Thanks to all!

Hunger Walk Hits New High at $321,600

For more than 1,000 parents, children, seniors, friends and even pets, Jan. 21 was a beautiful day to support the Harry Chapin Food Bank. Thanks to their participation, the WINK News Feeds Families Hunger Walk raised $321,600, a 5.4 percent increase over last year. Find more photos on pages 4 and 5.

Remember that the Food Bank can turn every $1 donated into $8 in food value!

Coming Up...

Get Ready for Letter Carriers’ Food Drive

Spring is coming, and that means the 25th annual Letter Carriers’ “Stamp Out Hunger” Food Drive on Saturday, May 15, needs your support and participation. Watch for empty plastic bags your mail carrier leaves in your mailbox. Fill them with non-perishable food for pick-up, and call 334-7007 to volunteer to sort donations at one of the collection locations.

Fresh Foods Get Quick Turnaround

Lettuce, cauliflower, frozen meats, watermelon, bread. They’re staples for most of us, but not for food-insecure children, families and seniors in Southwest Florida.

These nutritious fresh foods represent more than half of 20.6 million pounds the Harry Chapin Food Bank distributed in FY 2015-16 to its 150 partner agencies. Perishable foods, though, add enormous complexity at all points of the supply chain.

How does the Food Bank team move these foods seamlessly in and out of the warehouse doors in 24 to 48 hours? It’s not done with magic, but with expertise.

Chris Robinson, food resourcing manager, sources fresh produce from California to Canada, as well as from area grocery stores, farms and packing houses. Barry Draper, warehouse logistics manager, primes the warehouse to efficiently receive shipments. Walter Daniels, warehouse assistant manager, directs distribution back out to agency partners. Kari Lefort, director of programs, and Carolyn Jones, partner relations and compliance manager, guide the agencies — many with limited storage capacity — on the most efficient ways to order and receive perishable foods.

One ideal solution is “just-in-time” delivery so that “no food goes to waste,” said Eric Hitzeman, director of operations.

“Scheduling Friday morning delivery just before our pantry opens minimizes the need to store foods,” said Barbara Evans, chief development officer of Grace Place. Its Golden Gate service area, with few grocery stores, is considered a “food desert”; more than 225 families a week benefit from a wide variety of produce, dairy and/or meats from the Food Bank.

“Children need to be eating nutritious food,” she added, “because it impacts their growth, intelligence and behavior.”

The dollars you donate support refrigerated and mobile pantry trucks, and refrigerator and freezer storage that keep foods fresh. Thank you so much!

The Food Bank warehouse team readies frozen chickens for distribution to agencies.

Grateful for the Mobile Pantry...

“The mobile pantry distribution provided by Harry Chapin Food Bank has had such a tremendous positive impact on the lives of so many in Glades County. Our residents receive important foods such as vegetables, fruits, eggs and bread monthly.

“My initial goal was to make sure that our students and their families got food to feed them, but after working just a few of the distribution events, the lack of food in Glades County goes much farther. We are so fortunate to have a partner like Harry Chapin Food Bank!”

— Scott Bass
Superintendent of Schools
Glades County School District
We Won’t Rest From Our Mission

We are so very grateful to you, our donors and volunteers, for your contributions, your food drives, your helping hands, and your championship of the Harry Chapin Food Bank and our cause. You know about hunger, and about our work and its importance.

What you may not realize is that our work is constantly changing. We evaluate the needs of our community and the impact of our work continually, to be sure that we are doing everything we can and wisely using your donations to help our neighbors in need.

To that end, we are working to improve our physical facilities, invest in our trucks and equipment, enhance our processes and efficiency, expand our service programs, and bring new energy to our fundraising and events. I am so proud of the progress that our team is making in all of these areas.

This is the work we will continue to do. It’s why we can now say that we can distribute $8 worth of food (up from $6) for every $1 we collect. It’s what we need to do to ensure that we deliver on our mission. You should expect no less, and we won’t rest until no one in our community has to go hungry.

Hayden & Associates Gives Year-round Support

For the third consecutive year, Hayden & Associates fielded a team of staff members at the WINK News Feeds Families Hunger Walk in January. But the full-service community property management company’s support in fighting hunger doesn’t stop there.

Three years ago, it launched “Hayden’s Helping Hands,” a year-round food and supply drive within the communities the company manages in Lee, Collier and Charlotte counties. Themes are set for different months, such as holiday food items in November and December. An added incentive: the community that collects the most food/supplies by weight per capita gets a Visa gift card to be used for that community.

“We understand and respect the fact that people are in need 24/7, and not just special times of the year,” President Ken Hayden said. “We are rallying our communities to help make a difference in many lives.”

What can your company do? Call Tanya Phillips: (239) 334-7007 x141.

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.

CONTACT US TO DONATE, VOLUNTEER or SCHEDULE A TOUR: (239) 334-7007

A copy of the Food Bank’s official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval or recommendation by the state. For more information, contact the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs at 1-800-405-7500 or visit freshfromflorida.com.
For ‘Lowe’s Heroes,’ Volunteering At Food Bank Is About Teamwork

A core value of of Lowe’s is teamwork, “and it is best achieved when doing for other people where we live,” said Sarah Pokarney, Loss Prevention and Safety Manager. “These are our customers.”

Not only does the company’s “Give Back Hours” program enable individual associates to choose nonprofits they want to directly help, the “Lowe’s Heroes” program — where groups of Lowe’s employees take action together — has raised $1.3 million in store-driven volunteer projects.

So on a day in late January, 16 members of the home improvement company’s loss prevention team came to the Fort Myers warehouse of the Harry Chapin Food Bank from 14 stores between Sarasota and south Naples.

They sorted and packed 2,367 pounds of packaged bread, then sorted and packed 5,019 pounds of retail donation. That’s a total of 7,386 pounds — equal to 6,155 meals! “They thoroughly enjoyed the experience,” Pokarney enthused. “And they realized just how many meals could be put together in just the short time we came together. It was incredible! We won’t wait long to return.”

Sixteen “Lowe’s Heroes” sorted and packed 7,386 pounds of food at the Fort Myers warehouse.

Cross Creek Women’s 9 Hole Golf League Raises $33,000 Over 7 Years for Food Bank

Cross Creek Women’s 9 Hole Golf League started fundraising for the Food Bank seven years ago. But what’s interesting is the backstory. The husband of a former league president had sung in a cappella group at Cornell University many years before with a fellow student who just happened to be...Harry Chapin. (Even then, Harry had a strong empathy for people in need of food.) When the league decided to raise funds for a charitable group, the Food Bank was its natural choice.

To date, the league has raised $33,000, and its most recent event on Feb. 14 garnered $4,757 from about 90 participating golfers.

“You’re the Best!

Here are some great results from recent fundraising events:

• Give Where You Live Collier — the 24-hour online giving challenge from noon on Feb. 15 to 11:59 a.m. Feb. 16 — raised a total of $4,010,231 for 40 nonprofits, with the Harry Chapin Food Bank receiving $33,960.

• Stuff the Bus Food Drive on Feb. 19 at 10 Publix locations in Collier County has brought in 22,704 pounds to date.

• Harry Chapin Food Bank night at the Southwest Florida & Lee County Fair on Monday, Feb. 27, gave free gate admission for three cans of donated food. That came to more than 5,846 pounds of food!

7-Eleven Stores Drum up Support

Area 7-Eleven stores in Lee, Collier and Charlotte counties showed their support for the Food Bank, starting with donations of 1,548 frozen pizzas purchased by their customers during this past December’s holiday season. In January, the stores placed donation canisters at registers for contributions to the WINK News Feeds Families Hunger Walk — the first year 7-Eleven stores partnered with the event.

Snowbirds: Donate Pantry Leftovers

Mark your calendar now for the Snowbird Countdown! For the two weeks prior to your departure, place non-perishable, excess items from your pantry into a bag labeled for the Food Bank. Drop it off the day before you’re on your way. You’ll be doing a great deed for those in need — while clearing out your pantry!
WINK NEWS
FEEDS FAMILIES
HUNGER WALK 2017

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Find more photos at Facebook.com/HarryChapinFoodBank

We’d love to add your name as a sponsor at next year’s Hunger Walk. Contact: Marta Hodson at (239) 334-7007 x132.

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Monthly giving is a great way to support the Food Bank!
**Is Good Food Also Good Medicine?**

The Food Bank is assisting Lee Health in a study of low-income and food-insecure patients with hypertension. We are supplying nutritious food for them and their families to pick up once a week at locations in North Fort Myers and Dunbar. The year-long study will see if patients’ hypertension diminishes because they have access to nutritious food. Watch for their progress in future newsletters.

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**THANK YOU!**

**Taste of Boca Grande Delivers Fun and Funds**

The **15th Taste of Boca Grande** was better than ever, raising $56,500 for the Food Bank, with food from great local restaurants and music under the big tent.

**Enterprise-Rent-A-Car Donates $23,000**

Food Bank CEO Richard LeBer (in blue shirt in photo) received a $23,000 check from the Enterprise-Rent-A-Car Foundation. It’s part of a program called “Fill Your Tank” that celebrates the company’s 60th anniversary by providing $60 million over six years to fight hunger around the globe.

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**Harry Chapin Food Bank Photo Gallery**

Find more photos at harrychapinfoodbank.org

(Clockwise from above right) WINK News anchor Lois Thome welcomes the crowd, young walkers show their spirit, and cheerleaders urge the walkers on.

We invite you to tour the warehouse and learn how you can make a difference! Call (239) 334-7007.

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**Why Our Volunteers Are So Devoted...**

Full-time Naples resident **Mary Opland** plunged into Food Bank activities four months ago — working Fridays at the Naples warehouse and helping at mobile pantry distributions in Immokalee and at special events. “I love the fact that donor dollars are not tied up with administrative costs. And it’s empowering to help people with real needs.”

Since retiring from corporate law three years ago, **Don Cawley** volunteers in the Naples warehouse and at mobile pantries, especially in Immokalee. “You see the faces of the people who are food-insecure in front of you. It’s gratifying to help, but sobering.” His volunteer work “is my small effort to give back to a community that clearly needs it.”

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The Food Bank is testing a volunteer event in June for youngsters aged 10 and older. If your children are interested, please contact Tanya Phillips at (239) 334-7007 x141 or tphillips@harrychapinfoodbank.org.
From Humble Beginnings to Feeding 25,000 People a Year

In its early days, the food pantry at McGregor Baptist Church would put some supplies together and serve a few families in need of food. But a little over 20 years ago, a congregant learned about the Harry Chapin Food Bank. Today, the pantry is meeting food insecurity head-on, with the help of the Food Bank.

Last year, the pantry served 25,000 people, and already in January 2017, the pantry gave away 31,037 pounds of food to 2,368 people, thanks to 90 church volunteers and generous congregants. It is open every Monday and Wednesday from 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. and from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

“There’s no way we could meet the community’s food needs without Harry Chapin, because it is the bank for USDA food,” said Cheri Harmon, pantry director. (She’s referring to The Emergency Food Assistance Program from the United States Department of Agriculture.) The Food Bank is “within a few miles of our pantry, and their trucks deliver food to us. We would never be able to bring in that quantity of food ourselves.”

The food pantry is off campus, and its 5,670 square feet under air are divided into warehouse (with 11 freezers and 8 refrigerator/freezers for the much-in-demand fresh foods) and service areas.

People who come to the pantry sit with an interviewer at one of six private cubbies, where the clients share their needs. They can visit the pantry up to four times in a year, and all are treated with respect, care and love.

“They are overwhelmed when they see the amount of food they get. We see a lot of tears,” Harmon said. “And some people return after getting a job and say, ‘Thank you for caring.’”

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Leave a Legacy for the Future

Momentous events — a milestone birthday, the arrival of a grandchild or retirement — are times to reflect on ways you can pass on your values to future generations. A gift in your will to the Harry Chapin Food Bank will allow us to continue to help thousands of people in need in Southwest Florida. Working with your lawyer, you can designate how much you give (a set amount, a percentage of your estate, or the residual) and direct the funds to appropriate programs and services. To leave a legacy, contact Kelli King at (239) 334-7007 x202 or kelliking@harrychapinfoodbank.org.