



# Harry Chapin Food Bank OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Vol. X, No. 4

Newsletter — Fall 2010

**MAKE YOUR 'HUNGER WALK' PLANS NOW!**  
Get ready for the 3rd Annual WINK News Feeds Families Hunger Walk on Saturday, January 22, 2011. Gather a team, volunteer, or become a sponsor (see page 3). And you're just a click away at [www.harrychapinfoodbank.org](http://www.harrychapinfoodbank.org)!

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## Food Bank Boosts Poundage by 33% To Meet High Demand in Summer

Southwest Florida faces a triple whammy every summer.

Seasonal employment is at its lowest for the area's key industries of tourism and agriculture. Many children who receive meals at school seek their replacement at home. No local produce is available for donation. And the Summer of 2010 added a fourth challenge: a slowdown in the economy's recovery.

Yet the Harry Chapin Food Bank managed to source and distribute more than 3 million pounds of food from June

1 through August 31 — 33 percent more than last summer's 2.2 million pounds. And to make sure that plenty of fresh fruit, vegetables and bread reached those most in need, it launched "Free Food Fridays" with the United Way, Community Cooperative Ministries Inc., and the Salvation Army.

Through this program, the refrigerated mobile pantry truck that the Food Bank acquired in 2010 transported up to 20,000

*Continued on page 3*



*The "Free Food Fridays" summer program used the Food Bank's refrigerated mobile pantry to take food directly to people in need.*

## SNAP Outreach Hits the Ground Running

In less than a month on the job, the Food Bank's SNAP Outreach Coordinators Flavia Canalda and Melisa Etienne already are making a difference, helping clients at partner agencies apply for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

In her late thirties, G. lost her job, cannot find another, and no longer receives unemployment insurance. With no steady income, it's hard enough for her to survive, let alone raise three children. While food stamps through SNAP won't cover all their meals, "they would take a huge burden off her back," said Canalda.

Canalda and Etienne use laptops to complete SNAP applications on site and submit them online to Florida's Department of Children and Families. The process may take three to four weeks for those who are eligible to receive benefits.

A 65-year-old retired police officer, B. lost thousands of dollars in investments a few years ago as the result of corporate

fraud. On the day Etienne met him at St. Vincent de Paul pantry, he was caring for two grandchildren, assisting his wheelchair-bound wife, and trying to cope with his own cancer diagnosis. "He always prided himself on being a good provider," said Etienne, but a tiny pension and his wife's disability check just weren't enough.

A young woman in her early thirties with three sons, P. was under stress from more than the specter of hunger. Canalda could see from bruises on her arms that P. was a victim of domestic violence. Not only did Canalda help her apply for SNAP, she brought in the police, who moved P. and her children to a shelter, where they are living safely and receiving counseling.

"When kids are eating, food powers their brains," she added. "But it's not just about food. It's about improving the quality of life for people and making a huge difference in the community person by person."

### WGCU, Walmart and Food Bank Join Forces

For the second year, WGCU Public Media, the Walmart Foundation and the Harry Chapin Food Bank are partnering during WGCU's Fall Radio Membership Drive.

"Feed Public Radio...Feed a Family" will promote hunger relief programs, raise funds for the Food Bank, and incentivize listeners to support their public radio station.

Tune in to 90.1/91.7 FM from October 18 to 29 and call (800)533-9428 to make your donation.

Last year, the program raised \$150,000 for public radio programming. The Walmart Foundation matched 10 percent, donating \$15,000 to the Food Bank.

"With the increasing need of our neighbors for food, we know that our caring community will step up again to support the WGCU-Walmart initiative," said Jo Anna Bradshaw, Food Bank Board President, and Dr. Wilson Bradshaw, President of Florida Gulf Coast University.



**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](http://www.harrychapinfoodbank.org)

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## BANK NOTES...

From Executive Director Al Brislain

# Partners Fund New Staff Positions To Connect Clients to Resources

Last year, the Harry Chapin Food Bank participated in "Hunger in America-2010," the largest hunger study ever conducted in the United States. Two findings in particular have influenced the strategic direction of the Food Bank.

First, the study found that **almost 40 percent of the clients served through the emergency food network in Southwest Florida are children.** In an effort to develop a more effective approach to serving children in need in our community, the Food Bank has partnered with AmeriCorps, Con-Agra Foods, and Feeding America, the nation's food bank network, to add a Child Hunger Corps position to the Food Bank staff.

In that capacity, Danielle Hardre joined our team this past August. She will re-search our current efforts to feed children in Southwest Florida and then develop and implement a plan to improve these activities. You can find out more about Danielle's background and her ongoing work at our Web site.

The local results from the study also shed light on the gap between the number of emergency food pantry clients who are eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) — formerly

called food stamps — and those who are receiving such benefits. **Almost 57 percent of those eligible to receive SNAP benefits were not receiving them.** Thus, our emergency food providers are serving about 10,000 people a week who are eligible but do not receive SNAP benefits.

Since most of these people are the "new poor" — people who have been working for years and paying taxes until the recent recession — it is especially frustrating that they have not received SNAP benefits.

Through the generosity of the Southwest Florida Community Foundation, Bank of America Foundation, and Wal-Mart Foundation, the Harry Chapin Food Bank has been able to hire two staff people to assist emergency food clients with eligibility to receive SNAP benefits.

These grants enable us to help our neighbors in need garner additional resources. Also, studies have shown that for every dollar generated by SNAP, the community realizes \$1.75 in additional economic activity. It's a definite win-win for the community!



## Boys 'Scout' for Food

Boy Scouts of America's Southwest Florida Council hopes for good weather and a great turnout for this fall's Scouting for Food. Bags go out to scouts in four districts (from Bradenton to Marco Island) on November 6, with collection set for November 13. Last year's program gathered six tons in one day for the Food Bank!

**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.



### Join Us in Thanking Our Grant-Givers

Bank of America: \$30,000

Charlotte County United  
Way: \$14,148

Collier County United  
Way: \$44,000

Southwest Florida Community  
Foundation: \$50,000

Walmart Foundation: \$94,576

Walmart Foundation State  
Giving Program: \$25,000

# United Way Revs Up Campaign

The United Way of Lee, Hendry, and Glades is ready to begin its 2010-2011 Campaign, with an ambitious goal of more than \$8 million. Campaign Chair Patricia O'Donnell will host the Kick-Off on October 20 at Harborside Event Center.

The United Way mission of improving quality of life reaches far into the Southwest Florida community. It raises funds for 72 agencies and 160 programs and initiatives within the three counties.

The Harry Chapin Food Bank participates in the campaign each year and assists with presentations. Similar partnerships are underway with **United Way of Collier County** and **United Way of Charlotte County**.

"We work closely with all three United Ways in our service area, and they do a great job of raising resources to help families in need," said Food Bank Executive Director Al Brislain. "It's a great collaborative partnership, and we are proud to be United Way members."

The organizations also work together on hunger projects that take food to neighborhoods, and food drives that bring food in. "We are so appreciative of all that the Harry Chapin Food Bank does to make our community such a wonderful place to live," said Cliff Smith, President of the United Way of Lee, Hendry, and Glades.

People came out in droves for last year's WINK News Feeds Families Hunger Walk, presented by Panera Bread, raising \$145,950 — nearly triple the \$50,000 from the first year.

## Hunger Walk Aims to Top \$150,000 in Funds

Now that it is the Harry Chapin Food Bank's biggest fundraising event of the year, expectations are high that the 3rd Annual Hunger Walk at Miromar Outlets on January 22, 2011, will top \$150,000.

Last year's results allowed the Food Bank to distribute food valued at more than \$297,700. It was an important contribution to the Food Bank's FY 2009-10

distribution total of 9.5 million pounds of food, valued at \$15 million.

Still, the needs in the Southwest Florida community have grown exponentially, with a gap of at least 15 million pounds of additional food required to meet burgeoning demand. Remember that 38 percent of those served by Food Bank agencies are children.

"We need everyone's assistance — businesses and individuals — to reach our goal," said Alexander "Sandy" Robinson, President, Northern Trust, and co-chair of the event with Jo Anna Bradshaw, Board President of the Food Bank. "Given the tough economy, we have kept our goal for the Hunger Walk almost flat with last year's numbers. We would love to easily exceed this goal, and look for your support."

Go to [www.harrychapinfoodbank.org](http://www.harrychapinfoodbank.org) to find out how you can register, join a team, make a pledge, volunteer, or become a sponsor for the Hunger Walk.

clients were forced to work fewer hours or were laid off by their employers.

Encouraged by the success of "Free Food Fridays," the Food Bank is planning to expand it year-round, with a goal of two mobile pantry distributions per week during the growing season.



At the United Way Day of Action, a team from Sony Corporation packed food for the Harry Chapin Food Bank and Kids Against Hunger.

### WCI's a Winner!

As the **WCI Communities'** golf promotion — donate \$100 to the Food Bank and receive four free rounds of golf (cart included) between July 1 and October 15 — neared its end, donations topped **\$21,308**. Thank you, WCI!

## Distribution Up 33% to Meet Summer Demand...

*Continued from page 1*

pounds of perishable foods to locations in the Food Bank's five-county service area. Then it stayed on site to safely maintain the food until all of it was distributed.

At Lee County "Fridays," for example, more than 624 families (2,491 individuals) accessed the mobile pantry at six different locations. Other "Friday" mobile pantry distributions served Collier, Charlotte, Hendry, and Glades Counties.

The July 30th distribution alone, in Moore Haven, aided 165 families (632 adults, children, and seniors).

Last year, using its regular trucks, the Food Bank could only drop pallets of food that could withstand the heat of summer, and then leave.



"Free Food Fridays" helped many families make it through a difficult summer.

### Win 2 Tickets to Meet The Steve Chapin Band

Give us your e-mail address, and you could win two tickets to a private event in Southwest Florida on February 7, 2011! You'll meet the Steve Chapin Band (Harry Chapin's original band) and enjoy their music. Harry's brother Steve, Big John Wallace, and Howard Fields will be performing all of their hit songs, including "Cat's in the Cradle," in a beautiful tropical setting.

For your chance to win tickets, e-mail your contact information to [joycejacobs@harrychapinfoodbank.org](mailto:joycejacobs@harrychapinfoodbank.org). No calls, please!

# Corporations Embrace Team-building Through Food Bank Volunteering

Best Buy and Target may be retail giants, but at the local level, each store takes very seriously its commitment to improving the community. Here in Southwest Florida, the Harry Chapin Food Bank is a grateful recipient of their programs for team-building through volunteering.

Best Buy not only encourages staff to participate, it approves a \$1,000 donation



*Best Buy builds rapport among its staff by organizing volunteer events like this one at the Harry Chapin Food Bank.*

when 10 or more people work six hours volunteering for a particular group or event. Best Buy Store #1508 at The Forum made that happen when its team worked the Letter Carriers' Food Drive this past May.

Another Best Buy group spent a day at the Food Bank warehouse, unloading and sorting incoming food, and weighing and palletizing boxes for agency distribution.

"I've been in a position where I've had to use community services," said Glenda Rush, SWAT Inventory, Best Buy Stores. She inspires her co-workers to volunteer. "It helps when someone can say to them, 'I've been there.' Then they believe you when you explain that 'someday you may be in the same boat as the people helped by the Food Bank.'"

"Target is all about being best in the community," said Jessica Crouch, Executive Team Leader of Human Resources at the Gulf Coast Town Center Target Superstore. That's why the corporation is so supportive of volunteerism.



*Target team members regularly visit the Food Bank warehouse. Here, a group works together packaging meals for distribution.*

Team members from that store location recently began regular visits to the Harry Chapin Food Bank warehouse. It's time "off the clock," from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. the last Wednesday of every month.

"A lot of the food we sorted comes from Target, so it's rewarding to see our products going to a good cause," Crouch said. "Also, it's a great way to get our team working together on a single task. There's definitely a team-building aspect to volunteering."

Give your team an experience that is both rewarding and motivational! Contact Marta Hodson at 334-7007, x32.

Register at  
[www.harrychapinfoodbank.org](http://www.harrychapinfoodbank.org)  
 for the WINK News Feeds  
 Families Hunger Walk!

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