[nourish news]

August 2026 Community Update from Waste Not Want Not

[From the Executive Director]

A Strategic Investment in Our Future

We are thrilled to share some exciting news: **Waste Not Want Not has received a strategic investment from Baptist Health.**

This investment represents so much more than financial support. It is a powerful expression of the **trust and faith Baptist Health has developed in our leadership, our mission, and the impact of our work across Northeast Florida.** We are deeply grateful for that confidence.

A contribution of this size gives Waste Not something incredibly valuable: **the confidence and capacity to aggressively pursue our strategic plan.**

Our 2027–2029 Strategic Plan is built around four strategic focus areas, each with a visionary goal and strategic priorities designed to move Waste Not forward:

1. Programs & Food Rescue Impact

Visionary Goal: Expand food donor and qualified distribution partnerships to ensure consistent, reliable, and scheduled access to food.

2. Volunteers, Staffing & Operations

Visionary Goal: Drive operational growth through a sustainable volunteerism program and scalable workforce.

3. Community Visibility & Strategic Partnerships

Visionary Goal: Increase brand awareness of Waste Not Want Not to expand community visibility and grow strategic partnerships.

4. Funding & Sustainability

Visionary Goal: Increase and diversify funding to exceed organizational and programmatic growth and ensure long-term sustainability.

This strategic investment will help us turn those goals into action.

It will allow us to **expand our Food Insecurity Task Forces into outlying counties**, affording us the capacity to better understand where the greatest needs exist and be more intentional about getting the food we rescue into the hands of the people who need it most.

We will also strengthen our foundation for the future by investing in our **program growth fund** as well as **grant research and donor development tools**. These investments will help us become even more resilient, strategic and sustainable as we grow.

And, we are excited to celebrate and acknowledge our incredible volunteers in bigger ways, by investing in volunteer recruitment and recognition. Our volunteers are the heart of what we do, and deserve to know just how much their time, talent and commitment mean to us.

There is **even more great news** on the horizon, news we will be excited to share with you next month!

To Baptist Health: **thank you for believing in Waste Not Want Not, investing in our future, and trusting us to put this support to work where it can make the greatest difference.**

And to everyone who has volunteered, donated, partnered, advocated, served on our board, rescued food, delivered food, shared our story or simply believed in what we are trying to accomplish:

Thank you for your commitment to our mission and your passion for serving Waste Not Want Not.

We are just getting started. And together, we are going to do some extraordinary things. Together, we fight hunger...every day.



Excitedly yours,

Kathleen

Kathleen N. Spears,
PhD, MHA

President & Executive Director

[Community Nourishment]

The Jags Are Back!

While we value and appreciate **all** of our food donors, there is one our hunger relief partners get super excited about...the Jacksonville Jaguars! We're thrilled to welcome back into our food rescue network, the **Jags** and **Delaware North!** Our partners get excited not just because of the pride they have in our hometown team, but because the Jags provide large volumes of good nutritious and high quality food that meets the needs of many of our partners' hunger alleviation efforts.

Their recent donation put nearly **1,600 pounds of fresh salads, fruit, meat, and other nutritious food** into our hands. And, it didn't stay there for long! Within a matter of hours, this incredible donation was already making its way into the community, helping provide meals for **hundreds of people experiencing homelessness**. Some of the rescued food also went to **The Way Free Medical Clinic**, supporting its important **Food Is Medicine** program.

This is what food rescue is all about - taking perfectly good, nutritious food that might otherwise go to waste and getting it quickly into the hands of people who need it most.

With football season fast approaching, we're pretty excited to have the **Jags back on the field and back to donating food for rescue!**

Thank you, Jacksonville Jaguars and Delaware North, for helping us turn surplus food into nourishment, dignity, and hope for our neighbors.

Let's go, Jags!





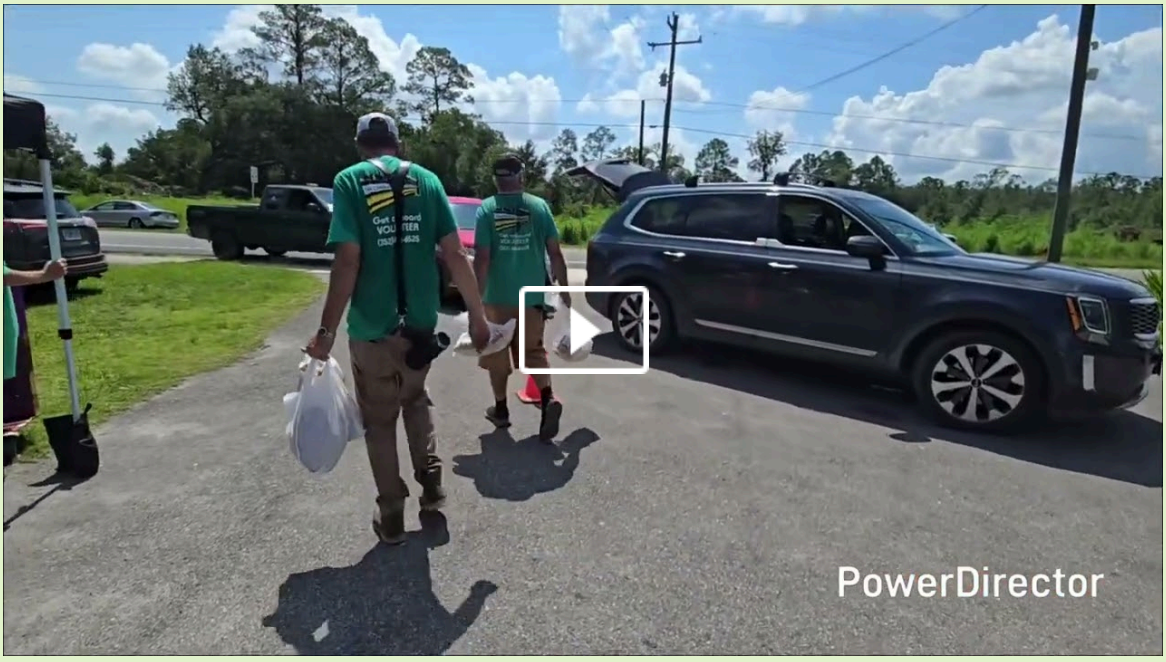




[Partner Highlight]

This month, we're honored to shine a light on **The Children's Table.** Serving rural communities across North Central Florida, they bring food directly to the towns and families who have the fewest places to turn, showing up week after week with a full truck and a warm welcome. Hunger looks different in a rural county, and reaching those families takes partners willing to drive the extra miles. We're grateful to have them alongside us in this work!

We invite you to watch this short video they've shared with us for a glimpse of their incredible work!



What is your mission?



The mission of **The Children's Table** is to reduce hunger and improve food security for families throughout rural North Central Florida.

For 30 years, we have worked to ensure that our neighbors—especially children, older adults, and families facing difficult circumstances—have access to nutritious food. We believe everyone deserves to be treated with kindness and dignity, and that no one should be turned away hungry.

How do you serve the hungry and impoverished in our community?

We provide food through our weekly distribution at our Bronson food bank, mobile distributions throughout rural communities, emergency food assistance, and fresh produce grown in our

teaching garden. Our mobile program is especially important because many of the families we serve live in areas with limited access to grocery stores, transportation, and other community resources.

Each distribution includes as much variety as possible, such as fresh produce, bread and baked goods, canned foods, frozen items, beverages, and other essentials. In 2025, we served approximately 110,000 people, including 56,000 children, and distributed nearly 40,000 family food boxes. No one is denied assistance because they are unable to make a donation.

How does Waste Not Want Not help you execute your mission?

Waste Not Want Not has been a valued and dependable partner of The Children's Table for more than six years. The bread and baked goods we receive help us provide more complete and useful food distributions to the families we serve. There consistency and reliability allow us to plan with confidence, knowing that bread will be available for our distributions.

The bread delivered to our facility is also very well traveled. Its impact reaches far beyond **The Children's Table**. We share these donations with **Bronson United Methodist Church,** whose food pantry serves approximately 500 families each month; the **Cedar Key Food Pantry**, which also assists hundreds of families monthly; and more than 30 small church-based pantries and community ministries, including organizations that provide food to individuals experiencing homelessness.

What may look like a tower of bread to some is a symbol of hope to many. Each loaf can become part of a child's lunch, a family's dinner, or a meal for someone who might otherwise go without.

This summer, the generosity of **Waste Not Want Not** helped us make bread available to families in our community almost daily. This assistance was especially meaningful during the summer months, when children were home from school and many families faced increased food expenses without the support of school breakfast and lunch programs.

Waste Not Want Not helps us stretch every donation farther, serve more communities, and ensure that good food reaches people who truly need it. We are sincerely grateful for the dependable partnership and for the hope they help us share throughout rural North Central Florida.

What do you love most about your organization?

What we love most is the sense of family and community surrounding our mission. **The Children's Table** was founded on the belief that caring for one another can change lives, and that spirit is still present in everything we do.

Our volunteers work incredibly hard, our community partners make our distributions possible, and the families we serve are always treated with kindness and respect. Seeing neighbors come together to ensure that children, older adults, and struggling families have food is what makes this work so meaningful. “Caring is Our Legacy” is more than our motto—it is the heart of our organization.

Is there anything you need help with?

As an independent rural food bank, our needs are ongoing. We are always grateful for dependable donations of bread, canned foods, shelf-stable staples, frozen foods, fresh produce, and family-sized grocery items. We also need financial support for fuel, vehicle maintenance, refrigeration, and the other transportation expenses involved in bringing food to remote communities.

Volunteers, community partnerships, and assistance sharing our mission are equally valuable. Whether someone donates food, provides funding, gives their time, or helps introduce us to a potential partner, every contribution helps us reach more families. Continued partnerships like the one we share with Waste Not Want Not are essential to keeping our distributions strong and consistent.





Birthdays & Volunteer-Versaries



🎂 Happy Birthday!

A big happy August birthday to these volunteers who make our work possible. We hope your day is filled with cake, good company and a little time off your feet!

Patty Archambault, Mary Barber, Cheutney Ellerton, Rufus Fox, Suzanne Hamlin, Bill Harrell, Jay Higgins, Jon Hines, Judy Holland, Russ Kamradt, Reggie Keeton, Barbara Meek, Arvid Nelson, and John Nelson.

If we missed your birthday or you'd prefer not to be included, just email Avery at avery@wastenotflorida.org.

Happy Volunteer-Versary to our August service anniversaries!💚

Thank you for showing up, month after month and year after year. August brings backpacks, bus stops and a whole lot of families counting on us to help fill the gap. Your consistency is what keeps this mission running, and every hour you give helps make sure no one in our community goes without. We are so proud to celebrate your dedication as part of the **Waste Not Want Not** family!

24 Years — Al Giroux

16 Years — Frances Fisher

10 Years — Denis & Cheryl Abbott, Jennifer Carbajal

9 Years — Mary Ellen Adams

8 Years — Levette "Lee" Byrd

7 Years — Eddie Guerra

6 Years — Rufus and Brenda Fox

5 Years — Wanda Bleich, Deborah Holmes, Ron Mills

3 Year — Bob Boykins, Karen Barber

2 Year — Ed and Marlene Grose

1 Year — Joseph "Joe" Sellix, Eugene Bruns, LaTonya Robertson

*If you've been volunteering with us for many years and happen to know the year you first got involved, **we'd love to hear from you**. Please send anniversary date to Linda@wastenotflorida.org so we can keep our records accurate. Thank you for being part of our community!*

[Volunteer Cheer]

Waste Not Want Not's tagline is **Rescuing Food + Helping People.**

Our volunteer program is about far more than getting people into the Castle to sort, pack, load and distribute food. It's about connection!

Kathleen recently picked up **Cass Wilhelm**, a longtime **Waste Not Want Not** volunteer and a very close friend of **Mary Cobb**. Cass had not yet seen the renovations to the Castle, so Kathleen brought her by on a Friday to see what we have accomplished and to see Mary. It seemed only appropriate to treat these two dear friends to lunch at "Grumpy's."

What happened next was beautiful.

As they sat together, they shared stories from their younger years. Backpacking through the United Kingdom. Volunteering side by side. The people they worked alongside. Their beloved husbands who have passed away. Two friends at one table, laughing and reminiscing and picking up right where they left off.

Kathleen sat there listening and thought: **This is Waste Not Want Not, too.**

Their friendship was strengthened at **Waste Not Want Not.** New memories were made, and their lives became more intertwined through service to others...here! — ***That is helping people.***

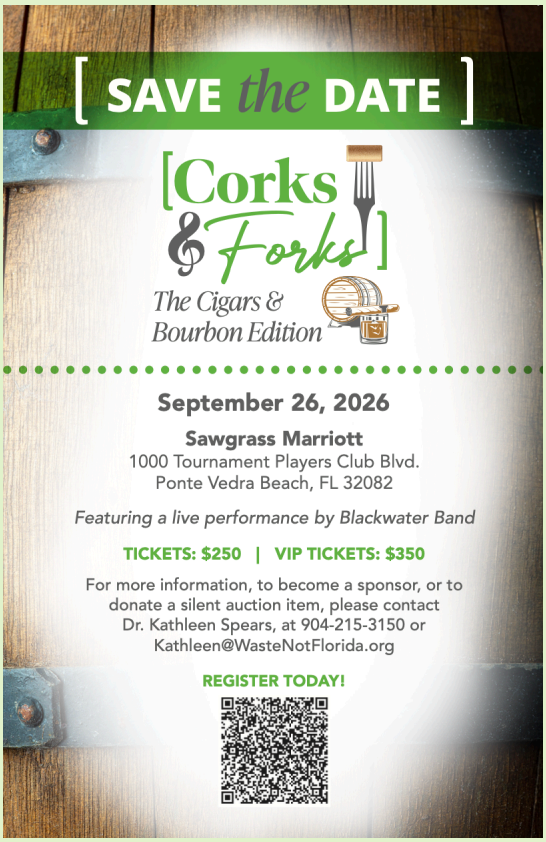
And while the pounds, meals, rescues and greenhouse emissions saved are incredibly important, and we should absolutely celebrate them, the human impact behind those numbers is what makes our work special.


EXIT

Mark Your Calendar

The 2nd Annual Corks & Forks Gala: The Cigars & Bourbon Edition is coming to the Sawgrass Marriott in Ponte Vedra Beach on September 26, 2026, featuring a live performance by Blackwater Band!

Want to come? **Active volunteers are eligible for buy-one-get-one-free tickets!** Contact Linda for details at linda@wastenotflorida.org.



Did you know we hold a yard sale every 1st Saturday of the month? **We've moved locations**! Our next yard sale will be **Saturday, September 5, 2026, at 8 AM**, at **673 Kingsley Ave**.

Explore more on our website!

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