



Harry Chapin Food Bank OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Vol. XI1, No. 2

Newsletter — Spring 2012

Get Ready for Letter Carriers' Drive

The biggest one-day food drive of the year arrives on Saturday, May 12, when the Letter Carriers seek to "Stamp Out Hunger" across the United States. Call 334-7007 to volunteer!



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Mike Davis Elementary School in Collier County hosts a mobile pantry distribution.

Mobile Food Pantries Widen Reach By Distributing at School Locations

Taking food to where the need is...that's what the Harry Chapin Food Bank's mobile food pantries aim to do. And some of the most effective locations for these distributions, not surprisingly, are schools.

Children represent 40 percent of those served by the Food Bank's partner agencies. Many live among the 63 percent of households in Southwest Florida that are "food insecure" — not knowing where their next meal is coming from.

Collier County has been particularly successful with mobile pantries at elementary school sites, thanks to a three-year grant from NCEF, The Naples Children and Education Foundation (funded by the Naples Winter Wine Festival). The grant, which began in March 2011, specifically tasked the Food Bank with feeding Collier County children and their families. By year's end, 60 percent of 938,000 pounds of mobile pantry food was distributed

at Collier school locations because of NCEF's "Lunch Boxes of Love" grant.

The schools that are targeted generally provide 90 percent of their students with free lunch, reported Katie Schweikhardt, Collier County food coordinator for the

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'I Have Never Asked For Help Before...'

Political leaders need to hear from their constituents why food banks deserve continued support. So, Feeding America sent paper plates to its member food banks, requesting that clients write their stories on them. The Harry Chapin Food Bank collected 85 plates and sent them to Sen. Bill Nelson's office in Washington, D.C. Here's what some had to say:

"My husband was laid off from work. We come to the food pantry because there is not enough money to make ends meet. If elected officials would spend even one day without food, they would understand that no one should go days or weeks without it."



Those helped by mobile pantries wrote their stories on paper plates.

"Being a senior citizen, I have several health issues, and struggle to pay my bills. This food bank has helped me so much. Right now I am depen-

dent on my community to help me through this economic crisis."

"Help me get a job and I won't need to come to the food pantry."

"Laid off after nine years, I now make a quarter of the income I used to. The Food Bank offers hope and relief — I can feed my kids."

"I once was able to buy enough food for my family. That was when there was work!"

"I have never asked for help before..."

Support Soars For WINK News Hunger Walk!



The 4th Annual WINK News Feeds Families Hunger Walk soared past its ambitious \$250,000 goal, raising more than \$310,000, thanks to a long list of sponsors and donors, and 850 committed walkers. The Harry Chapin Food Bank will be able to provide \$1.86 million worth of food to the 150 agencies it serves in Southwest Florida's five counties. **See more in a special insert inside!**

For every \$1 donation, the Food Bank can source and distribute \$6 worth of food! Please give generously!



Harry Chapin Food Bank OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

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www.harrychapinfoodbank.org

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Social Media Keeps Everyone in the Loop

With smartphones and tablet devices everywhere, ours is truly a social media world. And the Harry Chapin Food Bank is everywhere you want to look.

Numbers tell the story. Facebook boasts 800 million active users; the average user connects to 80 community pages, groups and events. Twitter users send 175 million Tweets every day, and 55 percent access the platform via their mobile device. LinkedIn has more than 150 million professionals and 2 million companies with their own pages. YouTube's 490 million users generate 92 billion page views each month. Online pinboard Pinterest is the latest service to catch on.

So when you connect to the Harry Chapin Food Bank through any of these channels, you stay up-to-the-minute with

information and events. For example, "Words of Wisdom Wednesday" inspires with a great photo and quote. By "checking in" through the **Facebook application** on their smartphones, volunteers let friends know they're helping the community.

Twitter updates point to important stories from news sources that educate about hunger in our backyard. **YouTube**

videos allow the Food Bank to "show you the people we're helping — the construction worker out of a job or the single mother whose pay isn't enough to support her family," said Ben Walther, social media and online services coordinator.

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Scanning this QR code on your smartphone takes you right to the Food Bank!

ATTENTION SNOWBIRDS...

As you get ready to clear out your pantry before leaving our shores, please consider donating your remaining packaged goods. Call the Harry Chapin Food Bank at 334-7007 for more information.

Here's How to 'Leave A Legacy' to the Food Bank

Imagine how much good could be done if each one of us remembered a favorite charity or cause in our will or estate plan!

That's the thinking behind the Harry Chapin Food Bank's "Leave A Legacy" program. It is designed to inspire people from all walks of life and all income levels to think beyond their lifespan when doing good works. It's easy to add the Food Bank as a partial or full beneficiary of an individual retirement account, insurance policy or 401(k) plan. All you need is the complete name, Harry Chapin Food Bank of Southwest Florida, Inc., and its federal ID number: 59-2332120. The impact of your gift — no matter the amount — is immeasurable, as you "pay it forward."

Let us know when you remember the Food Bank in your planned giving. **Contact Tom Brown** at 334-7007, x124, or tombrown@harrychapinfoodbank.org.

Corporation and Foundation Grants And Donations

Best Buy: \$2,500
**Community Foundation of
Collier County: \$7,500**
ConAgra: \$5,000
Gannett Foundation: \$3,000
Wells Fargo: \$10,000

(12/2/11 - 2/21/12)

Our Mission...To overcome hunger in Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee counties through education and by working in a cooperative effort with affiliated agencies in the procurement and distribution of food, equitably and without discrimination.



Partner Agency



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Taste of Boca Grande Celebrates 10th Year



The 10th Annual Taste of Boca Grande, featuring the Steve Chapin Band (Harry Chapin's original band) with special guest Jennah Barry from Nova Scotia (above), along with great food from 15 premier restaurants, raised more than \$33,115 to benefit the Harry Chapin Food Bank.

Volunteers Help Food Bank Thrive!

If you think sorting food is the only volunteer activity at the Harry Chapin Food Bank, think again.

From the board of directors to policy-making committees, from special events to warehouse help, from mobile pantry distributions to organizing fund drives, volunteer efforts are integral to the success of the Food Bank.

The numbers are staggering. In 2011, 2,154 volunteers gave the Harry Chapin Food Bank 32,000 hours of assistance — 15 percent more than in 2010. The Independent Sector, a coalition of nonprofits, values a volunteer hour at \$21.36 (and it's likely

higher, because many volunteer hours aren't accounted for). That means Food Bank volunteers effectively donated \$680,000!

Even with all those hours, the Food Bank needs more assistance, especially at specific times of the year:

- From mid-October to January, when most of the food donations arrive and need to be sorted, packed, and delivered to partner agencies.

- Following the May Letter Carriers' Drive, when a vast influx of food needs to be quickly and efficiently moved into inventory just when so many Food Bank volunteers who are snowbirds have left.



Walmart managers tour the Food Bank warehouse with president and CEO Al Brislain (right).

Volunteers are trained in food safety, especially

with the Food Bank sourcing more fresh foods and produce. They check expiration dates and examine perishable products.

But what people really like is the flexibility of Food Bank volunteering. They are not locked into a schedule, but can choose days and times that are best for them.

"Without volunteers to get food ready for agencies, the Food Bank wouldn't be there to help," said Bedzaida Bryen, Volunteer Manager. "Volunteers are vital to our food distribution and make a real difference!"

Season Heats up With Fundraisers, Food Drives

These fundraising and food gathering events are making a real difference for our local communities:

Entertainer, composer and musician **Paul Todd** and his illuminated show, "The Music of the Lights," at Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall benefited the Harry Chapin Food Bank to the tune of \$40,000.

The **4th Annual Tennis Tournament at Vivante** on Charlotte Harbor in early January was a winner, as it raised \$8,380 for the Harry Chapin Food Bank.

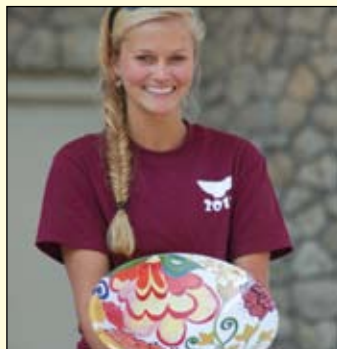
Harry Chapin Food Bank Night at the **Southwest Florida & Lee County Fair**, produced 3,600 pounds of donated food.

The **Taste of Miromar** at Miromar Lakes raised \$16,000 for the Food Bank.

AT PRESS TIME...The **Weekend of One**, when faith partners team up with the Food Bank in raising awareness and funds, was scheduled for March 23 to 25.

COMING UP... Don't miss the **2nd Annual Harry Chapin Food Bank Golf Tournament at Grandezza Golf and Country Club** on May 9! Contact chrisrobinson@harrychapinfoodbank.org.

Naples Empty Bowls Event Raises \$42,610



Students in Collier County (like Celeste Buck, above), along with local artists, created almost 2,000 bowls for the 5th Annual Naples Empty Bowls event. Delicious soups from 40 restaurants made for a tasty fundraiser that netted \$42,610 for the Harry Chapin Food Bank.

Your Donations Are Wisely Spent!

Charity Navigator gives the Harry Chapin Food Bank its highest rating of 4 stars for exceeding industry standards and successfully managing the finances of the organization in an efficient and effective manner.



Cameras, GPS, Shelving Improve Operations

In-kind donations are improving operations for the Harry Chapin Food Bank.

Asset Trax Inc. will provide and install tracking devices for nine trucks, four air-conditioning units and a back-up generator, thanks to the efforts of Bruce Banko, Sr.

Ten cameras in a new infrared system (valued at \$7,500) from **Woodlin Surveillance** can see at night without light. They have been placed outside the warehouse. A \$1,000 donation from **Wynters Automotive** and a \$250 donation from Woodlin Surveillance are helping defray the costs.

Sweetbay Supermarket donated rack shelving for the Food Bank's new cooler, at a value of \$15,000 including labor. The racks provide 86 more pallet spaces — the equivalent of an extra four tractor-trailer loads in the cooler!

The Harry Chapin Food Bank Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and friends thank Suzanne Foster as she leaves after five years of dedicated service. We will miss you!



Florida Ag Commissioner Joins in Fight Against Hunger

Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam is encouraging efficiencies and partnerships to help Floridians in need, especially children.

Why did you commit to fight hunger?

Adam Putnam: Florida produces an abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables, yet many Floridians are not able to access affordable, wholesome foods, particularly

in urban core areas and food deserts.

What steps are you taking?

Putnam: We're connecting Florida farmers with Florida schools. For some children, the meals they receive at school are the only meals they eat all day. It's critical that school meals provide vitamins and nutrients children need to grow and thrive.

In partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, we are developing a plan to automatically enroll eligible low-income children in the free school meal

program based on information from other programs that serve low-income families. We're also working with nonprofits to install machines at farmers markets to accept electronic benefits transfer payments.

How is the department working with food banks?

Putnam: We are working to enhance their capabilities. By coordinating seasonal availability of agricultural products and transportation needs, Florida's food banks distribute fresh foods more efficiently. By sending backpacks full of food home with students, food banks ensure that children in need have access to food during long periods away from school.

What partnerships are you initiating?

Putnam: Marrying the efforts of groups with a common mission, such as Florida Association of Food Banks, Florida Impact, Parent Teacher Association, Blue Foundation, Dairy Council, Share our Strength, Junior League and IFAS, means their resources can reach more communities and have a greater impact in the fight against hunger.

Mobile Pantries at School Locations...

Continued from page 1

Food Bank. "Principals hear about the program from other principals," she explained. "Between 300 and 500 families are served at each school distribution."

Many staff members at Mike Davis Elementary School, for example, give up their time to assist with the mobile pantries. "I have had the pleasure of volunteering when the Food Bank distributes food, and it is truly a humbling experience," said Meghan Leiti, assistant principal. "I have

even had my son help out so he can experience the feeling of doing something good for our families and this community."

The effectiveness of mobile pantries is so clear that the Food Bank is aiming to expand the program by 10 percent. In 2011 in Lee County, just 13 percent of 331,000 pounds of mobile pantry food was distributed at school sites. No mobile pantry distributions in Charlotte (125,000 pounds), Hendry (125,000 pounds) or Glades (81,000 pounds) were made at schools.

Letter Carriers' Drive!
We need you... Volunteer
to help on Saturday, May 12.
Call 334-7007 today!

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The Harry Chapin Food Bank
of Southwest Florida
3760 Fowler Street
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Thank you!



The 4th Annual WINK NEWS Feeds Families Hunger Walk was a tremendous success, raising more than \$310,000, thanks to the generosity of so many sponsors, teams, walkers, and dedicated volunteers.

Please join us in thanking the companies and organizations on these pages for their support. And be sure to visit www.harrychapinfoodbank.org to view many more wonderful photos!

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*Hunger Walk participants enjoy sharing
their stories on "I walk because..." signs.*

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