

MEDIA RELEASE

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##FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE##

November 11-17, 2012, is National Hunger & Homeless Awareness week. Brown County will join a nationwide effort to recognize the needs of many struggling to put food on the table and to find a place to sleep at night. On Tuesday, November 13th, 4:30pm, at Manna for Life, 1599 University Avenue, Green Bay Mayor Jim Schmitt and Brown County Executive Troy Streckenbach will issue a proclamation declaring November 11-17, 2012, as National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week in Brown County. A short walk will follow to raise awareness of this important cause.

Hunger and homelessness continues to be a serious problem for many individuals and families in Brown County.

- During the 2011-2012 school year, 1,217 students in Brown County schools were identified as being homeless- lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.
- On September 26, 2012, in Brown County, six shelters, 10 transitional living programs and six crisis programs reported sheltering a total of 224 adults and 124 children.
- Currently these programs have extensive waiting lists which will delay service delivery to individuals and families for several months. There are currently over 70 families with children on the waiting list at Freedom House.
- Even with the great efforts of these programs, 53 people were unsheltered in Brown County on July 25, 2012.
- In 2011, Brown County United Way identified the top five needs in Brown County as: food pantries, rent payment assistance, electric service payment assistance, community shelters and food stamp applications. The top five needs that went unmet included: electric service payment assistance, rent payment assistance, community shelters, gas money and transportation.
- More than 3,200 households per month receive assistance from Brown County Food & Hunger Network pantries.

"Our homeless and hunger issues in Brown County continue to grow. We continue to see a larger need for shelter and food," said DonElla Payne, President of the Brown County Homeless & Housing Coalition. "We are inviting the Brown County community to participate in the activities of Hunger and Homeless Awareness week, which is Nov. 11th – Nov. 17th. Our goal for this week is to help our community gain a better understanding of the increase in hunger and homelessness in Brown County. Area agencies, shelters, and programs are inviting the community to come out and learn about the work being done to address hunger and homeless issues."

Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week events include:

Monday, November 12th through Thursday, November 15th: **Seeds of Hope photo display** at the Neville Museum. Admission is free with a canned food donation. This exhibit features photos taken by youth on what it means to be homeless or live in poverty.

Tuesday, November 13th: **Manna for Life Hunger Walk**, 1599 University Ave. Register at 5:00pm for the short walk which will be followed by a chili dinner. Join us in this short walk to raise awareness of the issues facing the homeless and those in poverty and then stay for dinner!

Wednesday, November 14th: **Feeding America Food Drop**, East Town Mall parking lot. Food distribution from 12:00pm-2:00pm (while supplies last). Feeding America will provide bags of groceries to individuals and families in need. No prequalification needed.

Thursday, November 15th: **Building Community Bridges Resource Fair**, The Salvation Army, 626 Union Ct., 11:00am-1:30pm. This event will feature representatives from community social services agencies sharing information on resources available for people living in poverty.

All events are open to the public!

These events are jointly sponsored by the Brown County Homeless & Housing Coalition and the Brown County Food & Hunger Network. All community members are invited to participate in the events of the week. Additional ways to become involved include volunteering at a community agency or making monetary or food donations. Please contact DonElla Payne or Dean Ahrens for more information.

“Homelessness and hunger in the Brown County area is at one of the highest levels ever. One organization can make a difference in many peoples’ lives, but several organizations, working together, can impact an entire community. Every can of food or dollar donated helps to assure that people in this town have beds to sleep in and food to eat. To the generous people of Brown County, I say THANK YOU!” Dean Ahrens, President, Brown County Food & Hunger Network.

The Brown County Homeless & Housing Coalition is a community based organization made up of representatives from multiple community agencies working to end homelessness through advocacy, education, and collaboration.

The Brown County Food & Hunger Network provides a forum for community partners to take action toward improved food security and relief of hunger. The Network is made up of 23 neighborhood pantries.

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