



Feed Fannin News

One Community, One Spirit

Feed Fannin, Inc.

Harvest Edition, Fall 2021

Second Bowls of Hope Online Auction Even More Successful

For the second year in a row, Feed Fannin was unable to hold its in-person *Bowls of Hope* fundraiser due to significant outbreaks of Covid 19 and its variants in the area. Instead, a second online auction consisting of many items generously donated by local merchants, service providers and individuals took place in late August.

This year's auction had a special focus on art and home décor items to appeal to owners of all the new and remodeled homes in the area. Cheryl Engledow, a former local art gallery owner, was a big help in securing pieces for the auction. Several artists donated paintings created exclusively for the *Bowls of Hope* online auction. Among them was 10-year-old talented young artist, Adia Maslankowski, whose story is featured on p. 3 of this newsletter.

After months of working to obtain, catalog, photograph and write descriptions of the donated items, the team had collected more than 190 items. With some trepidation, volunteers began using a new software that allowed us to upgrade our processes, provide more options for participants, and communicate more easily with our membership.



Feed Fannin volunteers (left to right) Diane Payne, Carol Martel and Jane Kimzey show off a selection of the items donated to the auction.

We are pleased to report that the amount of money raised through the auction this year exceeded the total for last year's online event!

People from across the country and abroad participated in this year's auction. We are grateful to those as far away

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Farm & Garden Report

Summer is gone, fall is now upon us, and it's been busy at the Feed Fannin Farm and in our partner garden.



Produce donations to the Fannin County Family Connection Food Pantry through Sept. 30 from all sources (both grown and purchased) totaled just over 12,000 lbs. Our Farm-to-Pantry supplemental produce purchases will continue for the remainder of 2021.

Freshly harvested okra

Our garden partner, Faith Presbyterian Church, moved to its new location just off Highway 515 in Mineral Bluff in 2020, and this year, the church's new vegetable garden contributed more than 1,400 lbs. of corn, cucumbers and sweet potatoes to our donation to the food pantry. Feed Fannin supports the church's efforts by providing an annual garden grant to them of \$500 for the purchase of soil and equipment.

Late this summer, two students from West Virginia who were visiting relatives in Blue Ridge volunteered to take two days from their vacation to assist Feed Fannin in cutting corn stalks and the removal of tomato cages. Their

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FFA student volunteers digging up sweet potatoes.

Garden Volunteers Hard at Work!

Priscilla Cashman works in the rain to clear potato vines.



Feed Fannin Chair Ron Ciochon digs up sweet potatoes on a misty morning.



Curt Hinnant hauls corn stalks away.

Kathy Corey pruning invasives at the farmhouse.



FFA students box up the sweet potatoes they harvested.



Farm & Garden Report continued

help was much appreciated. Then, on Sept. 24, under beautiful blue skies, 18 local Future Farmers of America (FFA) students helped us finish harvesting a large crop of sweet potatoes and clean up the discarded vines. What a blessing to have the willing assistance and strong, young bodies of these students to help with these garden tasks!

Kathy Corey and Kathy Beck recently worked around the farmhouse, deck and carport, cutting back overgrown invasive shrubbery. They also trimmed overgrown vines from the arbor.

Thanks to Steve Corey, who has been mowing and filling in for Ham Kimzey in his absence, in addition to his usual mowing and string trimming. Also thanks to Kathy Corey for her extra help mowing and to Curt Hinnant for string trimming in the garden and around the fence line as well as helping move all the corn stalks out of the garden.

The fence post near the barn finally rotted and fell. But thanks to the skills of volunteer, BZ Cashman, we now have a sturdy new post and a gate that was on hand and installed to fit the spot perfectly. There is no way to adequately express gratitude for the help of loyal volunteers who show up to help at the garden and around the farm.

Thanks to the generosity of the Fannin County Board of Education, Feed Fannin is allowed the use of a beautiful piece of property for our farm and garden. There is also a pole barn on the adjoining property and behind the AG Facility that FFA students sometimes use. Recently, FFA received a grant to build a new high-tunnel hoop house that is now located behind the pole barn. Bush hog work is planned in November on the area behind the pole barn, our farmhouse and our garden. Feed Fannin will also schedule volunteer work days this fall or winter to trim around the farm's raised beds, the street and the farmhouse.

❁ Kathy Beck, vice-chair of Farm, Garden and Education

Through the Eyes of a Child Comes Inspiration for All

Adia Elizabeth Maslankowski is a 10 year-old artist who comes by her artistic talents naturally from a long line of family members – her mother and father, grandparents and great grandparents.

When we met for her first formal interview as an artist, Adia told me that her mother suggested she consider painting something for Feed Fannin that would help raise money to feed hungry children and their families. Her mother, Tina Maslankowski, a well-known artist and manager of Multitudes Gallery in Blue Ridge, first suggested that Adia pick something beautiful that would make people smile. Adia told me she chose water lilies “because they are so shiny and pretty in the water.” Her painting drew a lot of interest in the auction, as did her story.



"Water Lilies" by Adia Maslankowski

Adia told me she painted the piece when she was 9 years old, as she only turned 10 this September. She first began showing her artistic talent when she was four or five years old. As do so many children, she started with crayons, but Adia has continued with a love for drawing and painting and has improved her skills. She loves creating pieces with flowers, but she is currently concentrating on learning about landscape painting.

Adia's donation of her beautiful work of art to our online auction to help feed hungry families, children and seniors in our community has been an inspiration to all of us.

Feed Fannin thanks you, Adia, for sharing your talent and your story to help make this a better world for everyone.

❁ Carol Martel, 2021 *Bowls of Hope*
Online Auction Co-Chair

Online Auction continued

as the United Kingdom, Canada, Colorado, Florida, Pennsylvania and across Georgia and neighboring states for joining those of us who live in the area to support our major fundraiser for this year.

Feedback from winners about the ease of use, look of the items, overall functionality of the software has been very positive. Users really liked the way the software worked, how convenient it was for them to use, including receiving text notices, setting maximum bids, searching by categories, price or key words, by items liked, items they were currently winning, items without bids, etc.

On behalf of all the Feed Fannin volunteers who worked tirelessly to make the auction a reality, thank you so much to all who participated in the auction to make it a wonderful success. After reviewing this year's "lessons learned," planning is under way to determine how to blend the online capabilities with an in-person event in

2022. Volunteer positions to help are already open! Just give us a call!

A special thank you to all the wonderful donors — local merchants and service providers, individuals and artists — who give so generously to support Feed Fannin's annual *Bowls of Hope* fundraiser.

Funds raised by Feed Fannin are used to grow many thousands of pounds of nutritious produce from our community and partner gardens. They are also used to:

- purchase nearly 100 percent of the food staples bought from the Atlanta and Chattanooga Food Banks to stock the shelves of the Food Pantry at Family Connection for distribution to pantry clients,
- provide supplemental food boxes to seniors through the Meals on Wheels program,
- stock the Food Closet for students at the UNG campus, and

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Make a Gift to Feed Fannin

Your name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Would you like to receive information about Feed Fannin by email? 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
PO Box 1085
Blue Ridge, GA 30513

OR DONATE ONLINE at feedfannin.org

Your gift is greatly appreciated!

Feed Fannin website: feedfannin.org

Email us at Feedfannin@feedfannin.org

AG Experience Mobile Classroom Visits Fannin County Schools

The Future Farmers of America hosted a visit by the Georgia Farm Bureau's AG Experience mobile classroom on Sept. 9-10 at the Fannin County AG Center. Kathy Beck, Feed Fannin's vice-chair of Farm, Garden and Education, was invited by Fannin County High School FFA Advisor Rhonda Mathews to assist in the 36-foot STEM-based, interactive mobile classroom, which hosted third-grade students from all three local elementary schools.

The classroom showcases and promotes Georgia's No. 1 commodity, agriculture, using interactive technology and digital learning to help students explore seven different Georgia agricultural products. The

Online Auction continued

- distribute food to residents in need in low- and fixed-income housing units.

In addition, through new community partnerships with other local groups and organizations, Feed Fannin is reaching out to provide food assistance where it is needed to help friends and neighbors in our community who cannot travel to local food pantries or need supplemental help due to travel restrictions, age, health or disability.

We thank you for helping us to fight hunger and feed hope. In this amazing, caring community, with your support, Feed Fannin can make a difference in the lives of many people who need a helping hand along life's way.

❁ Carol Martel and Jane Kimzey, 2021 *Bowls of Hope* Online Auction Co-Chairs

Our Mission

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



traveling classroom comes with iPads that simulate "activities" like growing a garden. It also includes virtual puzzles and trivia to encourage students' interest in pursuing education in agriculture fields. Provided by the Georgia Foundation for Agriculture (aka the Georgia Farm Bureau), the classroom has been touring the state since the beginning of 2021, and this is the first time it has traveled to Blue Ridge. "It is a great educational tool, and kids of all ages loved it," Beck said. ❁