

Filling bags and feeding families

As this issue of *The Postal Record* was hitting the mail stream, down-to-the-wire preparations were taking place for the NALC's 23rd annual Food Drive to "Stamp Out Hunger" on Saturday, May 9.

"Short of Food Drive Day itself, this is probably the busiest time of year for your branch's food drive coordinator and volunteers," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "It takes a lot of work to get ready for the largest one-day food drive in the U.S., so anything you can do to help make these folks' loads a little lighter will be greatly appreciated, I'm sure."

Each year, thousands of active NALC members are joined by retired letter carriers, by family members and friends, and by countless volunteers to help collect and distribute the sacks of non-perishable food items that get left next to generous customers' mailboxes on the morning of Saturday, May 9.

"The simplicity of the drive is what helps make it such a success," Rolando said. "All customers have to do is leave their bags of food for their letter carriers to pick up as part of that day's regular service. That's the easy part—but that's just the beginning."

What customers often don't see is just how one bag of food at a time can really add up, the president said.

"By the time a letter carrier's vehicle reaches the station to be unloaded, more often than not it's practically dragging on the ground from the extra weight of food," Rolando said. "The letter carrier is probably dragging a little bit as well, after having to haul the bags back to the vehicle and find a safe place to put them with the rest of the food and mail."

"It does make for a long day for our members and volunteers," he said, "but in the end, we know that it's absolutely worth it."

**Fill A Bag.
Help Feed Families.**

**AMERICA'S LETTER CARRIERS
Delivering Hope**

Saturday, May 9, 2015

Help Us Stamp Out Hunger, Spread the Word.

Facebook.com/StampOutHunger @StampOutHunger

A sad reality, still

"It's a real tragedy that we live in the most prosperous nation on the planet," Rolando observed, "yet practically every community letter carriers serve contains men, women and children who are on the brink of hunger."

And that, sadly, includes veterans. A study by food drive sponsor Feeding America found that one-fifth of the households that the national food bank organization serves have a member who is a veteran or has served in the U.S. military.

Feeding America's "Map the Meal Gap 2015" study estimates that, over all, food-insecure American households have a total "food budget shortfall" of \$24.2 billion, compared with \$23.5 billion in 2014—an increase of \$700 million.

Joining Feeding America as the food drive's national sponsors this year are the U.S. Postal Service, the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, AFL-CIO and United Way Worldwide.

"We thank all of these great sponsors for stepping in to help out," Rolando said. "But we can't pull this event off,

year after year, without the generous volunteerism of our members and their families and friends. For your service beyond the satchel, we are truly thankful."

Last year's drive resulted in the collection of nearly 73 million pounds of non-perishable food left by customers' mailboxes. Thanks to that generosity, since the national drive began in 1992 letter carriers have picked up and delivered to local food banks more than 1.3 billion pounds of food.

Visit nalc.org/food for last-minute ideas to help make this year's food drive a similar success. There, you'll also find a plethora of resources, plus links to the coordinators' manual, support documents, graphics, videos and answers to frequently asked questions.

If you need help, call NALC Community and Membership Outreach Coordinator Pam Donato at 202-662-2489 or send her an e-mail at donato@nalc.org. And get up-to-the-minute food drive news on the Facebook page (facebook.com/StampOutHunger) and Twitter (@StampOutHunger). **PR**