Julie Smith
Joy and Sean Mooney
Judith Bushnell
Juubeet
JuneBaby Restaurant
Kay Barksdale
Koku Cafe + Market
Kontos Cellars
Kuma Coffee
Kye Young Lee
Lagana Foods
Leah Ball
Letterpress Distilling
Lickety’s Barbecue
Lilya Stikkel
Linda Rethke
Madison Park Bakery
Mary and Bruce Davis
Mary Pat & Bryan Smith
Matt’s in the Market
McMenamins Pubs and Breweries
Meany Center for the Performing Arts
Mercer Estates Winery
Mercer Park Dentistry
Mi Sun Chun
Michael Goodheim
Mike Gleason
Mioposto
Molly Moon’s Homemade Ice Cream
Montlake Community Club
Mount Rainier Guest Services
MoveMend
Nancy and Tony Nugent
Nancy Anderson
Nausea Sadiq
Neal Soffan
Neighborhood Grills
New Deal Distillery
New Roots Organics
New Seasons Market
Nielsen’s Pastries
Night Light Nails Salon
Nordic Museum
Northshore YMCA
Novelty Hill - Januik Winery
Oistles
OOLA Distillery
Optimism Brewing Company
Pacific Science Center
Pagliacci Pizza
Paint the Town
Pair
Panera Bread
Pasta Casalinga
Pat Blumen
Paul Yunker
Pike Brewing Company
Pike Place Fish Market
Puzzle Break
QFC Bakery
Queen Anne Frame & Gift
Rachel’s Ginger Beer
Randy Silvey
Ravenna Brewing
Reign FC
Reininge Winery
Renaissance Tree Care
Republic of Cider
Residence Inn By Marriott
Seattle University District
Rick Steves’ Europe
River & Roots
Robby & Kelly Whorton
Robert Adams
Rona Zevin
Roosevelt Chiropractic: Mark Jyringi DC, PS, Jeremiah Tickhitts, DC, and Brian Stuck, DC
Rotie Cellars
Ryan and Brooke Anderson
Salare Restaurant
Salty’s Seafood Grills
Sand Point Country Club
Sarah C.B. Guthrie, Professional Artist and Artist Coach
Sarah Washburn and Ben Spruich
Saviah Cellars
Scratch Distillery
Sea Creatures
Sea Wolf
Seapine Brewing
Seattle Aquarium
Seattle Cookie Counter
Seattle Fire Department
Seattle Gilbert & Sullivan Society
Seattle Green Earth Cleaning
Seattle Mariners
Seattle Piano Academy
Seattle Shakespeare Company
Seattle Sounders FC
Seattle Storm
Seattle Symphony
Seattle Theatre Group
Semiahmoo Resort
Shannon and Dan Jost
Shirley Towner
Shultz’s Bar & Grill
Silver Cloud Inns & Hotels
Smith Brothers Farms
Stanley
Starbucks
Steelhead Diner
Steven Landau
STG & Broadway At The Paramount
Stonehardy Hardware
Street Bean Coffee Roasters
Structure Cellars
StudioLife
Sun Liquor Distillery
Susan Williams and Dick Conway
Swanson’s Nursery
Syncline Winery
Tacoma Art Museum
Taproot Theatre
Target
Ted Hunter
Tennis Center Sand Point
Tesla Inc.
The Bard and Banker
The Harvest Vine
The London Plane
The Lyle Hotel
The Mountaineers
The Museum of Flight
The Pacific Jazz Institute
The Riveter
The Summit at Snoqualmie
The Sweetside
Theo Chocolate
Thurston Wolfe Winery
Tiltl Alliance
Tipsy Canyon Winery
Tom Douglas Restaurants
Tombow USA
Top Pot Doughnuts
Tropical Flowers & Bouquets of Hawaii
Tyler Hill
University Book Store
University District Farmers Market
University District Food Bank Board of Directors
University Family YMCA
University of Washington School of Drama
University Village
Urban Float
Vacation International
View Ridge PCC
Whim W’Him
Meet out new Pantries coordinator

Hi, food bank Community!

My name is Sarah Rowley. I recently joined University District Food Bank this October as the new Program Coordinator for the off-site Food Pantries at Magnuson Park Mercy housing and North Seattle College.

I am originally from Missoula, Montana, and currently live in Shoreline while I serve the next year as an Americorps member. I come here from working at the Missoula Food Bank supporting their nutrition programs, farmer’s market rescue and walk in-store.

Back home I was involved in a lot of different community organizations, from getting young people registered to vote across the state, to community nutrition and land access. I love going to theater, to garden and bike.

My favorite thing to grow this year has been garlic, which I learned for the first time to tie into braids with herbs and flowers. I look forward to learning more about Seattle and finding some favorite things.

It’ll be a plus to have a winter that is a bit warmer this year! It’s a different experience being so near the ocean. If you know any good trail bike riding suggestions, or a new recipe you loving, let me know!

I think nutrition access and food security is so important to our health and mental well-being, and our ability to reach for better things in our lives, and that sharing food can be one of the strongest building blocks to any community. I look forward to working alongside you to help alleviate hunger and build a strong community in the North Seattle area.

Sarah Rowley

New volunteer found a calling during her time in college

My name is Anya Atkins. I am a recent graduated from Gonzaga University with a Bachelors of Arts in sociology and psychology.

During my time attending Gonzaga University, I became involved in the community by volunteering at a couple of non-profit organizations in Spokane, Washington that helped vulnerable populations find food, housing and other resources they might be interested in. I enjoyed my volunteer experiences and wanted to continue working with non-profit organizations thus leading me to University District Food Bank.

I grew up in Seattle and I am excited to return after attending school in Spokane. I love living in a city that is nearby the ocean and mountains that are easily accessible.

Since I grew up in Seattle I love music and the music scene that Seattle has to offer. I am always interested in the various shows that come through the city and will try to catch a concert when I can! Other interests include animals, especially dogs and cats, as well as movies, and traveling.

Anya Atkins
FROM PAGE 1

Today she has prepared a rich vegetable soup and spinach pirogies for her three granddaughters who are visiting for the afternoon, and she invites her interviewers to join them—which they gladly do! From mixed berries, there is juice of her own making, and Rita raises her glass to offer a traditional Russian toast: “Ne imei sto rublei, a imei sto druzei!” For her new Food Bank friends, she graciously translates, “Better to have 100 friends than 100 dollars!”

Rita shares a radiant smile and friendly manner with everyone. Though she lives alone in her small apartment, her daughter and three granddaughters live near enough to visit her often, and Friday evening dinner together has become a regular family tradition.

Life has not always been easy for Rita, but you would hardly guess it from her pleasant manner and warm hospitality. She was born in western Ukraine in 1938, one year before the beginning of the Second World War. By the time she was three the war had come dangerously close to their home near the German border, and her mother fled with Rita and her older brother 2000 miles to their new home in Siberia. They traveled in open train cars, and the severe wind and weather was a hardship to them all. Her father had to stay in the Ukraine for the duration of the war, finally joining them in Siberia in 1945.

For the duration of the war Rita lived with her mother and brother about 15 miles outside of Novosibirsk. When the war was over in 1945, father returned to them, and Rita enjoyed a happy, healthy childhood. It was during this time that Rita’s “Mama” taught her the art of traditional Russian cooking.

When Rita’s older brother, Eosef, finished secondary school, he moved to Kazan, about 500 miles southeast of Moscow, to study engineering, finally specializing in aviation. When Rita was old enough to enter the university, Eosef invited her to join him. She also became an engineer in Kazan, with specialization in Radio and Television, and for many years she lived and worked in a broadcasting center there. Soon she met the love of her life in Kazan, a brilliant and gentle man named Yefim Levitski who was both a mathematician and an economist. Together they worked and raised their family of two daughters in Kazan.

In 1991 Rita’s elder daughter moved to Tucson, Arizona, and on February 9, 1992, Rita and Yefim joined them there. As with many who immigrate into the US, she could no longer continue her profession as an engineer, and she began studying English at PIMA college in Tucson. As her English improved, and with assistance from Yefim, she began to help older people nearby with their cleaning, shopping and other assistance.

Compared to life in Russia, Tucson was an exciting change. By February there were already ripe lemons and oranges on the trees, and by June the temperatures rose into the 100′s, chasing everyone indoors to their air conditioners. Rita and Yefim enjoyed seventeen years in Tucson, and they provided love and support to their daughter and four grandchildren.

Eight years ago the path took another turn. Her younger daughter, living in Seattle, faced a crisis, suddenly finding herself a single working mother of three girls. Rita and Yefim stepped up to provide much needed support, and they moved without question to Seattle. Their arrival here was especially fortunate for Rita’s three Seattle granddaughters, Berta, Liza and Sofya, who had never spent much time with “Grandma.” Soon, Rita became a constant and loving mentor to them all, and their teacher in the traditions of Russian cooking!

Only two years after arriving in Seattle, Rita’s husband Yefim died. She is tearful when she talks of his passing, but numerous pictures of this loving man adorn Rita’s apartment. Though he is not physically there, his presence in Rita’s life is palpable.

Rita stays active. She loves to exercise, and five times a week she either works out in her apartment complex or at a local gym. Her favorite is the aerobic dance to music. Every two weeks or so she goes to the nearby library to get books and to keep practicing her English. Rita also participates in a WWII veterans’ association, traveling with them on short trips to explore the Northwest.

Rita’s life is worthy of a book, and in fact she has a regular practice of writing down her life experiences. In her native Russian she writes out the narrative, from Ukraine to Siberia, from Kazan to Tucson, and now to Seattle, and her eldest Seattle granddaughter, Berta, translates Rita’s work into English. Their partnership is progressing well and they look forward to completing what should prove to be a riveting memoir.

Rita feels that she has had an exciting and fulfilling life, if not always an easy one. How fortunate we are to have her with us in our food bank family!