



## A HOPEful Year in Grass Valley, California



Elks Lodge No. 538 have completed the first year of their Helping Other People Eat (HOPE) in Nevada County Impact Grant project, and in their own words, it has exceeded all expectations! What began as an already ambitious plan to provide 4,000 healthy snacks for schoolchildren each week and monthly food baskets to the community became something much larger. Through donations, discounts, fundraising, food drives (*pictured above*), and much community support, the program was able to double the snacks provided each week to 8,000 and now provides emergency food baskets each week as well as at a few other key times a year.



*At top, scouts helping out at the Christmas food drive. Below, distribution of emergency food baskets.*

Their hard work did not go unnoticed. In addition to regular thank you notes from food basket recipients, one local teacher wrote to thank the Elks for their volunteer efforts.

*“I want to thank you for your active participation with your HOPE project. My students have received snacks for the past year and I can definitely attest to the benefits. My students often come hungry, and because they’re growing, playing, and working hard all day, they STAY hungry during school. When the boys and girls are able to eat nutritious snacks, I find they have better*

*focus for longer periods, they're able to sustain quality independent work, have more mature conversational skills, and employ appropriate problem-solving techniques. The snacks help alleviate issues that the kids bring to school from home because a very basic need is being met. With your generosity, my classroom is a healthier, happier place in which to work, grow, learn and play. Thank you again for caring so much."*

The Grass Valley Lodge has been awarded an Impact Grant again for 2010 so their good work will continue. Knowing that Elks are working hard to help children in their community really does give you HOPE!

*Below, the tireless volunteers at the Grass Valley Lodge.*

