The City of Muskogee Foundation, along with the City of Muskogee and Neighbors Building Neighbors, is feeding families in Muskogee this summer. Summer programs were cancelled because of COVID-19, which allowed the Foundation to repurpose grant funds and purchase food from the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma for the benefit of local families.

This food distribution program started June 4 and continues weekly through July. Community volunteers distribute food boxes to the first 450 cars and they also help with traffic flow and a quick survey. For more details, visit www.cityofmuskogeefoundation.org.

Foundation Management clients have distributed $650,000 in grants since early March.
These are crazy times. The words unprecedented, challenging, and ever-changing lead every news story and weave into every conversation these days. As we at Foundation Management motored through the uncertainty of the past months, we have been overwhelmed by the fortitude of the human spirit, the generosity within our communities, and the kindnesses we have witnessed personally and professionally. Yes, things are unpredictable, but having worked in the business of philanthropy for more than forty years, I feel now more than ever that we are living in giving times.

This edition of our Giving Times highlights good news: a new charitable platform to help Oklahomans working in foodservice, created by Cresap Foundation, through a partnership with Oklahoma Restaurant Association. And, after several grantees had to cancel summer programs, the City of Muskogee Foundation found a worthwhile way to use those funds that will still help local children and families. Another positive outcome this spring is how the Regional Food Bank is adapting to feed more people in Oklahoma.

We also share a few interesting and helpful apps and software suggestions to make your life easier. No one could have predicted our current situation—but it is probably safe to say we had better not expect things to get back to what we used to consider “normal” right away. With the pandemic, the changing financial markets and unstable oil prices, nothing is certain except that we must continue to help those in need and look for new ways to innovate. We are stronger together.

Please let me know how we can be of service to you—

Frankly Speaking

Three Cheers to the Regional Food Bank!

Spotlight on Innovation: Rising to This Challenge

In a recent email, Regional Food Bank Chief Development Officer, Cassie Gilman, wrote “As the State begins to reopen for business, I have been thinking about the recent weeks and how a crisis brings opportunity. And over the last several weeks, I have learned many lessons I hope we can carry forward in the future.”

She goes on to explain how her leadership team and staff have come together and through creativity, need, grit and trial-and-error, created new ways to feed Oklahomans in every corner of the State. They have greatly expanded Feeding Programs by collaborating with new partners, and in doing so, expanded their reach and increased efficiencies.

As an organization heavily reliant on volunteer labor and donations, they have created new ways to volunteer and added additional shifts in order to accommodate for current circumstances, while also getting even more creative with their fundraising and donor communications.

We commend their entrepreneurial spirit and their determination. We hope that each of you, as well as all of our nonprofit agencies, are able to find lessons and innovation as, together, we continue to work together through this crisis.
Grants Help Displaced Workers During Restaurant Closures

As John Cresap heard the news of restaurants and bars being ordered to close, he immediately thought of the wait staff, bartenders and other workers who would be without income. These frontline workers are the faces of so many local establishments and they are the ones who make our experiences there special. He and his family knew they wanted to help.

“For everyone who is missing their morning coffee, favorite meal or happy hour… I hope you will consider giving to this fund today. Restaurant and service industry workers have always had a special place in my heart. When I was the Anheuser Busch wholesaler, we worked hand-in-hand to give our customers the best entertainment experience. As our Foundation was considering impactful ways to get much-needed funds into the hands of these professionals, we were especially excited about this relief fund because it will allow others to easily contribute and guarantee funds get into the hands of those who need immediate help,” says Cresap, the President of the Cresap Family Foundation.

The Cresap Family Foundation, in partnership with the Oklahoma Restaurant Association, created the OKC Restaurant Employee Relief Fund. This fund provides $500 stipends to restaurant workers who have lost their jobs during this time. Over 350 workers have received funds and more will benefit as the platform continues to raise funds.

Bank of America, Boston Beers (Samuel Adams and Truly Hard Seltzer), Capitol Distributing, Corona Beers, Shiner Bock, White Claw Hard Seltzer and many others made contributions. Donations are still being accepted at OKRestaurants.com.

In its sixth year, the Cresap Family Foundation is committed to improving quality of life for Oklahomans and beyond through the support of programs impacting youth and families, health and wellness, education, arts and humanities and animal welfare. Denny, Gail and John Cresap established the foundation following the sale of the family’s business, Premium Beers of Oklahoma, one of the largest Anheuser-Busch distributorships in the country. A desire to give back to the communities that had supported Premium Beers of Oklahoma for 44 years resulted in the foundation’s creation.

“We are watching our fellow Oklahomans come together and we are especially appreciative of the hard-working staff at our nonprofit partners, who are feeding, housing and supporting those who need extra help and hope during this hard time.”  

John Cresap
Ginny Evans brings more than 20 years in community banking to the team, providing a range of financial services as an accounting specialist. Her expertise affords clients peace of mind with her timely reports of financial activities, monthly accounting, and mineral and risk management. She also does financial work internally, providing reporting and analysis for Foundation Management.

“During the past two months, Ginny has been the driving force behind check processing and payments to agencies who need them fast,” explains Kari Blakley. “She has adapted quickly and allowed us all to respond to the needs around us.”

Her skills and attention to detail allow clients to focus on their philanthropy and mission work, which is one of the things she likes best about her job. She earned her degree from University of Central Oklahoma.

Prior to joining Foundation Management, she was senior vice president at a local bank, focusing on residential real estate development and construction lending and has also worked in the insurance industry. She is a member of Lakeside United Methodist Church, former treasurer/board member of Oklahoma Youth Orchestra, former member of Visionary Oklahoma Women and an AMBUCS member.

She and her husband, Don, have two children and one granddaughter.