



Spring 2020 Quarterly Communique

For the past 37 years, BACN has proven to be resilient through organizational transitions, periods of growth, and deep economic recessions. We have confronted roadblocks, created opportunities, and when necessary, adapted our practices while staying true to our mission.

These are unprecedented times. Each of us is responding to the coronavirus pandemic in our personal lives in ways we never considered. During these uncertain times, BACN is making every effort to continue supplemental food, financial assistance and social support to our Neighbors.



Last week, BACN made major modifications in our services. Addressing **Food Insecurity** continues to be our top priority! Instead of opening the pantry, a drive-up service provides pre-packaged food bags to Neighbors. Neighbors can register by phone, make an appointment, and pick up their groceries outside at the “drive-up table”. The Benzie Bus delivers BACN food bags to Neighbors who lack transportation.

The Senior Food Bag Service offered in partnership with Benzie Senior Resources is continuing without change. In collaboration with our local “Blessings in a Backpack,” organization, food bags for students are now available for pick-up at BACN. Local schools are delivering food to families eligible for the free or reduced lunch program at bus stops. The power of **Partnerships** has never been so evident in our community.

Requests for limited **Financial Assistance** are being processed over the phone. BACN is continuing to work with partner organizations to help Neighbors meet utility company requirements for assistance. The Clothing Center (shopping and donations), Adult education and Career Assistance Programs and events like Dine-Out for BACN have been suspended until further notice. We continue to provide **Social Support** through our telephone interactions, Facebook posts, and referrals to other agencies.

Forty-five percent of the food distributed through BACN is acquired through food drives and donations. With the help of volunteers, our Chase the Chill Food Drive will soon come to a close. In the true spirit of "Neighbors helping Neighbors", many of our supporters are choosing to make monetary donations in lieu of visiting local grocery stores. We will continue to depend on the generosity of our community to support these critical services.

The health and safety of staff, volunteers, and Neighbors is foremost in our thoughts. Staff members and a limited number of volunteers have been organized into stand-alone "platoons" working on a rotating basis to help limit personal contact. If one platoon becomes exposed and is not able to work, we have another platoon ready to step in.

Despite real concerns over the health and the needs of a growing group of Neighbors, we find **Hope** in the strong community response to this pandemic. We are grateful for your involvement and support and pray for the day when we return to normalcy.

In His service,



Gerri VanAntwerp
Executive Director

Benzie Area Christian Neighbors' (BACN) mission is "to strive to improve the quality of life for people with limited resources in our community by providing food, clothing, financial assistance, education and social support in collaboration with area resources."

