



Feed Fannin News

One Community, One Spirit

Feed Fannin, Inc.

Spring 2018

Bowls of Hope raises over \$29,000 to feed the hungry

Feed Fannin's signature event of the year, Bowls of Hope, drew a capacity crowd in 2018, with \$14,300 in ticket sales alone. Well over 500 eager guests crowded into beautiful Willow Creek Falls in Blue Ridge to sample a variety of delicious hot soups and delectable desserts befitting the chilly, damp weather on March 10.

Bowls of Hope raised more than \$29,000 in total to support the Fannin County Family Connection Food Pantry. This was thanks to Willow Creek Falls, the generous chefs and restaurants that donated food, and the great individuals and organizations that donated silent auction items and pottery bowls. Also responsible were the talented musicians who provided entertainment, the Feed Fannin volunteers who constructed beautiful living centerpieces for the tables that could be purchased, and the many wonderful people of the surrounding community who purchased tickets and attended the event.

Once inside the building, guests split their time between the all-you-can-eat food and a large silent auction that proved very popular, raising close to \$10,000. But the centerpiece of Bowls of Hope and the hub of all that day's activity was the long narrow table displaying more than 700 bowls hand crafted by local pottery artisans in a rainbow of colors, shapes and textures. Every guest at Bowls of Hope takes home their choice of an empty bowl symbolizing the fight to end hunger. From the time the doors to the event opened at noon, the bowls table was ringed thickly with guests appraising and selecting their favorite bowls. Meanwhile, the band Gopher Broke and other guest musicians serenaded the now warm and satiated crowd that filled every seat available and then some.

"The business community in Blue Ridge is amazingly generous — they rallied to the cause, and this year's auction was our most successful yet," said Silent Auction Coordinator Carol Huey. "It's wonderful to live in such a caring community."



FF volunteers serving soup to guests at Bowls of Hope

An army of 100 volunteers — many of them Feed Fannin members and many who work with Family Connection, the Future Farmers of America and other community organizations — helped to carry off the event: working in the kitchen, fetching and serving soups and desserts, running the silent auction, wrapping the take-home bowls, and greeting and guiding guests onto and off the property.

"We are so grateful for the time and energy freely given by these amazing volunteers, which makes it possible for Feed Fannin to accomplish its primary mission of providing food for those in need in our community," said Feed Fannin Events Chair Carol Martel. ✨

✍️ Diane Payne

Feed Fannin's 2018 Ada Street garden off to a great start



Spring has taken its time to arrive but is finally here. After a wet winter and temperatures near freezing at the latter part of April, May has arrived with dry, sunny days. There are exciting, yet challenging things that have been happening in the garden over the winter.

Okay, here's some of the good news/bad news. GOOD news—there is a wonderful new Ag facility being finished right behind our garden. The BAD news is that the water line for the new facility started at Ada St and was buried right through the raised

bed area and the middle of our garden. The BAD news is that we lost a lot of good soil when they dug the water line. The GOOD news is that we got some new soil for the garden and have been able to start planting this year's garden. More GOOD news is that the construction company is now working to smooth and dress up

the rough areas and improve the driveway back to its original condition or better.

BAD news—the electric fence around the garden has not been effective over the past few years. Many of the posts were rotting, and ground hogs were able to enter the garden and devour our crops. Portions of the fence were taken down during construction and put back haphazardly. The GOOD news—we have replaced the old fence with a really good fence with fencing to the ground, gravel under the gates and electric fence wires at the top that should be able to keep groundhogs and deer out of the garden. Kudos to Cochran Fencing for the fantastic job of installing the fence for us. It was amazing having Tracy and Greg to work with us.

So now for some more continuing good news. The soil condition is looking really wonderful. Thank you to the small but faithful group of garden volunteers that have come to our first work days. All the tomato cages and trellis for pole beans have been installed. Several new garden volunteers were educated quickly

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Come play in the dirt with us!

FF Garden

and helped with planting.

We are so thankful to have wonderful community partners like Quinn's Nursery and FFA Ag students to provide plant starts, to the Farmer's Co-Op for providing seed and to Home Depot for helping with some soil to help replenish raised beds. I am forever amazed at the generosity and support Feed Fannin receives from our community. Thank you Fannin County Board of Education for your generosity in allowing us to use this property for our farm and being supportive of our efforts.

So far we have planted tomatoes, green beans, corn, peppers, cucumbers, red potatoes, cabbage and squash. We will be planting approximately 1500 sweet potato slips in late May and hopefully okra or another crop of corn a little later. Two new large raised bed have been donated and placed inside the new fenced area of the garden which will give us more planting options. We have added an adapter to the faucet at our vegetable cleaning table and have added a hose so we will be able to easily water the raised bed.

The rain last year challenged the drainage in the garden. We dug two new, improved and strategically placed drainage which, hopefully, will address our drainage issues.

We did some Spring cleaning in the barn and the shed. Shelves were made from scrap wood and placed in the lower barn bays to store supplies off the dirt floor. Stick-up LED battery lights have been added for better visibility.

We have planted marigold and cleome within the garden to encourage pollination and keep out unwanted insects. Other companion herbs will be planted to help discourage unwanted pests.

The Forge Mill garden is off to a great start with the addition of composted soil that Feed Fannin provided. They will plant red potatoes and sweet potatoes this year.

Taken all together, the garden is off to a great start, and I am encouraged by all that has happened. The first two weeks of May were very busy! Our preparations are good, and we've worked hard to address our problems. If the weather cooperates, our ditches drain properly, the fence keeps the groundhogs out, the beetles, corn smut and other pests stay away, our volunteers stay committed and on task our hard work should be rewarded, and we will fulfill our mission of providing fresh produce to our local food pantry to help feed the hungry in our community. Come see what's happening at the barn! Join with us in praying for a bountiful crop in the garden this year. May it be true! ✿

✍ Kathy Beck

Best wishes to Feed Fannin Founder Barbara Ferer

Farewell and Godspeed to the industrious and inspiring founder of our organization, Barbara Ferer, who is moving to Atlanta this summer! Barbara founded Feed Fannin to bring the community together to help others by providing them with the means to grow their own food. She also envisioned the organization's members using the abundance produced by their own communal gardening efforts to help feed the hungry.

In Barbara's own words:

Twenty years ago, as a newlywed couple, Del Woods and I moved to the North Georgia mountains. Our dream was to build an underground dome home. When that was completed, 10 years later another dream literally came true, beginning with a dream in which the words "Feed Fannin" kept showing up.

Linda Mahan, then director of Family Connection, and our county extension agent, Eddie Ayers, nurtured the concept of feeding Fannin County. Nathan Fitts invited us to hold our first meeting at the Comfort Inn, and on Jan. 29, 2009, 30 people answered the call to feed those in need fresh vegetables! On that day, Feed Fannin became a reality.

Linda gave us a place to gather regularly (Family Connection), Doug Davenport gave us a cause (the Food Pantry), and Tom Bartholf found us our first garden property (Dan Davenport's lumberyard). And you answered the call—organic gardening, which feeds more than those in need; it feeds our souls.

Like a magnet, Feed Fannin pulled, pushed, cajoled and gathered an incredible, diverse, talented, giving, loving, and lovable family — truly one community and one spirit. We worked, digging our hearts into our Mother Earth. We continued to gather like-hearted folks from our neighbors, thanks to the words and photos of Cynthia Maude (The News-Observer) and Elaine Owens (The Fannin Sentinel). Then, we dug into the county's needs with programs for the children (Kate and Walt George's Cool Kids Garden Club) and classes for the general public on topics dealing with gardens and food. And then, there was our special love, the



Barbara Ferer

Family Connection Food Pantry, thanks to Connie Galloway's compassionate dream. Our leadership is a democratic wonder. "If you come up with an idea, it sticks to you," making everyone committed to our dream. When I could no longer devote as much time to Feed Fannin during Del's departing time, Jane Kimzey, my Coco, led us. Connie Galloway led us to "the farm" (the Ada Street property). Bob Seeger took his turn, too, and most recently, Catherine Sugg has stepped up to the plate.

So, what is it like to leave you and Feed Fannin? I will be processing the grief that is the partner of change for the rest of my life. There are words, but I don't possess them, to tell you of my love for you and how you will be missed. Borrowing from an old camp song, all I can say is, "The joy I've had in knowing you will last my whole life through."

You are loved,
Barbara

Help us say goodbye and best wishes to Barbara Ferer by attending a potluck dinner in her honor 6-8 pm on Thursday, June 21, at the Ada Street farmhouse (762 Ada Street, Blue Ridge). Bring a dish and prepare to enjoy good music, good food and good fun. We invite you to bring a card or note for Barbara's scrapbook. Also, Feed Fannin will honor her with the purchase of a garden arch and bench for the Ada Street property. If you would like to contribute to this purchase, please make a donation either online at FeedFannin.com or by mailing it to Feed Fannin at P.O. Box 1088, Blue Ridge, GA 30513. Please indicate that the donation is for Barbara. ✿



Help us to help others by volunteering to assist in one of our programs or by making a contribution to Feed Fannin

Feed Fannin supports gardening education in our schools

Feed Fannin supports both in-school and after school education programs at the three elementary schools in Fannin County.

Through our in-school programs, we partner with the schools in the district to provide specialized instruction in garden-based learning. We accomplish this by connecting teachers with community 'experts' in gardening. These individuals are from two local organization, Feed Fannin and the North Georgia Master Gardeners. Through our support services, we also help the schools and other organizations build new educational gardens and sustain existing gardens with supplies, training and consultation. We provide seeds, starts, soil, gardening tools and supplies, garden education and design consultation.

Our after school program at Blue Ridge Elementary School (BRES), the Cool Kids Grow Garden Club, is based on the Na-



BRES Students learning about gardening

tional Junior Master Gardener curriculum. Using standards-based lessons, we strive for a balance between garden fun and academic rigor to third and fourth graders at this school. The Junior Master Gardener (JMG) program engages children in novel, "hands-on" group and individual learning experiences that promote a love of gar-

dening, develop an appreciation for the environment, and cultivate problem solving skills. JMG encourages youth to be of service to others through service learning and leadership development projects and rewards them with certification.

This year the students in the Cool Kids Grow Garden Club at BRES built bluebird houses and donated these to the city of Blue Ridge. The students also maintained the perennial beds at their school and at the Blue Ridge Senior Center. Fourteen new Junior Master Gardeners graduated on May 10, 2018. In order to become certified as a Junior Master Gardener the student must attend 90% of the 20 club meetings, complete 2 group service projects and pass a JMG final with an 80% or higher score. Congratulations to all the new Junior Master Gardeners at BRES! 🌸

✍️ Kate George

Feed Fannin's 2018 education classes off to a great start

Springtime temps and the promise of colorful flowers and garden greenery brought 16 local residents out to Feed Fannin's first class of the year at Quinn's Greenhouse in McCaysville on March 17.

Ginger Montgomery, co-owner of Quinn's, addressed the chilly and wet spring that delayed plantings this year. She offered advice on soil preparation and spring seedlings and, after playing in the dirt a bit, she sent everyone home with a tray of herb and annual cuttings and vegetable seeds.

April's class featured a tour of the Blue Ridge Cannery in a program jointly sponsored by Feed Fannin and the North Georgia Master Gardeners. As it was far too early in the growing season to have any crops ready to can, Rhonda Matthews, who co-manages the cannery and is an agricultural education teacher at Fannin County High School, showed a good mix of Feed Fannin members, master gardeners, future farmers and other curious area residents around the facility and explained its capabilities.

Rhonda detailed the canning process and talked about the advantages of using the cannery rather than canning at home (less messy, easier and more efficient for canning larger quantities of food, etc.).

Bats were the star of the May class co-sponsored by the Fannin County Young Farmers Association. Trina Morris, a wildlife biologist with the Department of Natural Resources, came to the Ada Street farmhouse to talk about the benefits of having bats,



Aspiring gardeners learning to start seeds

healthy bat habitats and White Nose Syndrome, a fast-spreading fungus that has decimated many bat species and caused five to seven million bat deaths in the U.S. in recent years.

Here is the schedule of future classes planned by the Education Committee:

- **June 16, 10 a.m.** Mittleider Gardening Method by FF members Ken Barnhart and Chuck Haines, presented by Feed Fannin and the Young Farmers Association at the Fannin County Family Connection
- **July 14, 10 a.m.** Saving Seeds by Master Gardener Fran Stoecker, presented by Feed Fannin and the Master Gardeners at the Ada Street farmhouse
- **Aug. 4, 10 a.m.** Medicinal Herbs by Patricia Kristi Howell, director of the BotanaLogos School of Herbal Studies, at the Ada Street farmhouse
- **Sept. 15, 10 a.m.** Invasive Species by Master Gardener Alyce Wirtz, presented by Feed Fannin and the Master Gardeners at the Ada Street farmhouse
- **Oct. 8, 10 a.m.** Edible Perennials by Dr. David Busch, class to be held in David's garden in Cherry Log

Many thanks to all of these volunteer speakers for their willingness to share their expertise with us. For class updates go to FeedFannin.com and click on Events. 🌸

✍️ Diane Payne

Feeding the hungry is Feed Fannin's mission

Feed Fannin partners with the Fannin County Family Connection food pantry to feed the hungry in Fannin County. Last year Feed Fannin was able to pay for almost 100 percent of the pantry's food needs (amounting to more than \$57,000), and our support for the pantry continues in 2018. Money raised by Feed Fannin purchases milk, eggs, bulk orders from Food Lion, and staple items from the Chattanooga Food Bank and Atlanta Food Bank.

In addition to raising money for the food pantry, Feed Fannin volunteers work at the food pantry on a regular basis, helping clients apply for food, packing food boxes, and picking up donations from area businesses and supermarkets. Each year, a faithful crew of Feed Fannin gardeners raises thousands of pounds of fresh produce at the Ada Street garden and donates it to the food pantry .

If you are interested in being a Feed Fannin volunteer at the food pantry or the Ada Street garden, please contact us at 706-946-1001 and leave a message. 🌸

In Fannin County, 18% of individuals are living below the poverty level. In the last 10 months, the food pantry has averaged more than 1,300 client visits per month. This includes 482 families, 345 children, and 392 seniors per month.

OUR MISSION

Working together to educate and encourage our community towards self-sufficiency while providing food for those in need.

OUR PROGRAMS

Ada Street Farm – We grow food at our Ada Street Farm and elsewhere to feed the hungry in Fannin County.

Community Garden – We manage a community garden at the Ada Street Farm that provides space for local residents to grow fruits and vegetables.

Food Pantry – We support the Family Connection Food Pantry with volunteer workers, food, and money to mitigate the costs of feeding the hungry.

Adult Education Classes – We provide information, education, and training to those who want to learn to be more self-sufficient in growing, preserving, and preparing their own food.

Youth Education – We support and help fund gardening programs in the Fannin County elementary schools.

Two Great Ways to Keep Up With Feed Fannin

Facebook

Our Website

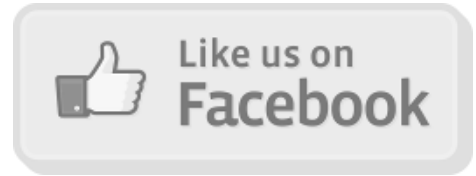


Feed Fannin

Founded in 2009, Feed Fannin is a volunteer organization working together to educate and encourage our community towards self-sufficiency while providing food for those in need. We are committed to eliminating hunger in Fannin County and the Copper Basin.

Key Activities

Our diverse group of volunteers apply their time and energy to help Feed Fannin through:



You can also help by donating to Feed Fannin



Feed Fannin Gift Form

Your name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Would you like to be added to our email list to receive information about Feed Fannin? Y _____ N _____

Amount of gift donation: \$ _____

Need a tax receipt? Y _____ N _____

Please make checks payable to:
Feed Fannin, Inc

Mail form and donation to:
Feed Fannin
P O Box 1085
Blue Ridge, GA 30513

YOUR GIFT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

Feed Fannin Inc.

P O Box 1085

Blue Ridge, GA 30513

Phone: 706-946-1001

(Leave message)

Chair: Catherine Sugg

Email: feedfannin@gmail.com

Website: feedfannin.com

Remember Feed Fannin in Your Future Plans

You can remember Feed Fannin when you make a bequest of assets in a will or trust, which could be a specific amount of money or assets, a percentage of the money or assets, or the residual money or assets of the estate. Ask us about it by emailing us at feedfannin@gmail.com or calling us at (706) 946-1001 and leaving a message.



Gardening is about enjoying the smell of things growing in the soil, getting dirty without feeling guilty, and generally taking the time to soak up a little peace and serenity.

~Lindley Karstens

