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Lafayette 'Men's Book Club' fights food insecurity

Submitted by Jeff Album



Men's Book Club founder and president Ross Goodheart hands off a check for \$7,200 to Elana Sissions, annual fund manager for the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano. With matching funds, the contribution resulted in 28,000 meals for Contra Costa County residents in need. Photo provided

exactly have rules.

"My only demand is that members answer my email invitations, whether to get together or to volunteer or make a contribution," said Ross. "The answer can be yes or no, but if you don't bother to respond, as another president might say, `you're fired.'"

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The Lafayette "Men's Book Club" - an informal group of 48 local dads who know each other through their wives and children - does not read many books. None, in fact. More likely, you will find them in a backyard pitching horseshoes, drinking beer and eating barbecue.

But with pandemic restrictions advising households not to come together, the MBC opted to come together this holiday season in a different way; by opening their purse strings, seeking corporate matches, and tackling the problem of food insecurity.

"We raised \$7,200 from a few of our members," said Ross Goodheart, MBC's founder and president. "When we turned that over to the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano, they were able to win matching funds, allowing us to net \$14,400, enough to purchase 28,800 meals."

Ross, a market trader with a local financial firm, notes that MBC members volunteer annually at the Food Bank's Concord warehouse, doing so since the club's inauguration in 2010. He readily admits his self-anointed title of president is tongue-in-cheek, but none of the other members seem to mind and the MBC doesn't