



Wednesday December 16, 2009

ember Restaurant hosts food drive



Snowshoe Foundation board members appraise the results of a canned goods collection at ember restaurant Sunday evening. The food will be donated to the Pocahontas Cooperative Parish Food Bank. Pictured, right to left, board member Bill Rock, Frank Santmeyer, Voras Haynes and Brain Ball. Behind Rock is Coby Brown, Snowshoe Foundation executive director. *G. Hamill photo*

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Staff Writer

ember Restaurant and Snowshoe Foundation hosted a canned food drive at Snowshoe Sunday night. The cover charge was canned goods and patrons enjoyed free refreshments, courtesy of the restaurant.

Patrons flowed through the door, depositing cans on a table near the entrance. Latecomers risked an avalanche as they carefully stacked their donations on a mountain that grew higher and higher. A standing-room-only crowd mingled to loud music and enjoyed a festive spirit, along with the feeling of helping a good cause.

The food will be given to the Pocahontas Cooperative Parish, a collaborative effort of churches and volunteers providing food to people in need. Sadly, the economic downturn has forced more county residents into poverty.

The Family Resource Network (FRN) reports that one-quarter of West Virginians are or will soon be living in poverty. Thirty-four percent of children in the Mountain State live in poverty, according to the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy. In some cases, people in ill health must decide whether to purchase expensive medicine or food.

Brian Ball, proprietor of ember Restaurant and Snowshoe Foundation board member, has hosted a charity event at Snowshoe for the last six years, each with a specific goal. Last year, the restaurant hosted Cribs for Kids to provide needed supplies to families with young children.

In addition to a large amount of canned goods, the staff at ember donated \$725 in tips collected during the event to a Snowshoe Foundation crisis fund.

FRN director Laura Young said donations of non-perishable food are accepted year-round for the Cooperative Parish, which is supported by churches of every denomination, civic organizations and individuals.

Snowshoe Foundation has been the single-largest donor to county food pantries in recent years, according to Coby Brown, the foundation's executive director.

Those interested in donating to the Cooperative Parish or providing volunteer service should contact the Family Resource Network at 304-799-6657.

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