



NEWS RELEASE
Office of the City Manager, City of Wheat Ridge
7500 West 29th Avenue, Wheat Ridge, Colorado 80033-8001

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FEED THE FUTURE BACK PACK FOOD PROGRAM A SUCCESS THANKS TO COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Grassroots program supports 75 students weekly

WHEAT RIDGE, CO –Pennington Elementary School in Wheat Ridge is one of 23 Jefferson County Public Schools identified as having a higher percentage of children that qualify for free and reduced lunches. Because of this, Pennington Elementary was identified as a Title I School. As a result, a backpack food program was developed to help feed low income students. The Pennington “Feeding the Future” Backpack Program officially began January 28, 2010, at Pennington Elementary. The program has over 75 participants at Pennington and wishes to expand to meet the needs of more students. The program supplies back packs with food for the weekend to children in need.

District IV Councilmember Tracy Langworthy stated, “I’m a mom and passionate about children’s issues. They do not have a voice for themselves and need someone to stand up for them. The program helps children, who through no fault of their own, find themselves without enough food for the weekend. This problem affects all of society as these children will become the workforce of tomorrow and we need to make sure they have the proper tools to learn.”

The Wheat Ridge Police Department, Optimists, and Rotary joined forces to bring this program to Pennington students. Food distribution is coordinated through the Arvada Community Food Bank and is brought to the school on a weekly basis by volunteers from the community. Wheat Ridge Police Chief Daniel Brennan stated, “This is a wonderful program and there is more work to be done to sustain and allow the program to expand.”

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Feed the future back pack program

Enterprise Wheat Ridge (EWR) is a local non-profit business organization that has played an important fundraising role in the back pack program. Loretta DiTirro, EWR President commented, "During 2010 several fund raisers were held to raise the \$25,000 in funds needed for the Wheat Ridge Feeding the Future Backpack program. The objective was to make folks aware of the critical needs of some of our children in Wheat Ridge." If you, your school, church, reading club or any other group would like to participate, have a suggestion for raising money or make a cash donation, please contact Loretta DiTirro at 303-594-1520.

Mayor Jerry DiTullio added, "The community's effort with the back pack program exemplifies the kind of involvement that is needed to make a difference. The cooperation of the local non-profits, private businesses and the City government, especially Councilmember Langworthy, are a fine example of the community involvement needed in tackling a tough problem."

To make a tax deductible donation please send to:

Wheat Ridge Foundation, c/o Wheat Ridge Recreation Center
4005 Kipling St.
Wheat Ridge, CO 80033

For more information, contact Matthew Brozek, Assistant to the City Manager Fellow at 303-235-2867 or E-mail at mbrozek@ci.wheatridge.co.us

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