March 29, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOOD FOR FINES AT THE LIBRARY

(Panama City, Fla.) During April 10th – 21st, all eight locations of the Northwest Regional Library System will participate in a Food for Fines food drive. Patrons will have $1 in current overdue fines waived for each can or package of nonperishable food they bring to the library. Food items could include peanut butter, canned soups, canned vegetables, canned fruit, cereal, pasta, etc. We cannot accept glass containers, opened packages, repackaged food, or expired food.

"Our goal is to help the people in our communities while at the same time providing our patrons with a charitable way to pay off their overdue fines," said Robin Shader, Library Director.

All items will be donated to local organizations who help fight hunger in our communities. The Bay County Public Library, Panama City Beach Public Library, Parker Public Library, and Springfield Public Library will donate all items collected to the Panama City Rescue Mission. The Corinne Costin Gibson Memorial Public Library in Port St. Joe will donate all items collected to the Community Resource Center. The Charles Whitehead Public Library in Wewahitchka will donate all items collected to the Ministerial Association. The Harrell Memorial Public Library in Bristol and the Jimmy Weaver Memorial Library in Hosford will donate all items collected to the Calhoun-Liberty Ministry Center.

Communications Coordinator of the Panama City Rescue Mission, Lisa Nixon Mabry, stated that "Homelessness and hunger in Bay County and surrounding counties are on the rise. We have experienced a significant increase in the number of meals we serve, from 85,843 meals in 2014, to 111,163 in 2015, and 129,823 meals in 2016 – that's an increase of almost 44,000 free meals in only two years!"

Food for Fines will waive current overdue fines only. It does not include fees for lost or damaged materials, card replacement fees, printing costs, or credit for future overdue fines. Library patrons who do not have fines, but are interested in participating in this year's food drive, are encouraged to bring in nonperishable food items.

Please call 850-522-2100 or your local library branch for more information.

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