

Gazette



A 'Place of Plenty'

FOOD BANK OF NORTHEAST GEORGIA MOVES INTO EXPANDED FACILITY

The Food Bank of Northeast Georgia, a Walton Gas customer, recently moved into a new, expanded warehouse on Newton Bridge Road in Athens. The roomier space is allowing the non-profit to expand its food assistance programs at a time when it's desperately needed.

"There has been a 30% increase in total food insecurity in Northeast Georgia," said Kelly Klein, the nonprofit's director of development.

The Food Bank's Athens branch, along with a second location in Rabun County, are the main collection points for donated items and purchased surplus food. The supplies are distributed in a 14-county service area with the help of more than 200 member organizations, mobile pantry events and community programs.

Last year, the Food Bank distributed 11.8 million pounds of food — the equivalent of 9.8 million meals. It was the second highest total food distribution in the 32-year history of the organization.

The new facility is 65% larger, which correlates to the organization's ability to source and mobilize more food to meet escalating need in 2024. Improvements include an 84% increase in fresh and frozen food storage capacity and an additional 8,000 square feet in dry food storage.

There is also more room for helping hands like those of the Walton Gas employee team. The facility's volunteer center now accommodates up to 75 people at one time, more than doubling the workforce available to sort and distribute food.

Erin Barger, president and CEO, sums up the benefits of the new facility, saying: "This allows us to be what we have always been in spirit: a place of plenty."

—continued on back

The Food Bank of Northeast Georgia, a Walton Gas customer, recently moved its collection and distribution operations into a new warehouse on Newton Bridge Road in Athens.



The Walton Gas team looks forward to our annual volunteering at the Food Bank of North East Georgia and we're excited to support their new facility.

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Current Capacity vs New Capacity

	Facility Size	Pounds Mobilized	Volunteer Capacity	Dry Food Storage	Fresh Food Storage
Current Facility	38,187 ft² 5 acres	11.5 Million	30 serving at one time	22,197 ft²	5,481 ft²
New Facility	62,964 ft² (65% increase) 37 acres	18-20 Million (56%-74% increase)	75 serving at one time	30,539 ft² (38% increase)	10,071 ft² (84% increase)

gas up the stove Coconut Delight



INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup margarine, melted
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 1/4 cup flaked coconut
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 cup slivered almonds
- 1 package instant vanilla pudding mix
- 1 package instant coconut pudding mix
- 2-2/3 cups cold milk
- 2 cups whipped topping
- strawberries to garnish, optional

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine the margarine, flour, coconut, brown sugar and almonds in a bowl. Press lightly into a greased 13x9x2 baking pan. Bake at 350 F for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Stir every 10 minutes to form coarse crumbs. Cool, then divide mixture in half. Press one half of the crumb mixture into same pan. In a bowl, beat the pudding mixes and milk together. Fold in whipped topping. Spoon over crust. Top with remaining crumb mixture. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Serve garnished with strawberries, if desired.

Submitted by Lunnette Edens, customer care supervisor at Walton Gas. Featured recipes are not independently tested, so we must depend on the accuracy of the cooks sending them. Always use safe food handling, preparation and cooking procedures from the recognized experts.

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