



As food needs continue to rise, KorthaseFlinn sponsors Manna mobile pantry at Odawa Casino

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HARBOR SPRINGS, MICHIGAN—Even with government stimulus checks, many Northern Michigan families continue to face economic hardship due to the COVID-19 crisis. According to Char-Em United Way, food assistance is the most common request of call centers and hotlines in our area. To meet the need, Manna Food Project announced that a second mobile food pantry has been funded, this time for the Petoskey area.

The drive-thru, mobile pantry will be held at Odawa Casino—1760 Lears Road—every Friday from May 1 through May 22. Manna staff and volunteers will distribute pre-assembled food boxes with an assortment of shelf-stable items, along with a bag of fresh and frozen items, from noon to 3 p.m.

When those in need of food assistance arrive at the casino, they will be asked to provide only basic household information, including name and address—all from the safety of their car. No prior registration is needed, all food is distributed free-of-charge, and all are welcome.

“KorthaseFlinn Insurance & Financial Services approached us last week wanting to help,” says Kim Baker, executive director of Manna Food Project. “Thanks to their generous donation and a matching gift by Auto-Owners Insurance, we’ll be able to supply hundreds of food boxes to help our neighbors.”

After just two weeks, the mobile pantry at Boyne Highlands provided food to nearly 140 households, representing nearly 400 individuals. A large portion of those clients had never used food assistance before, Baker notes.

“KorthaseFlinn and Odawa Casino have been wonderful community partners for many years,” says Baker.

“Hospitality, restaurant, construction, and other service workers help make Northern Michigan a wonderful place to live, work, and play. Unfortunately, they are among the hardest hit by the COVID-19 crisis, suffering from layoffs and countless retail and restaurant closings,” says Randy Flinn, president of KorthaseFlinn. “In normal times these individuals are always there for us...but at this moment it is our opportunity to be there for them.”

“We have been very proud to partner with Manna Food Project on several projects,” states Ron Olson, general manager of Odawa Casino. “We support their efforts and are excited to be a host site for the drive-thru mobile pantry in our area. It’s truly remarkable to see our community step forward.”

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Manna Food Project, a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization, helps feed the hungry in Antrim, Charlevoix, and Emmet Counties. Manna is a partner organization of the national Feeding America Food Bank Network and operates a food bank and distribution center, a food rescue program, a food pantry, and the “Food 4 Kids” backpack program. For more information, call 231.347.8852 or visit www.mannafoodproject.org.