



The Almost Monthly Epic-Cure Newsletter *May 2022*

Open Invitation – *if you volunteer in St. Augustine, we'd love to have you join us in Palatka, and if you volunteer in Palatka, we'd love to have you join us in St. Augustine.*

We are proud of our volunteers. To a person, they share the Epic-Cure ethos: no matter what the job, they get it done right and with good grace in their hearts and deeds. Not all the jobs are easy. None of them are glamorous. But, every job matters to those we serve. We love our volunteers. They make this thing happen!

Announcement:

Indefatigable – that is the one-word email that I wrote not long ago describing a formidable personality, **Francisco Sanchez**.

- Sunny and I are proud to announce that Francisco has accepted the role of Epic-Cure's new **Head of Operations**.

Francisco brings boundless energy and an infinitely good heart to everything he does, and his ability to warmly bring people together is truly impressive. Francisco will be on a whirlwind tour of all our distributions in the coming weeks. So, when you see him, please congratulate him. If you have not yet met him, please introduce yourself. He will invite you warmly into his world, and you will be better for it.



Francisco is the man with the big smile and red shirt:



Recent news articles about Epic-Cure:

- <http://voyagetampa.com/interview/rising-stars-meet-sunny-mulford-of-st-augustine/>
- <https://www.staugustine.com/story/news/nonprofits/2022/05/02/st-johns-county-food-rescuer-distributor-epic-cure-needs-new-home/9569208002/>
- <https://uploads.documents.cimpress.io/v1/uploads/25120ac9-c1bd-41c2-a124-ed0c70a3da45~110/original?tenant=vbu-digital> (page 13)



Epic-Cure is one of Feeding Northeast Florida's 325 agencies. In 2021, Feeding Northeast Florida (FNEFL) provided 31.9 million pounds of food to those 325 agencies, and Epic-Cure obtained and, of course, distributed 3,482,617 pounds of that total. While it is 0.3% of the FNEFL agency world, Epic-Cure processed 10.9% of FNF's total throughput in 2021.

The remaining 998,137 pounds Epic-Cure distributed in 2021 came from sources like the USDA, Southeastern Food Bank, The Bishop's Storehouse, farm donations, food drives, etc.

Operations:

Palatka Warehouse:

We are still working to source more food for Palatka/Putnam County. We have a waiting list of people to contact when we can accommodate more appointments.



Our partner, First Baptist Church of Interlachen, where we distribute food on the 3rd Friday of each month, has the volunteers and desire to add a second distribution every month. Of the 800 families we serve every Friday and Saturday at the Palatka facility:

- 92 families travel from Interlachen (22 minutes away), and
- 29 families come from Hawthorne (37 minutes away with Interlachen in the middle)

to shop for food. Those 111 families would be much better served if we could move food out their way so that they can save money on fuel, the price of which has been rising and rising. So, adding a 2nd monthly distribution there is a top priority.

Electrical upgrade: Work began on May 2nd. The electrician is still waiting for the step-up transformer to arrive but is doing all the work he can so we can get our freezers working as soon as the transformer arrives. That will be a game changer! The biggest limiting factor for all food pantries is cold storage. If you cannot store food safely, you cannot take it. When those three 45' freezer container units come online, it opens so much more potential for food. Ken is already in contact with cold storage warehouses to let them know of our capacity and willingness to pick up.

St. Augustine Warehouse:

St. Johns County/United Way ARPA update.

United Way will form a steering committee to determine the guidelines and process for non-profits in St. Johns County to submit applications for funds from the \$7.7 million in ARPA grant money. The Steering Committee will be composed of 2 members from the County (1 staff and 1 elected), 2 from United Way, and 2 from the community. The United Way will receive 10% for coordinating the process, and the county will receive 5% administrative fees. \$6.5+ million will go to the non-profits.

The St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners will respond to the Steering Committee's recommendations on the guidelines and process. We trust the United Way's process and transparency. There are so many fantastic non-profits doing such great work in St. Johns County. We know that, whatever the outcome is, it will be good for the community. Of course, we will apply and will look for alternate sources of funding for both the St. Augustine and Palatka warehouses. Yes, we still need to worry about Palatka too. We need permanent bases so we can focus our attention on the pressing matters of sourcing more food and helping more families as they experience increasing need.



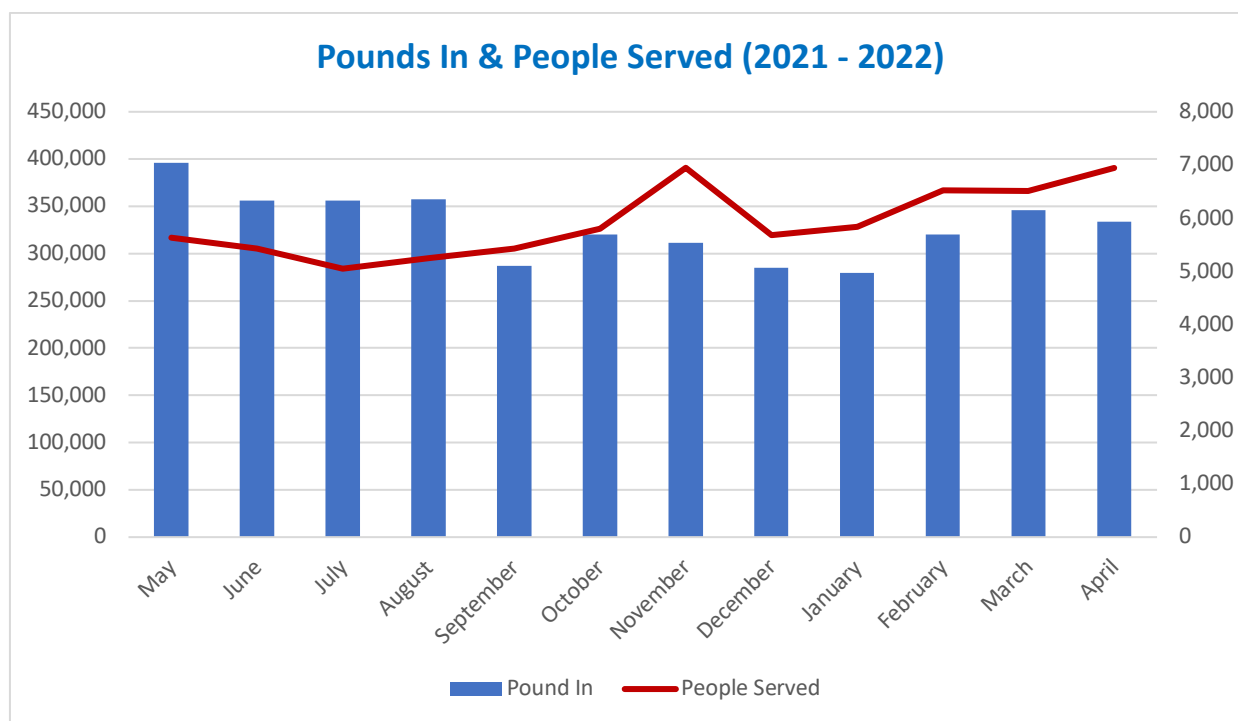
Please – do not call to advocate on our behalf. This is a grant process, not a public process. There is no need, and we do not wish to be disruptive.

We are so thankful for all the support and advice that our friends at Compassionate St. Augustine, CARES and Good Trouble have offered along the way. When they believe in you, they put their minds and energy into helping and open doors and possibilities. With them by our side, the answer is when, not if.

We still need a few more volunteers: The organizers of the Blue Crab Festival that takes place over the Memorial Day Weekend are going to donate tips received at the beer stations to Epic-Cure if our volunteers will help with the event. They still need are few more volunteers to help Friday from 12pm to 8pm, 3pm to 10pm, and 6pm to 11pm. On Saturday they need more volunteers on the 6pm to 11:30pm shift and on Sunday for the 9am to 1pm shift. If you can help, please sign up using the link below and mention Epic-Cure as your “company”.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4BADA92AA3FAC16-palatka>

Here is our PIPS (Pounds In & People Served) graph:





Notes on the graph:

Month	Total
January	279,452
February	320,028
March	345,916
April	334,062

You can see that “families served” is still rising. Our “pounds in” were slightly less than March, but we anticipate being back up in the 350,000 range in May. We have 3 new Dollar General stores for food rescue pick-ups in Putnam County, and Waste Not Florida sends a lot more our way now that we have been able to send the truck with a lift gate to do the pickups rather than personal vehicles. When we send personal vehicles, they must bag and box all the bread. When we send

our truck, they roll rolling towers of bread straight onto the truck eliminating lots of volunteer effort.

As always, we work non-stop to find new food sources. They are out there. With annual food waste in 2019 estimated at 108 billion pounds (source: ReFED) and Feeding America reporting that they and their national partner agency networks rescuing only 4.7 billion pounds, 4% of 108 billion, in 2021, we have a long way to go. That 4.7 billion was up from 4 billion in 2020 and 3.6 billion in 2019.

Sustain U.

Just 3 more weeks before we wrap up our Spring cooking class session. In July and August we are going to try something fun and different – everything breakfast.

1. Bacon, Egg and Cheese Sandwiches using both scrambled and fried eggs.
2. French Toast.
3. Eggs Benedict.
4. Smoothies & Homemade Granola.
5. Cafe Au Lait & Beignets.
6. Huevos Rancheros.
7. Omelets.
8. Biscuits and Gravy.

We plan to take the month of September off so new back to school routines can be established.

Fun fact: Every other Saturday, we do a food distribution at Woodlawn Terrace. Our cooking class students and a few parents show up each time to help. That now means that it only takes 1 volunteer to drive the truck and help the residents and our students take care of their community, including making home deliveries to the disabled residents.

By invitation from Hope4veterans, on May 21st, several of our instructors are volunteering their afternoon to teach a group of 5 military women how to cook a few recipes. [Hope4veterans](#)



assists military women and their families with financial, emotional, and physical support and they are sponsoring the event. The event will be held Murabella Community Center.

Composting: Yes, we haven't forgotten about that. We have one bin built and ready to be placed in service. If you know of a community that would be interested in starting or expanding a compost program, please have them contact sunny.mulford@epic-cure.org.



Grants & Fundraising:

Giving Day: Giving Day was a huge success raising **\$53,035**. Very special thank you to Charity Roberts for doing such a great marketing job for it. We know she volunteered over 100 hours for this project alone on top of all the warehouse working, store pickups, appointment taking and volunteer coordinating she does.

We have both the **As-If Festival** and the **Blue Crab Festival** coming up over the next few weeks.

Amazon Smile and Epic-Cure: If you are an Amazon shopper and do not have a charity you are supporting with your purchases, please consider choosing Epic-Cure and login to [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/smile) when shopping. 1% of all purchases go to support the charity you choose.



Please consider using these Honor Cards to donate to Epic-Cure as your gift to your friends and family!

IN HONOR OF YOUR GIFT IS TOO BIG FOR A BOX A donation to Epic-Cure's Sustain U children's cooking class has been made in your honor. This donation supports free culinary classes to middle school children from low income families. The children will leave the class with culinary skills and the ingredients needed to recreate the meal at home for a family of 6. 	 SUSTAIN-U At Sustain U we teach children and veterans about nutrition, meal planning, and how to safely prepare food through cooking classes taught by senior citizen mentors and chefs. By teaching useful and marketable life skills, we are connecting generations to improve the health and wellbeing of our seniors and providing paths to self-reliance for our Title 1 school children and our veterans- returning the favor. We are an 100% volunteer organization, our mission is fueled by the communities donated time and funds. Thank you for your contribution.
IN HONOR OF YOUR GIFT IS TOO BIG FOR A BOX A donation to Epic-Cure has been made in your honor. The donation made will provide 3 families with groceries for a week. This donation helps us to reach community members experiencing need, by providing them with the most basic necessity, food. It turns the lights on at our warehouse, powers our freezers and puts gas in our delivery trucks. This donation feeds our community. 	IN HONOR OF YOUR GIFT IS TOO BIG FOR A BOX A donation to Epic-Cure has been made in your honor. The donation made will provide 20 families with groceries for a week. This donation helps us to reach community members experiencing need, by providing them with the most basic necessity, food. It turns the lights on at our warehouse, powers our freezers and puts gas in our delivery trucks. This donation feeds our community. 
IN HONOR OF YOUR GIFT IS TOO BIG FOR A BOX A donation to Epic-Cure has been made in your honor. The donation made will provide 10 families with groceries for a week. This donation helps us to reach community members experiencing need, by providing them with the most basic necessity, food. It turns the lights on at our warehouse, powers our freezers and puts gas in our delivery trucks. This donation feeds our community. 	 EPIC-CURE Epic-Cure is a 100% volunteer organization. Our mission to nourish our planet and its people by eliminating food waste and hunger, teaching self-sufficiency, connecting generations, and promoting individual success through accomplishment. We rescue still good food from ending up in landfills, and redirect it to address food insecurity, ensuring that community members, regardless of income, age, and ethnicity, are nourished. Our impact is fueled by the communities donated time and funds. Thank you for your contribution. Scan the QR code to learn more about what we do: 

Awareness:

- This is large and bold for a reason...

FYI – we have not had to buy plastic bags in over a year thanks to you all. Before, we were spending about \$150 a month on bags. Great job everyone!

An easy, impactful way that you can help us is to please ...

Save And Drop Off Your Grocery Store Plastic Bags.

You will help reduce waste by allowing us to re-use them.
You will be saving us money by reducing the number we have to purchase.



Volunteering:

To hear about ongoing volunteer opportunities, please join our Facebook Volunteer Group.

Charity Roberts, our Volunteer Coordinator, posts details about our needs every week. You can reach her at charity.roberts@epic-cure.org if you have any questions.







Anyone who wishes to see *[Epic-Cure's financial statements](#)* need only ask.

- Please email your requests to Sunny Mulford: sunny.mulford@epic-cure.org

Please watch the movie "[Wasted: The Story of Food Waste.](#)"

You can watch it on [Amazon](#) or [Netflix](#).

Or, you can "check out" a DVD at our warehouse.