

Food Drive preparations kick into high gear

Preparations continue to pick up speed for the 21st annual NALC National Food Drive on Saturday, May 11. “In too many of the communities we serve six days a week, hunger remains a huge challenge,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “That’s why each year on the second Saturday in May, thousands of letter carriers enlist the help of family members, friends, co-workers, and managers to participate in the largest one-day food-collection drive in America—our sincere effort to make a real difference.”

As this magazine went to press, the number of registered branches for the 2013 food drive already had topped 1,250. Branch coordinators are encouraged to continue to register, as only registered branches can provide collected food totals. The more branches that report, the more accurate the total number becomes. Resource guides and other materials continue to be mailed out to registered branch food drive coordinators in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Providing these branches and volunteers a much-appreciated boost are the drive’s official sponsors: the National Rural Letter Carriers’ Association, Campbell Soup Company, Valpak, U.S. Postal Service, United Way, AFL-CIO, Feeding America, Uncle Bob’s Storage, AARP, GLS, Source Direct Plastics, Publix and Valassis.

“Last year, as we celebrated the drive’s 20th anniversary, we collected more than 70 million pounds of food,” Rolando said. “This year, with the partnership of rural carriers, and the assistance of supervisors and other craft members, we’ll continue the tradition of doing what we can to help Americans in need.”

The sponsors of the drive understand why the letter carriers’ efforts are so important:

- “The National Rural Letter Carriers’ Association is proud to align ourselves

with such a noble and distinguished cause,” NRLCA President Jeanette Dwyer said. “I look forward to working with you in order to ‘Stamp Out Hunger’ in 2013.”

- “Today, more than 50 million Americans face hunger—that is one in six,” Feeding America President Bob Aiken said. “Our food banks rely on the donated items from this national drive to help them feed people in their communities each year, especially now, when so many people are in need.”

- “As we approach May 11, we pledge to work diligently to ensure every community rallies support for the National Association of Letter Carriers food drive,” Campbell Soup Co. President and CEO Denise Morrison said. “The need has never been greater, which is why we remain committed to this drive and to the efforts of the letter carriers.”

- “Last year, AARP and AARP Foundation donated nearly 15 million bags to support the Stamp Out Hunger drive in communities across the nation where food insecurity among Americans 50 and older is prevalent,” AARP Foundation President Jo Ann C. Jenkins said. “We anticipate even greater results this year, and we are proud to support Stamp Out Hunger again this year.”

- “Valpak is committed to help spread the message, and encourage Americans to donate food to the millions of families and individuals in need,” Valpak President Michael Vivio said. “We know the Valpak audience around the country will see this call to action featured on our envelopes and be generous with their donations.”

- “We are pleased to announce that United Way will continue to partner with the NALC National Food Drive in 2013,” United Way President Stacey Stewart said. “This effort is a tremendous example of the importance of working with organized labor to advance the common good in communities throughout the United States.”

- “With America still reeling with devastating unemployment, the

Remembering food drive innovator

Phoenix, AZ
Branch 576’s John Schwander, who helped lead the way toward the creation of the NALC Food Drive, died on Feb. 10, from complications associated with a stroke.

In 1990, Branch 576 President C. Michael Crowley appointed Schwander to coordinate the local food drive held on Nov 3.

John revamped the entire process to include TV and radio coverage, and would later arrange for the then-Scottsdale resident, Bill Keane, to create Family Circus artwork for the 1992 Food Drive.

During the 1991 Arizona state convention, NALC President Vincent Sombrotto viewed a videotape of John’s successful food drive format. Sombrotto invited Crowley and Schwander to share the concept with AFL-CIO Community Services leaders attending their July convention in Washington, DC. The concept was adopted and the NALC established a 10-city pilot food drive modeled after Branch 576’s program, to be held on Oct. 26, 1991. The success of that pilot program led to NALC’s nationwide food drive.

Schwander was 57 years old and is survived by his son, Matt, his daughter, Gale, and his former wife, Nancy. **PR**



National Association of Letter Carriers Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive comes at a most critical time,” AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka said. “With the support of unions all across America, the NALC can set a record in collections, helping those who have lost their jobs in this economy and the millions more facing economic uncertainty.”

Questions regarding the food drive should be directed to NALC Director of Community Services Pam Donato at 202-662-2489 or at donato@nalc.org. **PR**