

[nourish news]

March 2026 Community Update from *Waste Not Want Not*

[From the Executive Director]

Waste Not Want Not serves as a catalyst to collective impact. We realize that no single organization can solve hunger alone. It takes a network. It takes partnership. It takes a shared commitment to something bigger than any one effort. That's the power of **collective impact**, and it's at the heart of everything we do.

At Waste Not Want Not, our mission comes to life through collaboration. Every pound of food we rescue is only the beginning of the story. That food moves through the hands of dedicated volunteers, into the care of our nearly 100 nonprofit food distribution partners, and ultimately onto the tables of families, children, seniors, and veterans across Northeast Florida.

This work is made possible because of a powerful ecosystem:

Food donors who choose to give rather than waste

Volunteers who generously give their time and energy

Hunger Alleviation Partners who serve on the front lines in their communities

Supporters and funders who invest in high impact sustainable solutions to hunger



Together, we are not just distributing food—we are building a more efficient, compassionate, and responsive system to address food insecurity. Collective impact also means aligning around a **common goal**, sharing resources, and working in coordination rather than in isolation. In fact, Waste Not Want Not, along with Baptist Health System, The Kitchen of Clay County, Celebration Church, Florida Department of Health, Impact Clay, and Mission of the Dirt Road have launched a collaborative to develop a system that better accommodates our food insecure neighbors. This collaborative is called Clay County Food Insecurity Task Force.

Every pound rescued, every meal provided, and every life touched is the result of this shared effort. **Thank you** for working with us to fight hunger and build long-term lasting solutions to food insecurity in our community.

P.S. Don't forget to vote for Waste Not Want Not in the Best of Clay 2025!

Have you voted for us yet?! Cast your vote for Waste Not Want Not for **Best Nonprofit Organization** and **Best Place to Volunteer** in the Best of Clay 2025. You can vote every single day **until April 1st!**



Vote Now for Best Place to Volunteer

Vote Now for Best Non-Profit Organization

Sincerely,

Kathleen N. Spears, PhD, MHA
President & Executive Director



[Community Nourishment]

Our Castle Is Becoming a Palace

Exciting progress is underway at our beloved “Castle” and it will be truly a remarkable transformation. Soon to reopen as a true palace, this upgraded space will allow us to serve our community more efficiently, safely, and at a greater scale than ever before.

The renovation includes state-of-the-art commercial refrigeration, brand-new heating and air systems, enhanced security and fire safety features, and expanded space to support our growing operations. Every improvement has been thoughtfully designed to strengthen our ability to efficiently rescue and distribute food to those who need it most.

We are now in the home stretch and are thrilled to share that we **plan to reopen at the end of April**. In the coming weeks, be on the lookout for your **invitation to join us** for a **special ribbon cutting** celebration as we unveil our newly transformed space.

[\$25,000 – \$49,999]



HCA Florida Healthcare
Pruette Electric

[\$10,000 – \$24,999]



Jacksonville Jaguars
The Community Foundation
of Northeast Florida
Wiggins Construction Company

[\$1,000 – \$9,999]



Chavez Flooring, Inc.
Mary Cobb
Torin & Linda McKenzie
Kathleen N. Spears, PhD

This **milestone** would not be possible without the generosity and support of so many individuals and organizations. As a tribute to those who made this transformation a reality, we will proudly reveal our **"Donor Wall"** at the ribbon cutting.

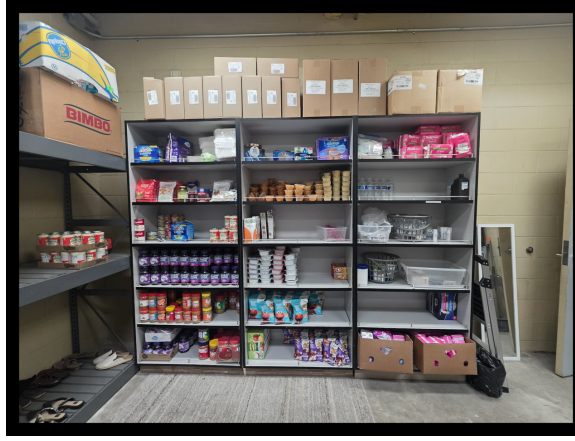
Until then, we're excited to share a sneak peek of what's to come—and there's still time to be part of it. **Donations of \$100 or more will be recognized** on the **Donor Wall installation**. If you would like to be included, please contact our Executive Director at kathleen@wastenotflorida.org by **April 15, 2026**.

Thank you for helping us build something truly special for our community.

[Partner Highlight]

Waste Not Want Not is proud to serve 14 counties across Northeast Florida — and some of the deepest need lives in our most rural corners. **Putnam County** ranks 66th out of 67 Florida counties in food insecurity, with 85% of students qualifying for free or reduced meals. Partners like **Feed the Need of Putnam County** are vital to our mission. Working entirely within the Putnam County School District, Feed the Need meets students where they are — making sure that when the school bell rings on Friday, no child heads into the weekend without food. Read what Feed the Need has to say about their incredible work below!





What is your mission?

Feed the Need of Putnam County's mission is to provide over-the-weekend food to food-insecure students in Putnam County Schools. Students are identified by teachers and faculty within the Putnam County School District (PCSD). Each participating school has a designated food pantry and support team to distribute food to the identified food-insecure students. This food is essential for students living in low-income households. With Putnam County ranked 66th out of 67 counties for food insecurity and 85% of students on free or reduced meals, Feed the Need partners with the PCSD to ensure no student goes hungry over the weekend. Currently, 800 students receive weekend food through our program each week.

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

Feed the Need of Putnam County serves children facing hunger by providing food through school-based pantries and supporting programs like the culinary arts program at Interlachen Jr./Sr. High School. By working closely with local schools and community partners, we help ensure students have reliable access to food when they need it most outside of regular school meals.

How does Waste Not help you execute your mission?

Waste Not helps Feed the Need of Putnam County by providing rescued snacks and dry goods that support our school pantry network and the culinary arts program at Interlachen Jr./Sr. High School. Their partnership allows us to stretch resources further and increase the amount of food available to students in our community.

What do you love most about your organization?

What I love most about Feed the Need of Putnam County is how our community comes together to make sure children have food when they need it most. It's powerful to see volunteers, schools, and supporters work side by side to help local kids facing hunger. Every bag packed means a child is cared for.



Birthdays & Volunteer-Versaries



Happy birthday to our volunteers with March birthdays:

Mary Cobb (celebrating her 80th birthday!! 🎂), Wanda Bleich, Wayne Cahal, Becky Goyer, David Jackson, Amy Pellitier, Beckie Arildsen, Dave Krippner, Lynn DeLoatch, Alice Toovey, Trixie Brouillette, Brenda Fox, Ken Makris, Benicia O'Neal, Jim Collins, Ron Mills, and LaTonya Robertson!

We make every effort to ensure our birthday and anniversary list is accurate and up to date. If we missed your birthday, please let us know so we can update our records. If you prefer not to be included in the monthly birthday "Well-Wish List," please let Avery know by emailing avery@wastenotflorida.org.

A heartfelt thank-you to the incredible volunteers who are marking anniversaries with Waste Not Want Not this March! Your time, energy, and commitment mean the world to us!

35 Years

Mary Cobb

27 Years

Helen Howard

25 Years

Mary Holtcamp

21 Years

Don Mancosh

9 Years

Tom & Donna McNamara

5 Years

Carol Geib

3 Years

Jim Lynch

*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]

When asked to be brave and step up to be featured on a television news piece, **Linda Boyd** didn't hesitate to say yes. Well, she hesitated for just a second or two but she did ultimately say yes! And...she did great!

Linda answered questions about our mission, our operation and our partners like a pro. She shared that our volunteers ARE the heartbeat of the organization and how she and her husband **John Boyd** volunteer together every Tuesday. Linda also thanked many of our food donors. Tune in to News4Jax at 9 am on March 30 to see the segment!

We loved bragging on Linda Boyd this month for her bravery on News4Jax! But this section is truly yours, and we want YOU to fill it! Submit your **Volunteer Cheer** to Avery at avery@wastenotflorida.org. Taken an exciting trip? Created something beautiful? Have a fun recipe to share? We want to celebrate with you and share it with our community!



[Supporter Spotlight]

Waste Not Want Not and HCA Healthcare Florida are forming a powerful new partnership to help strengthen the fight against hunger in Northeast Florida and it all began with an introduction. It was suggested by several people that our executive director meet with a woman named **Jessie Roush** who works with the American Heart Association. "It was about

the 4th time someone told me I needed to meet this woman, that I finally reached out” says Kathleen. “We set times to meet but could never catch up. In the meantime, I met a woman named **Odette Struys** at a Ramadan dinner hosted by Jacksonville leaders **Sel and Angie Buyuksarac** who welcomes community members of all faiths to fellowship during Ramadan. Turns out, Odette works for HCA.”

Later, Kathleen saw a woman wearing a nametag that read Jessie Roush, and for the first time, they were able to meet in person! At that same event, Kathleen ran into Odette. One thing led to another, and Jessie later introduced Kathleen to the director of the HCA Foundation and from there, Jessie, Kathleen and Odette along with the Foundation director came together to explore ways HCA and Waste Not can work together to fight hunger.

Fast forward a few months and HCA Healthcare Foundation awarded a **\$25,000 grant** to Waste Not Want Not through its **Healthier Tomorrow Fund**, a community impact initiative focused on addressing some of today’s most urgent needs—including food insecurity!



The investment, made by HCA Florida Memorial Hospital and HCA Florida Orange Park

Hospital, reflects a shared commitment to improving community health beyond clinical care. “Community health extends far beyond the walls of our hospital,” said **Chad Patrick**, president and CEO of HCA Florida Orange Park Hospital. “By investing in programs that address food insecurity, we are taking an important step toward building a healthier, stronger future for our neighbors.”

HCA’s partnership comes at a critical time. Across Northeast Florida, food insecurity continues to rise—particularly in Clay and surrounding counties. In Clay County alone, the rate has increased significantly in recent years, underscoring the growing demand for accessible, nutritious food. “Addressing food insecurity requires collaboration and long-term commitment,” added **Reed Hammond**, President & CEO of HCA Florida Memorial Hospital. “This grant reflects our dedication to improving the overall well-being of the families we serve and partnering with organizations that are making a measurable difference every day.”

“This amazing gift is truly transformational,” said Dr. Kathleen Spears. “Not only to Waste Not Want Not, but to the thousands of people confronting food insecurity in our community. This investment strengthens our operational capacity and helps ensure that every single pound of rescued food fulfills its highest purpose—feeding people.”

Born from an introduction, came opportunity and from that opportunity came this collaboration which is about more than food, it’s about the health of our community.



Waste Not Want Not Board Chairman, Rick Hood; President & CEO of HCA Florida Memorial Hospital, Reed Hammond; Waste Not Want Not Board Vice Chairman, Paul McDaniel; Vice President, American Heart Association, Jessie Roush; and Odette Struys and Rachel Berry, both with HCA Florida Healthcare.



What started with an introduction became a transformational partnership. Pictured with a \$25,000 investment in our mission: Rick Hood, Jessie Roush, Reed Hammond, Paul McDaniel, and Odette Struys.

We have an exciting event coming up and we would love for you to be part of it! Our 3rd Annual **Tee'd Up To End Hunger** golf tournament is back on **Wednesday, April 29, 2026** at Top of the Tee in Fleming Island — and we are looking for both golfers and corporate sponsors to help make it a success. Every dollar raised goes directly toward rescuing food and feeding hungry neighbors across Northeast Florida. Sponsorship opportunities start at \$1,500, and individual tickets are \$80. Whether you are a seasoned golfer or just looking for a great day out for a great cause, we hope to see you on the green! We hope you can make it **FORE** a great cause! ☐

To sponsor, play, or donate a raffle item, contact **Christie Hingst** at Christie@wastenotflorida.org



[Register For Tee'd Up To End Hunger](#)

Did you know our **yard sale** is now held monthly? Join us **every first Saturday** of the month outside of

Challenge Enterprises, 526 Kingsley Ave in Orange Park, at 8 AM, and get some great steals and deals

while helping **fight hunger + poverty**! We hope to see you on the sidewalk on **April 4th!**

Explore more on our website!



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