

# Newsletter

FALL 2023



Guests enjoying unique tastings from guests chefs

## Saving Grace Celebrates a Decade of Perishable Food Rescue

September 30, 2013 – the first day Saving Grace Perishable Food Rescue began operations. Fast forward 3,650 days and Saving Grace has reached a milestone in its history, celebrating ten years of operations. Founded by CEO/President Beth Ostdiek Smith, Saving Grace continues to reshape the conversation in the Omaha metro around wasted food and its societal and environmental impacts.

To honor this moment, Saving Grace hosted *To the Rescue: Celebrating a Decade of Nourishing People, Nurturing the Planet*. Held Monday, September 25 at Film Streams Dundee Theater, the event's goal was to empower people to solve the problems of wasted food and hunger in our community. Guests enjoyed a cocktail reception and appetizers from Lola's, along with unique tastings by local chefs.

Following the reception, several short films about the impact of wasted food on society, and solutions that everyone can be part of, were shown. An engaging panel discussion, along with an opportunity for guests to ask questions about topics such as Omaha's Climate Action Plan and Saving Grace's role in it, also occurred. Panelists included **Sam Buck**, Senior Manager of Development, ReFED; **Pete Festersen**, Omaha City Council President and Vice President of Strategy and Public Affairs, CHI Health; **Tyler Humphrey**, Senior Executive Chef, Levy at CHI Health Center Omaha; **Robert Wilson**, Food Service Director, The Stephen Center; and **Beth Ostdiek Smith**, Founder and CEO/President of Saving Grace Perishable Food Rescue. **Brian O'Malley**, Associate Dean, Culinary, Hospitality and Horticulture at Metropolitan Community College, served as the emcee of the event.



Pete Festersen, Robert Wilson, Beth Ostdiek Smith, Tyler Humphrey, Sam Buck, Brian O'Malley

To date, approximately **eight million pounds of food, at a value of over \$15 million dollars, has been rescued by Saving Grace**, and redistributed to serve those in need. We thank the many financial donors who have supported our work, the food donors who have redirected nutritious, perishable food away from landfills and donated it through Saving Grace to reach our nonprofit partners, past and current staff, board and advisory board members who help guide our efforts, and community members and volunteers who advocate for the mission. We are honored you are part of Saving Grace.

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Photos by Debra Kaplan

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## Saving Grace Sponsors National Conference on Food Waste and Loss Prevention

ReFED is a national nonprofit with a holistic view of the food system, working to advance solutions to reduce food loss and waste. Since its inception in 2015, ReFED has developed a trusted history of producing first-of-their-kind tools and resources, providing a full-supply-chain picture of U.S. food waste, cost-effective solutions to reduce it, and methods to track progress. Aligning with the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals to reduce food loss and waste by the year 2030, ReFED is distinctive in their aim to leverage data to promote a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive food system.  
(ReFED website)

ReFED hosts the annual Food Waste Solutions Summit, convening businesses, funders, innovators, policymakers, and nonprofits to drive food waste solutions. Saving Grace was proud to serve as a sponsor of the 2023 event, held in May in St. Louis. The nearly three-day event featured speakers from a variety of disciplines, educating and empowering all attendees to be active participants in the reduction of food waste. Saving Grace is committed to working collaboratively with partners locally and nationally to establish more equitable food systems that decrease the environmental impact of food waste.

Find out more  
at [www.refed.org](http://www.refed.org).



**ReFED**

## GUESTS ENJOY MENU Featuring Rescued Food WHILE RAISING FUNDS



Saving Grace CEO and founder, Beth Ostdiek Smith (right), is pictured with Dining for Good guests Marsha and Milton Kleinberg.



Guests from Dining for Good Bronze Sponsor The Premier Advisory Group enjoyed dinner featuring rescued food.

Over 100 attendees enjoyed a gourmet meal at Dante during Saving Grace's June 12 Dining for Good fundraiser. Participants raised more than \$39,000 to support the organization's work to reduce wasted food and provide more people with access to the nutrition they need to thrive.

Guests at this year's event enjoyed the menu Chef Nick Strawhecker and his staff curated, including items featuring rescued foods from our trucks. Diners could choose from three starter dishes, three entrees and two original cocktails that incorporated rescued foods such as asparagus, rainbow chard, fresh tomatoes, raspberries and lavender.

A fun and interesting collection of raffle prizes provided guests with an opportunity to win big while supporting Saving Grace. Packages included tickets to popular sporting events, favorite restaurants, a catered Dante pizza party, fine spirits and more.

We appreciate everyone who supported the event, including the Dante team and our sponsors:

- Silver plate – First National Bank of Omaha and Nebraska Medicine
- Bronze plate – Bridges Investment Management, Dundee Bank, Iridian, Koley Jessen, Mutual of Omaha, PenFed Credit Union, Physicians Mutual, Premier Advisory Group and Valmont.



Guests Donna and Michael Foley and Mary and Richard Murphy enjoyed the Dining for Good event supporting Saving Grace's mission.

Photos by Debra Kaplan



# Rescued Food Makes a Big Impact on Hunger

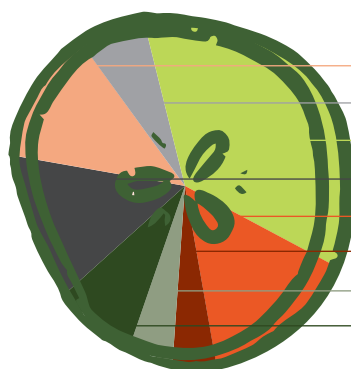
Did you know that approximately one-third of all food produced is wasted? In Nebraska and Iowa alone, there were 1.7 million tons of surplus food in 2021 and most of it went straight to the landfill. At the same time, over 80,000 people in the Omaha and Council Bluffs area struggle to have enough nutritious food for themselves and their families.

The solution Saving Grace provides makes sense. We make it easy and safe for food vendors to donate their surplus instead of letting it go to waste. Every business day, our food rescue and redistribution service connects nutritious, perishable food from local businesses to nonprofit agencies serving those in need.

The food we rescue is matched to each nonprofit partner's needs and is delivered free of charge on the same day we rescue it. When you support Saving Grace Perishable Food Rescue, you are supporting over 40 nonprofit organizations in our community. A full list of the nonprofit organizations we donate food to can be found at [www.savinggracefoodrescue.org](http://www.savinggracefoodrescue.org).

The food Saving Grace rescues has a positive impact on thousands of people in our community. Shawn Peoples, Supervisor for Adams Park Senior Center, shared: **"Many of our clients depend on Saving Grace as a main source to provide meal options to their families and to feed their children on the weekends. Some have also been able to provide food options for elderly neighbors who are not able to get to the grocery store. We often overhear our clients praising Saving Grace for being a beacon of nutrition during trying times."**

## Where Our Rescued Food Goes



Homeless Shelters 6  
Senior Centers 3  
Pantries 18  
Transitional Living Centers 7  
On-Site Meal Programs 7  
Health Centers 2  
Community Organizations 2  
After School Programs 4

## Getting to Know Our Team:

We are pleased to announce the addition of a new member to our Saving Grace team, as well as two promotions within our team.



**LENLI CORBETT**

Lenli Corbett has joined as COO/ Vice President. Lenli has been involved with Saving Grace in volunteer roles since inception. She served on the Saving Grace Board 2017-2023 while serving as chair in 2019, and most recently until she stepped down to join our staff on August 1. Lenli comes with a wealth of knowledge and experience, having worked in various roles within the nonprofit community. Lenli will work closely with Beth Ostdiek Smith, CEO of Saving Grace, to help define the next chapter of the organization.



**RANDY HANSEN**

Randy Hansen has been promoted to the Director of Operations and Food Partnerships. Randy joined Saving Grace in 2015 as a driver/ food ambassador. He was first promoted to Lead Driver and then to Field Manager two years ago. He will oversee field operations, analysis of our data for operational improvements, steward and recruit food donors, and invest in relationships with our nonprofit food recipient partners to ensure we are making the best impact where needed.



**TIM WYATT**

Tim Wyatt has been promoted to Field Manager. Tim joined Saving Grace in October of 2020 as a driver/ food ambassador. Tim was promoted to Lead Driver in July 2022. He will work closely with our food partners and supervise our food ambassadors/ drivers, set the daily schedules, and take all food partner calls. Tim will work closely with the Director of Operations and Food Partnerships, while growing his great working relationships with food donors and recipient partners, train and manage the field team, dispatch all calls, oversee truck maintenance, and monitor fuel and product expenses.



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[www.savinggracefoodrescue.org](http://www.savinggracefoodrescue.org)

## BE THE SOLUTION: WAYS TO GET INVOLVED IN THE #NoWastedFood Movement

Support Saving Grace Perishable Food Rescue by making a donation this fall and winter:

### November 28 – #GivingTuesday402

Make a donation through [www.savinggracefoodrescue.org](http://www.savinggracefoodrescue.org) on Tuesday, November 28th for Giving Tuesday.



### December 6-26 – Whole Foods Round Up at the Register

Shop Whole Foods December 6th through the 26th and round up your purchase at the register. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Saving Grace.

Looking for a unique gift for your loved one? In lieu of a gift, make a donation in honor or memory of your loved one this season. All memorials and honorariums will receive an online certificate to print out and insert into a card.

Look for this emblem where you shop and eat! Support businesses that donate their excess perishable food through Saving Grace.

