

Mercy Meals of Southwest Nebraska surpasses 100,000 packaged meals

Written by Wauneta Breeze

Friday, 22 February 2013 18:26 -



Mercy Meals volunteers (from left) Jackie McBride, Ila Foley and Elaine Haarberg are busy getting ready for the next round of meal packaging by putting identification stickers on empty meal bags. The organization has now packaged 109,200 meals after last weekend's surge.

By Sheri Hink-Wagner

The Wauneta Breeze

Mercy Meals of Southwest Nebraska volunteers are celebrating a new milestone this week.

Last weekend was a flurry of activity at Mercy Meals in Wauneta when 35 volunteers in two shifts packaged 15,600 meals, bringing the organization's total number of packaged meals to 109,200.

This milestone was reached exactly five months after volunteers packaged the first meals at the Wauneta site on Sept. 16, 2012.

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The food packaged at Mercy Meals is sent on to people in need both domestically and throughout the world. The meals are shipped free of charge via the Orphan Grain Train.

Organization leaders urged volunteers to give their time last Saturday, Feb. 16 in order to make room for a new shipment of food products and supplies that arrived on Monday.

Monday's shipment included enough food to package another 70,000 meals. It consisted of six pallets of soy and rice as well as loose boxes of chicken flavoring and dried vegetables.

The meals packaged by Mercy Meals' volunteers are highly nutritious and carry a cost of only \$0.10 per serving—which includes food and packaging materials.

Monday afternoon while some volunteers were outside rearranging the storage unit and unloading the new shipment from the Orphan Grain Train truck, others were inside getting ready for the next round of packaging.

Each package includes enough food for six people and has an attached sticker identifying where the meal was packaged, a packaged date and expiration date. Meals are packaged into bags which each hold six servings.

Jackie McBride, Ila Foley and Elaine Haarberg worked inside putting identifying stickers on empty bags, making them ready to fill with meals.

Mercy Meals sent its last shipment of packaged meals in December 2012. The shipment in December was sent to the Philippines.

The organization is awaiting a date for the next outgoing shipment of packaged meals.

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Those interested in signing up to help package the new shipment of food can sign up via the organization's website at www.mercymealsofsouthwestnebraska.com or by calling Janet Keiser at 308-394-5191, Kent or Elaine Haarberg at 308-394-5771 or Mary Haarberg at 308-883-6761.

Financial donations can be sent to Mercy Meals of Southwest Nebraska, P.O. Box 474, Wauneta, NE 69045.



Volunteers of all ages are welcomed at Mercy Meals. Here (clockwise from top left) Tyler, Bo and Ella O'Neil take a break from loading the storage unit with new supplies when the organization received a new shipment from Orphan Grain Train on Monday.