



State College Area Food Bank News

276 West Hamilton Avenue, State College, PA 16801 • (814) 234-2310

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<http://foodbank.centreconnect.org>

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Executive Director's Report

By Linda Tataliba

Did you know that one in six Americans struggle with hunger? While it may seem that hunger is confined to certain sectors of society or certain areas of the country, the truth is that hunger issues are a reality everywhere. Centre County is no exception. As individuals and families continue to deal with high costs of food, energy, housing, and health care, our Food Bank provides a vital resource to those with emergency food needs.

2009 saw continued increases in demand for emergency food. We served almost 2,300 clients last year, including 211 new, first-time heads of households. We provided 15,031 bags of groceries, which represents a 21 percent increase over 2008. And we greatly increased the distribution of frozen, refrigerated, and perishable foods.

The value of food orders also increased in 2009. For example, the total value of a food order for a household of 4 to 5 people (8 bags) was \$254, a 24-percent increase from 2008.

Of course, we would not be able to serve our clients at this level without donations from the community. In 2009 we received donations of 236,465 pounds of food items as well as personal care, baby care, and cleaning products. We continue to receive between 200 and 400 pounds of frozen meat and other frozen foods weekly from Sam's Club. Wal-Mart has provided us with 200 to 300 pounds of canned goods each week and has recently begun to donate deli and meat items.

Our volunteers continue to be our mainstay. In 2009, our volunteers logged in 7,585 hours, helping with food pickup, transport, storage, and organization, as well as cleaning, office work, and serving clients.

As we move into summer 2010, our challenges are to maintain service to our current clients in the face of rising costs and increased client needs, to better meet the needs of other food insecure families in our area, and to be in a better position to fill the gaps in food needs not met through government sources.

There is not space here to thank all of the business, individuals, community groups, and churches for your generosity, kind hearts, and helping hands. Because of all of you, the State College Area Food Bank has been able to continue serving our 2,300 families in need in 2009, despite these difficult economic times. Please accept our heartfelt thanks. Have a wonderful summer! ■



Planting a Tradition — We held our second annual plant giveaway on May 22. Our giveaway last year allowed many of our client families to grow their own vegetables last summer.

Call to Volunteer!

(814) 234-2310

Working Together to Reach Our Goals

The mission of the State College Area Food Bank is “to provide emergency food to needy people in the State College Area and to assist the network of food pantries in Centre County.” To carry out that mission we partner with many other organizations. Here are just a few:

Community Help Centre – We have a small pantry in their facility to ensure that emergency food is available for all county residents, 24/7. Help Centre staff members distribute food during emergencies when other food pantries are closed.

Penn State – Faculty, staff, and students help with food drives, community service projects, and

fundraisers. Penn State Student United Way members help with the national homeless and hunger awareness week campaign. Students from the Smeal College of Business, College of Health and Human Development, and College of Information Sciences and Technology assist with special projects. Fraternity and sorority members volunteer at the Food Bank and help with food drives and other events such as the annual United Way Trash to Treasure Sale, held recently at Beaver Stadium.

State College Area School District – Faculty, staff, and students help with food drives, community service projects, and

fundraisers such as the Empty Bowls project. High school students with special needs help at the Food Bank as part of their job training and life skills programs. We also store food in freezers in the district when we have overflow.

Olive Garden, Red Lobster, Benjamin’s Catering – These establishments provide frozen leftover seafood, soups, and baked potatoes on a weekly basis. Red Lobster also donated flatware and dishware for distribution to Food Bank clients.

A sincere thanks to these partners as well as many others in the community! ■



Linda at our volunteer dinner with her volunteer assistant Karen Wise. Our annual volunteer dinner is one way that we can say thanks to those who give so much to support the Food Bank.

How to Give By Linda Tataliba

We appreciate donations of all kinds. Grocery gift cards in any amount are especially welcome. We use gift cards to maintain our food inventory and supplement what we don’t receive in food donations. Using gift cards also supports our local grocery stores and jobs here in Centre County. And the best part is, gift cards hardly take up any space!

Other current Food Bank needs include dried fruit (raisins, apricots, cranberries), canned chili or pasta, dry pasta and pasta sauces, canned corn, muffin or quickbread mixes, flour, evaporated milk, Jello, and bath soap (especially for sensitive skin). ■

Three Ways to Connect!

Donate online – it's quick, easy, and secure! Just go to <http://foodbank.centreconnect.org/>, click on the “Donate Now” image, and enter your credit card information. It's that easy!



Find us on Facebook! Just search for State College Area Food Bank.

If you'd like to receive your newsletter electronically, email us at statecollegefoodbank@gmail.com.



Helping Neighbors

“For a While I Wasn't Eating ...”

Janet, who is 30-something, began using the Food Bank in late 2006. She is sensitive to many foods as well as many ingredients in packaged food items. Over time, Food Bank staff and volunteers have encouraged Janet to develop a list of food items she would like to have each time she visits the Food Bank. A volunteer or staff member who knows about her food needs accompanies her as she carefully reads the labels to make her food selections. Taking almost two hours at times, she selects the amount of food allotted for a single-

member household, including eggs and boxed soy milk.

Janet's list has grown to include about forty types of food items she is willing or able to eat. The Food Bank has also helped her choose recipes that she can prepare and that incorporate her food choices. Janet is grateful for the personal attention she receives at the Food Bank. “For a while I wasn't eating, until I realized you would customize my order to accommodate my food needs,” she says. And she's giving back: Janet now volunteers weekly at the Food Bank. ■

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Sandy and Steve Elbin collected donations at last spring's Bruce Springsteen concert at the Bryce Jordan Center. More about Sandy and Steve on the last page.

Thank You

Two Enjoying Their Work

We say it all the time because it's true: We couldn't do what we do without our volunteers! A special thanks to Sandy and Steve Elbin, who pick up produce from Wegmans each Thursday and transport it to the Food Bank facility on Hamilton Avenue. Each week they handle 100 to 150 pounds of fresh produce. At the Food Bank, volunteers inspect each item and place it into storage until it's issued to clients. Sandy and Steve enjoy their work every step of the way, and they say what's most gratifying is partaking in the generosity and care our community has for its residents. Thank you to Wegmans and to Sandy and Steve! ■



(L-R) Steve Elbin, Sandy Elbin, and Wegmans employees Gerry McCully and Clyde Dillon.

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(814) 234-2310



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