

# Food for Thought



Nutrition · Education · Connection

1075 General Newsletter

January 2023

Vol. 3 No. 1

## Message from Mary Ann

As the year draws to a close, we have been working hard to wrap up goals and readjust our focus to the season of Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas. At our January 2022 Board of Directors meeting, I shared three words for the New Year. Why three? It gives a "three dimensional" approach to your plans which brings energy and perspective. The three words: Values, Develop and Deliver. Since success is hidden in your daily routine, it is important to review your values, ask what we as an organization are developing so we can deliver to our community.

The Filling Station Values: Christ Focused, Empower, Equip and Educate

What happened in November and December?

- Served 1215 households from the Food Pantry
- 20 of our volunteers benefited from the Volunteer Enrichment Class
- 547 Volunteer hours (food pantry, admin, facilities)
- Bulk distribution of Amazon gifts received were distributed to Salvation Army/Angel Tree Project, Jones County Partnership for Children, Christmas on Main Event, DSS Senior Nutrition Centers

- Hosted Christmas on Main - opened the lobby for Santa and children to write letters to North Pole
- Awarded prizes from the Perfect 10 Event
- Met with Chick-Fil-A to find out how much they will award to
- The Filling Station - PRESS RELEASE in mid January
- Blessed with \$30,000 in grants for facility support/renovation

Thank you for the continued love, prayer and support in this county wide mission.

Time, Talent and Treasure assist in filling unmet needs - You make a difference!

**Mary Ann LeRay**  
Executive Director

Coming UP next year - Neuse River Bridge Run! (Sponsor a Youth)  
The Filling Station is 1 of the 6 non profits to benefit from this annual event.

**Happy  
New Year**

## So Much to be Thankful For...

On Dec.21, Backpack Blessings, which serves the schools in Jones County-- provided Holiday Food Boxes to 26 families!

We are thankful for the partnership between the Backpack Blessings group and the Filling Station, providing seasonal help to our families!

Pictured on the right: Mayor Jay Bender and his wife, Sheron Bender filling cars.



Pictured above: Thank you Catholic Daughters, Cynthia White, for organizing a wonderful donation of food items for the Food Pantry children's bags.

Deliveries were made to all 3 DSS Senior Nutrition Sites in Jones County. A gift bag of Art Supplies and lip balm along with a Christmas Card from The Filling Station Family Pictured here: Jeanne Huffman, director of the Pollocksville Senior Nutrition program

Delivery Brookstone Living Center in Pollocksville - Kleenex, Socks, Lip Balms and Christmas Card for each resident Pictured here: Maddie Norris, youth volunteer

A new partnership with Salvation Army/Angel Tree this year. Our volunteer team made phone calls to our clients with children to apply and directed donations and toys benefitting the children of Jones County. We stopped by St. Stephens Church in Trenton to see the distribution on Dec 20th. 238 Angels sponsored this Christmas. We were one of several organizations partnering with the Salvation Army.

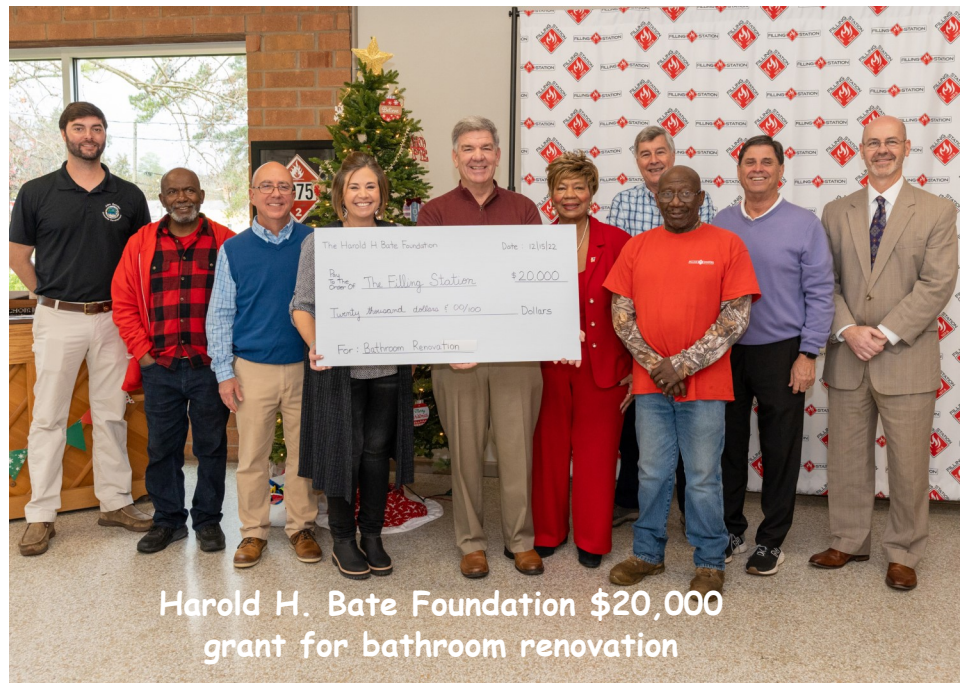
Pictured here: Sandy Middlebrooks and Laura Hagerman, Angel Tree Coordinators

Last picture: Sandy, Twin Rivers Quilters Guild delivered a wonderful donation to the Food Pantry on Dec 19th. The group collected the items at their Christmas Luncheon





**Christmas Luncheon for FS Volunteers (Photos by Jeremy LeRay)**





## Teaching Kitchen—Making Progress— A Picture is Worth 1,000 Words

Gas and water hookups are completed. Kitchen being stocked. Working on registration platform, policies and procedures. A little more to be done on the barn doors. Nearly ready to begin scheduling classes.





## Cow Pie Bingo Winner—Perfect 10 Event

Congratulations to Willie Smith as the winner of the Cow Pie Bingo this year! Although we canceled the event due to Tropical Storm IAN, we still continued to sell tickets to raise awareness and funds for the mission. On November 8th, we held a drawing for all the ticket numbers purchased. We sold 245 tickets and the winner received 10% of the PIE. (pictured L to R: Bobby Darden, Willie Smith and Karen Plaster)



## Christmas on Main 2022 Event a Huge Success

Thank you Pollocksville Rotary Club for sponsoring this annual event on Main Street!

A special thank you for partnering with us to host the information tent, cake walk, and several vendors on our campus. What a joy to be able to open the front lobby and welcome parents and children in to visit with Santa and the Elves. So fun to see the children at the tables writing letters to Santa and drop in the box provided by the USPS Postmaster in Pollocksville.

Ed Jekel, Facilities Manager and Lead Construction Engineer, offered tours of the New Teaching Kitchen.





Christmas on Main Pictures





## Church Supporter Spotlight: Pollocksville Baptist Church



Pollocksville Baptist Church exists as a Christ-centered, Bible-based ministry that is also a missions-minded entity. We believe that missions provide the opportunity for many people to have life in relationship with God. We believe that God's call to all of us who have heard and believed is to align our mission with God's mission.

One of the most heart-touching stories in our church history is that of Dr. Blanche Barrus who was born in Pollocksville in 1888. She grew up in a strong Baptist mission-minded family. Her goal was to become a medical missionary. In 1921 she was to become head of a new Baptist hospital

in India. She was our role model at Pollocksville Baptist, and her legacy for missions still lives on in our church today.

As a promise to God and Dr. Barrus' legacy, missions continue to be a major focus at Pollocksville Baptist Church. Sylvia Miller serves as our leader of missions and liaison for our partnership with the Filling station. We appreciate and support that partnership and the difference it is making in the lives of people in Pollocksville, and know that it is aligned with God's mission. What a Blessing!

## Church Supporter Spotlight: Cypress Creek Church

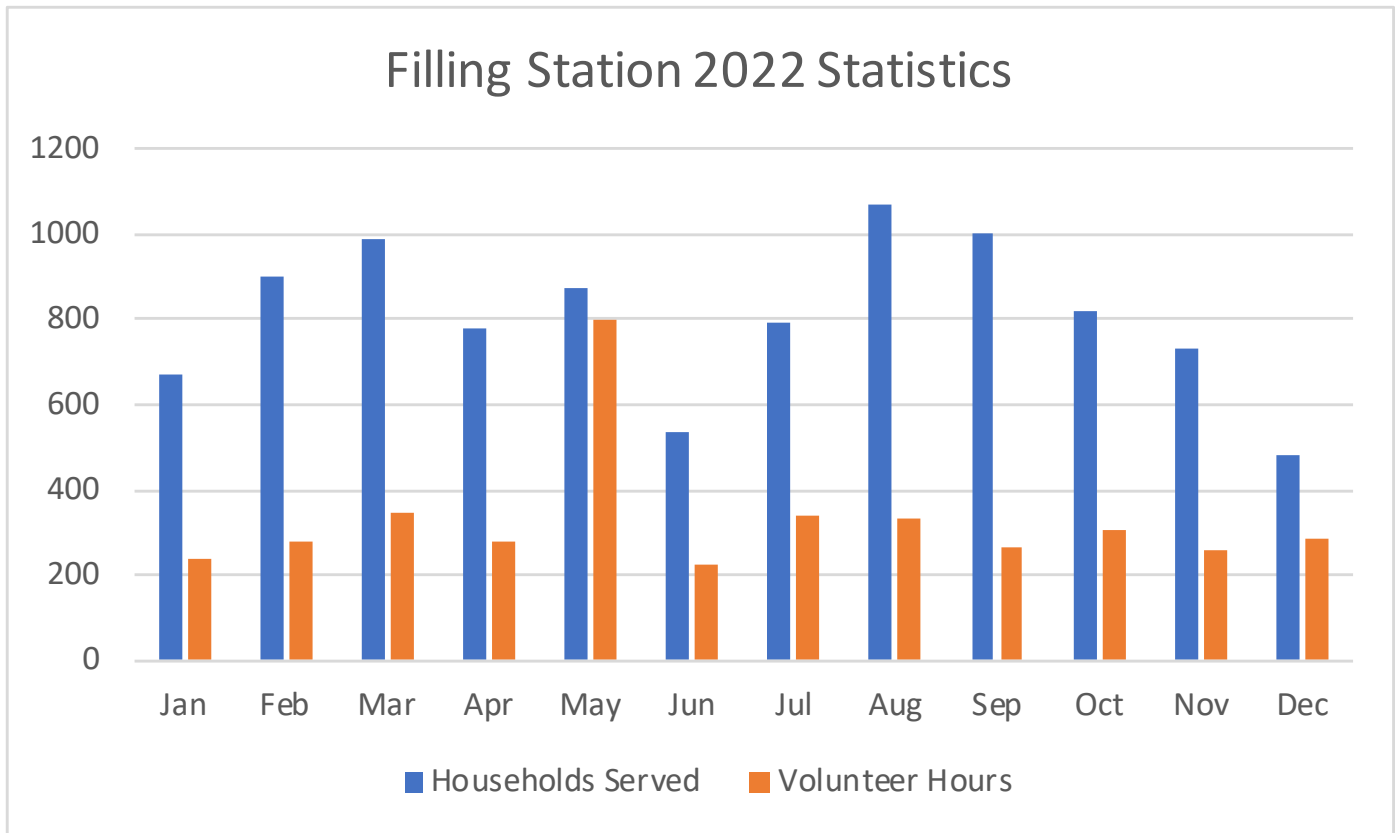


Cypress Creek Church serves at the Food Pantry on the 2nd Thursday of every month. They bring joy and willingness to do whatever it takes to serve the residents of Jones County.

Thank you Cypress Creek Church!







## Tutoring Program Resumes

Joan Knight, Lead for Tutoring Program, reports that her team of 5 volunteers began tutoring again. After 2 years of not being able to be in the school, Joan is thrilled to be face to face with the children. This team of dedicated volunteers offers:

- word work,
- alphabet sound and letter recognition,
- 1:1 correspondence,
- writing and reading with level A books.

The materials used in the tutoring program were donated by Heinemann Publishing, NY. We are grateful for the many donors, volunteers and partners who assist our youth in reading and comprehension.

Thank you Steven Howard, Principal of Pollocks-ville Elementary School, for your partnership.





## Jones County Heritage Festival

It was a beautiful day to connect with so many wonderful people sharing the mission. We sold over 150 tickets for the Blackstone Grill. At the end of the festival, Bobby Darden, Perfect 10 Co-Chair, drew the winning ticket announcing Darrell and Vickie Bell won the grill. Thank you to the Bell Station for helping us sell tickets prior to the drawing.

Thank you to the Salvation Army who partnered with us and shared information about the Angel Tree. Good News from Salvation Army - over 238 Angels have been sponsored from Jones County.

Thank you Allen and Jean Bender, for stopping by our tent and purchasing grill tickets.

Pictured: Laura Hagerman, Salvation Army and Sandy Middlebrooks, Angle Tree Coordinator.



Winners Allen and Jean Bender below.



## 2022 Giving Tuesday at Union Point Park in New Bern

The Giving Tuesday event was held on November 29th. Between 3 and 6 PM over 45 Non-profits set up in the park to raise awareness and funds for their organization. The Filling Station was chosen to receive 1st Place for the Spirit Competition.

Thank you Karen Plaster and Bobby Darden, Board Members, for coming and volunteering your time during this event. Always great to see the Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC and Coastal Women's Shelter, both of which are partners in The Filling Station mission. Candace Parker and Amanda Delgado pictured below with Mary Ann LeRay, Executive Director Thank you for all those who chose to donate on Giving Tuesday...you make a difference.

Below: Marcy Hoffman and Mary Ann LeRay being presented a \$50 Lowes Gift Card by Tharesa Lee of the Giving Tuesday committee.





## Teaching Kitchen Update—Grant Received

International Paper awarded \$5000 to The Filling Station Teaching Kitchen Project on Dec 13, 2022. Mary Ann LeRay, Executive Director thanked them for their generous donation. "We are thrilled to receive this grant to stock the kitchen with all the items needed for our upcoming classes. Thank you International Paper for your continued support as we grow each year.

Pictured left to right: Bobby Darden (Board Member) Karen Plaster (Board Member), Mary Ann LeRay, Executive Director, Elena Sanders, New Bern Mill Manager, John Taylor, Board Member.



## Food Pantry Volunteers Dressed for the Season



Happy New Year!



Food Pantry Volunteers — December



Above Zack Koonce, thanking those who bought grill tickets, Jane Peele and students in middle, Norma McDonough bottom left.







## The Neuse River Bridge Run - Youth Outreach



The Neuse River Bridge Run is now soliciting sponsorships for youth participation in the 2023 Events. We will offer a Super Kids Fun Run for children ages 3 to 12, and 5K, 10K and 1/2 marathon races for teen runners up to age 18.

There are many young people in our community who are interested in running, supporting the non-profit organizations, and doing their part for the broader community. The problem is that many young people lack the funds to register. **Our goal is to offer registration grants to any youth runner who would like to participate but can't afford to.** Will you please consider a gift at one of the following levels to sponsor youth runners?

\$50	1 Youth registration
\$100	2 Youth registrations
\$250	5 Youth registrations
\$500	10 Youth registrations
\$1000	50 Young registrations



This is a great opportunity for individuals, church and civic organizations to give the gift of health, together with the sense of accomplishment and community that comes from participating in this prestigious annual event. We will be identifying eligible youth runners through our many partners in schools, recreation centers, and after school programs across Jones and Craven Counties. Will you join us in this effort? Your donation in any amount will help to support this effort.

**THANK YOU!**  
**NRBR PARTNERS**

If you have additional questions about this program, please contact us via email: [NeuseRiverBridgeRun@gmail.com](mailto:NeuseRiverBridgeRun@gmail.com)

The non-profit sponsoring partners for NRBR 2023 are:  
Craven Community College Foundation  
Duffyfield Phoenix Project - The Filling Station  
Mediation Center of Eastern Carolina  
Religious Community Services (RCS)  
Twin Rivers YMCA

## NRBR YOUTH SPONSORSHIP FORM

Individual or Company / Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form with check payable to:

Neuse River Bridge Run  
Mail to: P.O. Box 234  
New Bern, NC 28563-0234

**Donation Amount \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Please return your youth sponsorship form by January 30, 2023

**OR make a donation online - [www.BridgeRun.org](http://www.BridgeRun.org)**

**Click on the yellow donate button in the upper right hand corner.**





Nutrition · Education · Connection

Our mission is to assist with filling the unmet needs in the areas of nutrition, education and connection serving the residents of Jones County.

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Tharesa Lee, Consultant

Mary Ann LeRay, Ex. Dir.

Judy Hills, Editor

“  
Heavenly Father,  
At midnight,  
When the old year dies,  
And the new comes  
bounding in,  
I draw strength from knowing  
That in the next twelve months  
The snows will go  
The buds will burst  
The heat will rise  
The leaves will fly,  
That all these things  
will happen  
According to Your schedule  
And in Your time;  
That there is order  
in Your universe,  
And that I am part of it.”

VAN VARNER

—woman's day—

The Filling Station, a dream born out of a long vacant, propane company building, opened its doors on August 28, 2017. Why the Filling Station name? During a walk-through of the building, someone noticed a red hazardous material warning sign with a flame and the number 1075, the DOT classification for propane. The group discovered that Psalm 107:5 read: “They were hungry and thirsty; their lives were slipping away.” A new mission was launched and it was called “The Filling Station” to refer to the building’s prior use as well as to its new purpose. Our mission is to assist with filling unmet needs in the areas of Nutrition, Education, and Connection serving the residents of Jones County.