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Section D

Artists for a Cause combines dance performance with food drive

Margaret Mead's words — "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has" — ran through my mind when I learned about next week's food drive by Artists for a Cause.

The nonprofit organization is putting on "Dance for Food," a 6 p.m. performance Wednesday at the Port St. Lucie Civic Center at U.S. 1 and Walton Road. Admission is a bag of non-perishable food, and food will be collected at other locations throughout the community.

The whole project started in 2003 with an idea from one local dancer.



JENNIFER TREFELNER

COLUMNIST

The "Dance for Food" concept began with Julie Colombino, a former dancer with Anna Preston, Artists for a Cause artistic director. Inspired by a Pulitzer Prize-winning photo of a starving child in Africa, Colombino participated in a charity concert that was life and career changing. Colombino lives in Miami and is no longer in the dance field, but is

the director of Rebuild Globally, which seeks to improve the quality of life for people in distressed communities.

Four years ago, Preston revived the event on the Treasure Coast to help people suffering in the bad economy.

Artists for a Cause, which pairs performing artists with charities, aims to collect enough food to provide 20,000 meals to struggling families throughout the Treasure Coast and Palm Beach County. The Port St. Lucie concert is the third in a series of food-collecting performances that have taken place in Martin and Palm Beach counties.

"Although our previous events were well attended, we didn't receive as many meals as we had expected," said Terry Barber, founder and executive director of A4AC. "We're hoping our St. Lucie Dance for Food attendees will be as generous as possible."

I am optimistic that the group can reach its goal, as I personally know how generous the citizens of St. Lucie County are. In the past, our residents donated 6,000 meals for a single Artists for a Cause performance.

Donors will not only know they've made a difference in the life of another family, but they will be treated to an hourlong show

by contemporary dancers from some of South Florida's finest dance companies. Additionally, the Treasure Coast Community Singers will perform holiday music as guests arrive.

Items collected Wednesday will be given to the Treasure Coast Food Bank. If you can't attend, you still can donate by dropping off nonperishable goods at any Bank Atlantic or BB&T bank branch throughout St. Lucie County.

Visit www.a4ac.org, call 772-419-8778 or email info@a4ac.org.

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