



Harry Chapin Food Bank OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

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Newsletter — Winter 2012

Senior Hunger Poised for a Crisis, As Boomers Join Ranks of Elderly

The last thing Baby Boomers thought they would face as they age is hunger. Yet that is exactly what's coming.

The 2010 Hunger in America study from Feeding America painted a troubling picture of senior hunger here in Southwest Florida. In 2009, 10 percent of clients served by local food pantries were 65 and older; a year later, 28 percent of clients were 50 and above. Many have lost jobs and are unable to find new ones. With more than 3,000 seniors a month already in the Southwest Florida emergency food system, the trend line points up.

Many of the "oldest old" are outliving their savings. Meanwhile, half of seniors here who receive emergency food assistance are also eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps), yet don't apply for the benefits. And seniors who struggle to eat are almost three times more likely to skip or stop taking their medications entirely.

Concerned about an impending crisis, the Harry Chapin Food Bank and Senior Friendship Centers joined together, with sponsorship support from Comfort Keepers, a private home health agency, to convene a Senior Hunger Summit this past October at Florida Gulf Coast University. It drew nearly 100 area professionals involved with senior services.

The big issue seniors in need face is that "food must get to them, they won't come to it," said Kristina Rodriguez, Director of Community Engagement and Nutrition Services, Senior Friendship Centers. "Hidden in plain sight, isolated and frightened," she noted, they face an



Senior Hunger Summit participants worked in groups to prioritize future community actions.

array of barriers — lack of transportation; limited access to groceries appropriate to their health needs; physical pain; cognitive

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'We Are Thankful for the Food Bank...'

It wasn't easy for Kristina Moser to make her way to two Harry Chapin Food Bank mobile pantry distributions at the Boys and Girls Club of Collier County.

She has a full-time job, and her husband, Melvin, found part-time employment nearly a year ago. They try their best to support four children ages 4 to 14, but after housing, utilities, vehicle insurance, child and after-school care are paid, how do they put food on the table for the next two weeks? "We have been at a loss financially, mentally and emotionally," she explained.

Money raised by the Naples Children & Education Foundation through the Naples Winter Wine Festival helped

make the mobile food distributions possible. Whether it's orange juice, bread, a box of cereal, noodles or a pound of hamburger, Moser is thankful for the Food Bank's assistance for her family and others in need.

Our gratitude...to volunteers from the Immokalee substation of the Collier County Sheriff's Office who assist with the

Food Bank's mobile pantry distributions...and to Deputy Steven Dodson, who coordinated the distributions and spearheaded a can collection of 243 pounds of food!

...And to the exceptional **Marriott** volunteers, whose hard work at the mobile pantry distribution comes through the hotel's "Spirit to Serve" program.



Mobile pantries distributed turkeys to families in need at holiday time.

Get Set for Empty Bowls Collier!

Circle the date — Saturday, January 28 — and get to Cambier Park between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. for Collier County's 2012 Empty Bowls event. For \$10, you can fill a beautiful bowl with one of 28 soups from local restaurants, and enjoy a healthy helping of Panera Bread on the side!

Believe in the Magic!

The 4th Annual WINK News Feed Families Hunger Walk on Saturday, January 21, at Miramar Outlets in Estero has its goal of \$250,000 clearly in its sights. But there's still time to "make magic" and sign on as a walking team or a sponsor, and help us break all records! Contact Marta Hodson, 334-7007, x132, or martahodson@harrychapinfoodbank.org.



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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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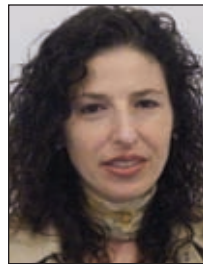
Food Bank Team Welcomes New Colleagues

Skilled leaders just took over two vital functions of the Harry Chapin Food Bank.

Tom Brown brings to his new post as **director of planned giving** many years of experience as president and CEO of three



Tom Brown (above)
and Miriam Pereira.



successful United Ways in Missouri, Florida, and Oklahoma. Because of his leadership in Oklahoma City in the aftermath of the Murrah Federal Building bombing, he helped as a volunteer with recovery activities following the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon.

"I'm thrilled to work with people who have been loyal Food Bank volunteers and contributors and find some way to perpetuate their

service and support," he enthused.

Miriam Pereira joins the Food Bank as **director of development**. Her career began with an internship at the Miami Herald and came to full flower at the Fort Myers News-Press. Over almost 17 years there, this award-winning journalist rose from reporter to assistant metro editor and daily content editor. She also is studying for her MBA at Florida Gulf Coast University.

"I'm hopeful that the skills I bring to this position will help make a difference in the community," she said.

New Muppet Raises Awareness of Hunger

A television special produced by Sesame Workshop premiered on PBS in October with a special theme and a new muppet.

"Growing Hope Against Hunger" introduced Lily (at right), whose family has an ongoing struggle with hunger. The film features strategies that help families find resources and grow stronger together, as it raises awareness of the growing extent of food insecurity (www.pbs.org/parents/growinghope/).



© Sesame Workshop

ABOUT PLANNED GIVING...

A remembrance of the Food Bank in your will — large or small — is very much appreciated! To learn more about planned giving, contact Tom Brown at 334-7007, x124, or tbrown@harrychapinfoodbank.org.

Food Bank Receives \$76,750 in Grants

Southwest Florida Community
Foundation: \$20,000

Wells Fargo/Wachovia: \$10,000

Target Community
Foundation: \$5,000

Cape Coral Community
Foundation: \$5,000

Copham Family Foundation: \$5,000

Davidson Family Foundation: \$5,000

First Fruits Fund: \$5,000

Martin Foundation: \$5,000

Target Stores: \$5,000

Publix Supermarket Charities: \$3,000

Sweetbay Stores: \$2,750

Daniel R. & Anne M. Harper
Foundation: \$2,500

Mary E. Dooner
Foundations: \$2,000

Cameo of Lee County: \$1,500
(8/15/11 - 12/1/11)

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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Everyone's 'Special' at First Baptist Lehigh Food Pantry

A tiny food closet at First Baptist Church Lehigh four years ago is all grown up.

Helped by its partnership with the Harry Chapin Food Bank, the food pantry now serves about 500 families a week. While everyone is special, "we pull aside the elderly and people with disabilities so they will not have to wait," said Misty Patterson, outreach director.

For Thanksgiving, First Baptist teamed with nearby Richmond Avenue Baptist

Church and the Salvation Army to provide 600 families (2,503 individual) with a complete turkey meal, as well as a full weekly food package. This group effort, she said, was led by "amazing" volunteers: pantry coordinator Victor Denney, volunteer coordinator Carol Duran and Lois Collom, who does the food ordering.

The fresh produce and frozen meat that the pantry receives from the Food Bank are especially vital to those who should not eat

more processed foods. So is the "phenomenal" support from local businesses, grocers Sweetbay and Winn-Dixie, churchgoers and individuals donating money, food and time, she said.

A growing number of families served have lost jobs, cars and homes, and "have to start over from ground zero," Patterson noted. So it was very gratifying to learn that one client, "back on his feet and working," comes in every couple of weeks to give a donation. "That's what we're here for," she added, "to help move them out of the bad places they are in."

Hot Rods & Hogs Rev up Donations



The Florida Hot Rods & Hogs car and bike show at the Lee Civic Center lowered its admission fee for anyone donating non-perishable food items to the Food Bank.

Southwest Airlines Gives 'Time for Tickets'



Southwest Airlines employees (l-r) Tami Neubauer, Greg Henderson and Melissa McClintick earned the Food Bank a second air ticket for their volunteer hours.

Donated Materials, Services Help Secure Trucks

More than \$10,000 in donated materials and services is helping the Harry Chapin Food Bank safeguard refrigerated trucks.

Jim Toffoli of JTCC is acting as general contractor; Keith Carpenter of Smith Fence is providing the fencing; Shawn Harper of Halifax, Inc., is supplying the gates, and Don Mathews of Don Mathews & Associates is assisting with funding.

The Food Bank also appreciates the City of Fort Myers for its cooperation in expediting the necessary permits.

All work should be completed by the end of January. Thanks to all!

Fundraisers, Food Drives Deliver Much Support

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

The 3rd annual "Fill Our Fleet – Feed Our Hungry" event by **Lee County Transit** and **Publix**, co-sponsored by the News-Press and Beasley Broadcasting, stuffed LeeTran buses at 33 Publix stores with 67,672 pounds of food.

Valero helped motorists "Fill up to Fight Hunger" by donating \$1 for each 8-gallon fuel purchase since April. The nationwide campaign raised \$2.9 million to distribute to 125 food banks, and \$6,399 went to the Harry Chapin Food Bank.

A **Wal-Mart** matching program during the **WGCU** Fall Fund Drive resulted in a \$16,000 donation to the Food Bank.

WCI Communities presented \$6,689 from its June to September program for golfing foursomes at five WCI golf courses.

Aviation Day at **Page Field** provided 2,185 pounds of food and nearly \$1,000 in cash donations.

Over three days in November, people exchanged more than 100 turkeys at **Fort Winter 2012**

Myers Floral Designs for a bouquet of flowers in "Blossoms for Birds" event.

The annual **Turkeys for Thanksgiving** program netted 12,000 turkeys (and chickens) for partner agencies.

In honor of its 125th anniversary, **Coca-Cola** donated two pallets of its products and its employees gave 200 pounds of food, all part of the company's "Make a Difference" program.

Servpro "Golfing for Charity" event

brought in more than

\$5,614 and 778 pounds of food.

Entertainer, composer and musician Paul Todd presented "Illuminated, the Music of Lights," at the Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall, with part of the proceeds benefiting the Food Bank.

Empty Bowls Lee County raised \$14,827 as it sold 600 bowls of delicious soup (served with Panera Bread) from 10 participating restaurants.

The Food Bank thanks **Publix** and **Sweetbay** for their Holiday Food Drives!



Web Site Rich with Resources

Stay on top of all that's new with the Harry Chapin Food Bank by visiting our web site: **www.harrychapinfoodbank.org**. You'll find links to how to host a food drive; photos of participants in the many food and fund drives that benefit the Food Bank; YouTube videos, and much more. Also, the web site is now configured to make it easy for you to access on your mobile device (left).

Peace Lutheran Initiates 'Friendly Competition' of Volunteers

It was just a small idea, thought Carolyn Mijokovic. Her husband, Steve, coordinated Peace Lutheran Church's volunteer efforts at the Harry Chapin Food Bank, and the

Senior Hunger...

Continued from page 1
difficulties; and pride.

Furthermore, not eating leads to poor health, low energy, low activity, loss of appetite, and poor concentration — a “downward spiral that is difficult to reverse,” said Rebecca Brislain, Executive Director, Florida Association of Food Banks.

Just as the first Hunger Summit four years ago coalesced into a taskforce whose collaborations help sustain Southwest Floridians at risk of hunger, a new Senior Hunger Taskforce has emerged from the recent summit. At its first meeting in November, a committed group of volunteers began the process of developing a strategic plan and forming coalitions designed to better serve the growing numbers of seniors in need.

two knew that help was particularly scarce during summer months. How could they encourage other Lutheran churches in Lee County (there are 20) to participate?

Carolyn's service on the board of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, a fraternal organization that supports volunteerism, turned out to be the key. She proposed a “friendly competition” among the churches for the most volunteer hours. Four enthusiastically signed

on for the month of August: Messiah Lutheran in North Fort Myers, Saint Peter on Ft. Myers Beach, Trinity Lutheran in Cape Coral, and of course, Peace Lutheran.

The competition was fun and rewarding. The Food Bank gained 717 volunteer hours. First-place Trinity Lutheran received

\$1,600 from Thrivent that it used to improve its school's playground equipment. Second-place Messiah Lutheran is devoting \$1,200 from Thrivent toward sending youth to a national gathering in 2012.

A fan of Harry Chapin, Steve was drawn to volunteer at the Food Bank soon after he and Carolyn moved here from Milwaukee in 2008. Since then, he has coordinated 30 volunteer visits from Peace Lutheran, for



Four Lutheran churches delivered 717 hours of volunteer service to the Food Bank in August.

a total of 1,000 hours.

As for Carolyn, “my dream is to get the 20 Lutheran churches of Lee County to hold a ‘Mission Servant’ week in January, when most people are here,” Carolyn wished. “That would be a huge number of volunteer hours!”

Believe in the Magic!
Sign up for WINK News Feeds
Families Hunger Walk at
www.harrychapinfoodbank.org

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