



Manna's Empty Bowls Luncheon cancelled, September golf outing held as outdoor-only event in face of COVID-19

August 5, 2020

HARBOR SPRINGS, MICHIGAN—With the threat of COVID-19 continuing, Manna Food Project announces significant changes to its two annual events: cancelling the late-November Empty Bowls Luncheon, and holding the September “Golf Fore Manna” charity outing as an outdoor-only event.

Empty Bowls is part of an international effort to bring awareness to hunger. Stafford's Perry Hotel has generously hosted the event for Manna year after year, providing a large display room for guests to admire and choose a beautiful bowl hand-crafted by local potters. Patrons then enjoy a soup luncheon overlooking Little Traverse Bay. Tickets for the event benefit Manna's programming and usually sell out every year.

Due to the health risks of indoor dining and public gatherings, Manna felt it was only right to cancel the event for 2020. This year would have been the 28th anniversary of Manna's Empty Bowls Luncheon.

“Once we realized that many similar events scheduled for this fall had already been cancelled, we knew we should follow suit,” says Kim Baker, Manna's executive director. “We have sent out letters to the local artists who normally donate their bowls, thanking them for past involvement and informing them of our decision.”

Meanwhile, Manna's September fundraiser, the “Golf Fore Manna” charity outing, is still planned to take place, with several significant modifications.

While in the past participants have been invited inside the club for a post-event reception, including a sit-down dinner, Baker explains that this year's event will be held entirely outdoors. Instead of a standard meal service, a “strolling dinner” will be provided, with chef stations and a cash bar on Boyne's tented patio. Additionally, the number of teams has been limited to 27, and there will be no silent or live auctions.

The outing takes place on Thursday, September 10, at the Country Club of Boyne's Moor course in Harbor Springs. Tickets are \$150 per golfer, or \$600 per team, and includes a boxed lunch, 18 holes of golf, holes prizes, and awards.

While Manna understands the community is still in economic recovery, Baker says that sponsorships are available for anyone interested in supporting the event.

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“We’ve seen tremendous generosity from our community during the pandemic,” says Baker. “Our goal is to make sure our donors and community partners know how much we appreciate them, and we hope these changes show that.”

Registration for teams as well as sponsorships can be completed by going to the event page on Manna’s website (www.mannafoodproject.org/golf.htm) or by emailing golf@mannafoodproject.org.

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Manna Food Project, a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization, helps feed the hungry in Antrim, Charlevoix, and Emmet Counties. Manna is a partner organization of the national Feeding America Food Bank Network and operates a food bank and distribution center, a food rescue program, a food pantry, and the “Food 4 Kids” backpack program. For more information, call 231.347.8852 or visit www.mannafoodproject.org.