



Volunteer Newsletter

Route Restructure:

Why It Matters and How You Can Help
Written by Gina Hudson

We're currently working on a route restructure to improve how we deliver rescued food to our food access partners. Our goal is to make the process more efficient, more equitable, and ultimately easier for our volunteers - while continuing to meet the needs of the communities we serve. This restructure is about more than just changing routes. It's about making thoughtful improvements to how we allocate food, how we schedule deliveries, and how we engage with both our donors and recipients.

One of our main goals is to better match food deliveries to each partner's needs, considering things like service hours, capacity, and food type. We're also working to simplify the volunteer experience by reducing the need for on-the-spot decisions. This includes combining smaller stops, adjusting delivery order, and making sure partners, whether first or last stop, receive a fair and usable share of food.

On the donor side, we're reviewing how our pick-ups are performing. This includes assessing which partners are providing high volumes of quality donations and whether the time and resources spent on certain pick-ups are giving us the best return in terms of food access. Our hope is that, with a more streamlined route system, we can make better use of your time and our fleet while maximizing the impact of each delivery.

To make sure the restructure is doing what we want it to, we'll be tracking several key outcomes. We'll look at whether food is being fairly and consistently distributed, how often partners are declining food, and whether routes are running more smoothly overall. We'll also pay close attention to whether "last stop" deliveries are receiving quality food, and whether the types and quantities of food we're delivering align with what our partners actually need. All of this data helps us make informed adjustments and continue improving.

Most importantly, we want to hear from you. Your on-the-ground experience is incredibly valuable, and once the new routes roll out, we'll be looking for your input on how they're working.

We'd love to know how manageable the routes feel, whether things feel clearer or more complicated, and if the food allocation changes pose any new challenges. Even small observations about parking challenges or delivery timing can help us refine the process.

We understand that change can be challenging, but we're committed to making this transition as smooth as possible - and better for everyone involved.

Thank you for all you do to support this work. Your time, care, and feedback are at the heart of our mission.

Van

Temperature/Equipment
Written by Elizabeth Wagner

It's heating up outside, which means our vans' refrigerator units are working extra hard to keep our food cold during routes! To help keep temperatures in the cargo area as cool as possible, please leave the vehicle running at your stops and keep the doors closed when you can. Temperature readings on our refrigerator units will naturally be higher in the summer, but if you notice consistently high temps (even while the doors are closed for extended periods) please let a staff member know when you return!

If you are in an unrefrigerated vehicle, please grab a bag of ice pack sheets from the food warehouse before your route. You can place these sheets over boxes that contain chilled items, and collect them after distributing the boxes to our food access partners. Thanks for helping keep our food safe while it's on the move!

North Liberty Pantry

Written by: Ryan Mohwinkle

The new North Liberty Pantry is officially up and running! We've been making regular drop offs at the new location for two weeks now! Here are the updated instructions for dropping off at NL Pantry in a T2T van:

- Enter on the East driveway with the sign that says "Deliveries Only" - closest to Pizza Plus/railroad tracks.
- Park parallel to the garage door in the loading zone. Push the doorbell by the 'Volunteers Only' door if the garage door isn't opening.
- Exit out the farthest west lane and straight out the lot. If you're unable to reach volunteers, call Leslie Alvarez (319) 721-4015.

Volunteer Spotlight - Steve Gallagher

Written by: Lynn Morano

If you haven't already had the pleasure, we'd like to introduce you to Steve Gallagher.

Steve was born in Belmond, Iowa, and moved to West Branch at age 14, where he lived until he was 18. He's called North Liberty home for the past 41 years. Before retiring, Steve worked as a Class A CDL driver for Hawkeye Foodservice/US Foods.

Steve has been a dedicated Table to Table volunteer for over six years—specifically, six years and four months. When asked how he got started with T2T, Steve shared: “I knew that Dick Braverman (past president of Hawkeye Foodservice) volunteered at T2T. Two months after I retired, I started volunteering. Fun fact: Before looking into it, I had no idea what T2T did—but figured if Dick was involved, it had to be worthwhile!”



Steve with Shavonna - Operations Manager at Amazon Steve and Shavonna have developed a friendship through Table to Table's partnership with Amazon

One of Steve's favorite memories from his time with Table to Table comes from his early days: “There were times when it was just Frank Lalor and me in the building. I marveled at—and was humbled by—the quiet, modest, unassuming person who had a vision that became Table to Table.”

Steve believes passionately in the mission: “You may discover that T2T is something that was missing from your life—and you didn't even know it. Despite what some might say, NO ONE in this country should go hungry. Especially children.”

When he's not volunteering, Steve's interests are as wide-ranging as they are thoughtful. He enjoys being outdoors, walking, bicycling, reading, feeding and watching birds, and sharing meals with friends. He loves working on and maintaining anything mechanical and has a deep curiosity for planes, trains, automobiles, ships, deep space telescopes, weather, wildlife, and just about anything else you can think of. Steve is also passionate about economics (macro and micro), history, human behavior, and travel. He describes food as a hobby too—not just eating, but balancing it with activity. His favorite dish? Authentic Key Lime Pie. Though, he's also known for making an excellent chocolate banana malt: vanilla ice cream, too much chocolate syrup, plenty of malt powder, and a whole banana—blended to perfection. (But don't even try to sip it through a straw—it's not going to happen.)

Steve also has a dream: “Someday, I'd like to cross Lake Superior on a seventy-year-old Great Lakes freighter—exploring everything from bow to stern. I'll pass on doing it on the last trip of the season, though.”

Above all, Steve describes himself as someone who's “curious about everything” and trying to “age gracefully”—with a healthy dose of humor.

We're so lucky to have Steve as part of the Table to Table family.

Service Enterprise Project Update

Written by: Marcia Musgrove

Update on Service Enterprise Project:

Objective of this project: Table to Table agency Assessment, Evaluation and Implementation of Best Practices that support Volunteer Engagement

What has been completed 2024-25?

- Collaboration with Volunteer Iowa to learn about best practices in supporting and engaging volunteers
- Assessment of current state at Table to Table
- Analysis of assessment with identification of areas meeting expectations and also areas for improvement.
- Developed action plan
- Completed timeline for agency action plan
- Revisions made to current documents and processes
- Completed and submitted the required documents to Volunteer Iowa for review and feedback

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Service Enterprise Project Update Cont.

Outcomes:

- Completion and implementation of Volunteer Handbook
- Update on-line orientation to align with Volunteer Handbook
- Completion of Volunteer Survey
- Review of volunteer orientation process resulting in identification of need for standardization of orientation
- Developed and implemented Volunteer Orientation checklist

What is next?

- Awaiting feedback from Volunteer Iowa
- Site visit in July, 2025

Gleaning:

Written by Gina Hudson

Help Fight Food Loss on Farms & Gardens – Join Our Gleaning Crew!

Love being outdoors and making a difference? Volunteer with our Gleaning Program! Collect excess fresh produce from local farms and gardens and help get it to neighbors in need the very same day.

Why volunteer?

Rescue fresh, local, nutritious food

Support local hunger relief

Enjoy time outside and connect with others

Flexible, meaningful opportunities

Sign up today and help nourish our community—one harvest at a time!

If you are interested or have questions please send an email to gleaning@table2table.org



Moments that Matter

Written by: Dedi Walker

There are so many reasons to volunteer with Table to Table rescuing food. The obvious one is that by transporting food items from those who have them to those who need the food is reward in itself. But for Will and me the best part of our route is the interaction that we have with employees at the donor sites and with our recipient partners. Sometimes the interactions are just as simple as a “Thank you for taking this food so we don’t have to throw it away.” Other times the interactions are almost miraculous.

Last week at one of our donor sites (Waterfront HyVee) we were given several banana boxes of taco kits. Each kit included taco seasoning, hard shell tacos and soft shell tacos. That is not a typical item for us. When we got to our first partner agency (Waterfront HACAP) to drop off food, we mentioned that in addition to the usual dairy, produce and bakery items, we had taco kits.

The recipient was thrilled. As it turned out, she had planned to have tacos for lunch the next day. We had enough kits that she could serve hard shell tacos for lunch and save the soft shells for a snack! That wasn’t the first time that we’d been told that the food we had was exactly what was needed. Such a blessing! Interactions with employees and the general public are so positive and reinforce what a difference Table to Table makes. Recently, we’ve had numerous positive interactions. Some examples: An employee thanked us for taking the food from HyVee. We’ve had employees flag us down to let us know that their department had a donation for us, even though they know that we always stop and ask for their donations. They seemed excited to be able to contribute. A woman in a parking lot asked what we were doing and after a brief explanation, she told us that she sometimes went to the food bank.

And, all of that was just in the last two weeks!

Zucchini Season Is Here – Let’s Air Fry It!

Written by Greg Clancy
Quick and tasty recipe for that wonderful summer squash

- One zucchini sliced ¼ inch
- Drizzle both sides of zucchini with olive oil
- Sprinkle with garlic salt and pepper - or add some oregano, basil or parsley
- Toss zucchini in breadcrumbs or panko
- Place zucchini on baking sheet or line wire rack with parchment
- Top each slice with parmesan cheese
- Set air fryer to 400 degrees and air fry for 6 minutes until zucchini is a light toasty brown
- Best served with a Marinara sauce



Got Ideas? We’re All Ears (and Inbox)!

We're cooking up future issues and want your input! Got a half-baked thought, a spicy topic, or a food rescue question that's been simmering?! Just send an email to Jared at: Jared@table2table.org - it could be our next main course.



Your Volunteer Newsletter Crew:

- Jared Long
- Gina Hudson
- Marcia Musgrove
- Greg Clancy
- Jeff Knox
- Lynn Morano



"This newsletter aims to provide consistent and clear information for all volunteers so everyone is on the same page. Articles are informative, offering insights, tips, and resources that empower volunteers to make a difference. Each bi-monthly issue will also showcase the incredible efforts of individuals who share their knowledge and inspire action."