

# Thanks to you

## Letter carriers' and allies' efforts make the difference

**L**etter carriers across the country gave hope to the hungry through the 26th annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive on Saturday, May 12.

"Letter carriers see the needs of their communities as they deliver the mail at least six days a week," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "Food Drive Day is the very special day when we have the privilege of bringing food to the tables of the families that depend on our efforts."

Thanks to the generosity of millions of postal customers who donated food at their doorsteps, letter carriers collected more than 71 million pounds of food this year and delivered the donations to food banks, pantries and shelters, providing a lifeline of nutrition for the needy. While results were still coming in as this issue went to press, the results confirm that this is the 10th year the food drive has collected more than 70 million pounds. This year's collection brings the total amount of food collected for hungry families nationwide in the 26 years of the Letter Carriers' Food Drive to more than 1.6 billion pounds.

Bad weather in many parts of the country did not deter letter carriers from picking up tens of millions of pounds of food left near mailboxes as they delivered the mail. Thanks to their dedication, food pantries in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands received critical replenishments of their food stocks.

Los Angeles, CA Branch 24 again topped the list of branch food collection totals by collecting more than 2 million pounds. The leading branches among different branch size groups, and results reported from every branch, are listed in the pages ahead.

Nationwide, the food drive effort came together with the sustained energy of letter carriers and their families. President Rolando congratulated them for their success and thanked the NALC's national partners in this year's drive—the U.S. Postal Service, the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW), the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA), AFL-CIO, Valpak Direct Marketing Systems, United Way Worldwide and Valassis. Thousands of local community organizations and volunteers helped to sort food and bring it to local food banks in each town.

UFCW's sponsorship helped pay for the millions of postcards that arrived in residential mailboxes around the country shortly before



Top: Hayward, CA Branch 1707

Above: San Juan, PR Branch 869



# Stamp Out Hunger FOOD DRIVE

Right: Anchorage, AK Branch 4139

Below right: The food collected was delivered to pantries and food banks in local communities



Saturday, May 12, with Valpak handling the printing of the cards and the logistics involved in getting them to NALC branches. USPS generously donated the use of its G-10 postage permit for the mailing of postcards and other food drive-related items, while Valassis's Red Plum mailing, combined with the blue-envelope mailing by Valpak, helped ensure that millions would keep the food drive in mind when they shopped at grocery stores. Rural letter carriers, meanwhile, volunteered to participate in offices throughout the country.

Rolando also noted with appreciation the boost provided by "Family Circus" cartoonist Jeff Keane, who once again provided special artwork to promote the drive. The president thanked acclaimed actor Edward James Olmos ("Battlestar Galactica," "Stand and Deliver"), whose father was a letter carrier, for again serving as the food drive's national celebrity spokesman. Rolando also thanked Alison Arngrim, a TV and stage actor best known for her childhood role on "Little House on the Prairie," for joining Olmos in the cause.

Thanks to the efforts of both national sponsors and local branches, articles about the drive, before and after Saturday, May 12, were run by hundreds of news outlets—print, web, radio and television. And in the weeks leading up to Food Drive Day, CVS Pharmacy ran in-store announcements to promote the drive to store customers.

The contributions of the labor community also were vital—they included sponsoring bags, helping gather volunteers and getting out the message about the drive.

## A spring bounty

The annual food drive is held every second Saturday in May for a reason—

it fills a void in the calendar for food banks, pantries and shelters.

"The food collected in this drive is quite timely," said Matt Edmonds, communications manager at the Clark County Food Bank in Washington state. "That's because all the food collected through food drives during the holidays and winter months has already been distributed. This drive is a chance to restock the shelves."

Edmonds said that in Clark County, which is across the Columbia River from Portland, OR, the Letter Carrier Food Drive's impact is substantial—food from last May's collection accounted for 23 percent of donations from all local food drives.

"That's why it's such a big deal," Edmonds said.

Preliminary results showed that Clark County and many other communities boosted their food collection over last year's results, with some even exceeding all previous results over the last 25 years.

In Mansfield, OH, letter carriers gathered 10,906 pounds of food to top their total of 9,000 from last year.

"NALC does this across the country every year for the past 26 years," Mansfield Branch 118 President **Bob Diehl** told the *Mansfield News Journal*. "It is the nation's largest one-day food drive. It's a collective effort."

Letter carriers and partners in and around Conway, AR, came through with 31,340 pounds in food donations,







## Food drive art contest

The entire town of Hillsboro, OH—including its grade school students—pitches in for the Letter Carriers' Food Drive.

Since 2007, the Hillsboro Post Office has asked students at Hillsboro Elementary School to submit their works of art for display in the post office, to promote the annual food drive. The submissions number several hundred. The works of art celebrate the annual event that helps to put food on every table and encourages everyone in the town to participate.

"We wanted to create better awareness of the food drive," Hillsboro Postmaster Curtis Pegram said. "What better place to start than in the elementary schools?"

In the weeks leading up to the second Saturday in May, students who submitted artwork come to the post office, with proud parents, to see it on display.

"It's like a children's art museum," Pegram said. "This is a small town, so it's a big deal."

At a special ceremony, students in each grade win trophies from the post office for the best art, and their names and artwork are published in the local newspaper, the *Times-Gazette*.

The contest does more than show off artwork, though—the media attention

and visits to the post office in this town of 6,600 people have helped build awareness of the food drive and boosted the number of pounds of food collected for the local food bank, Pegram said. Thanks to the students, the combined efforts of city and rural carriers and the community, he said, the collection has grown from 800 pounds in 2006 to 15,000 pounds this year.



Second grader Ella Jordan's first-place entry



said Melissa Allen, community programs director for the Community Action Program for Central Arkansas in Conway—exceeding last year's record of 29,013 pounds.

"It's just amazing," Allen told the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, adding that it comes at a great time because families often struggle to feed their children when school ends for the year. "That food is what helps us get through the summer."

The timing is critical because school food programs typically aren't available in summer.

The director of the Madison-Morgan County Caring Place, a food bank in Madison, GA, knew just by looking at the bags and boxes of food gathered on the evening of May 12 that it was the most the food bank had ever received.

"A commercial-style van was filled to the ceiling twice, a pickup truck filled to overflowing and two carts carried extras," Nancy Pluckhahn, who runs a local food bank, wrote in a letter to the *Morgan County Citizen*. Pluckhahn said that her food bank provides assistance to about 180 families a week who depend on efforts such as the Letter Carrier Food Drive for steady nutrition.

The *Newton Daily News* of Newton, IA, reported that the town had donated 4,700 pounds of food on May 12, far exceeding its typical totals of about 3,000 pounds in previous years.

St. Albans, VT, nearly doubled its food total over last year. "It's a huge team effort, on the part of the carriers, management, and really the whole community, which I think is really unique," St. Albans carrier **Chris Kenyon**, a member of Burlington, VT Branch 521, told the *St. Albans Messenger*.

Teamwork was also key to bringing in 8,422 pounds of food in Laramie, WY, Laramie Branch 463 Food Drive Coordinator **Ben Brosmire** wrote in



a letter to the editor of the *Laramie Boomerang*.

"This was a herculean effort and could not be done without our wonderful community pitching in for this great cause," Brosmire wrote. "The food collected will provide thousands of meals to the hungry and comes at a time when holiday reserves are low."

Brosmire thanked local media outlets for helping get the word out and volunteers for pitching in to collect, sort and distribute the proceeds from the day.

In Rugby, ND, the *Pierce County Tribune* reported that local results for the food drive were the highest to date.

"Seven hundred pounds was collected in a six-hour window," Rugby Branch 3989 Food Drive Coordinator **Nathan Kleespie** told the newspaper, "and the Stamp Out Hunger Drive was highly successful this year."

"People throughout the city were generously donating, and individual carriers in Rugby had to carry and distribute items also," added Kleespie. "We thank all our employees, carriers and everyone involved with the effort."

Northeastern New York Branch 358 President **William Cook** and Schenectady, NY, Postmaster John Reilly explained in a letter to the editor of Schenectady's *Daily Gazette* how the Letter Carrier Food Drive's local efforts add up to national results.

"Hunger in America isn't isolated to one region or ZIP code," they wrote. "Some 42 million Americans live daily not knowing where their next meal may come from. Thirteen million children and more than 5 million seniors face hunger each day. Our letter carriers take great pride in distributing your contributions to resources right in our local community, and the rest of our postal family support and applaud their efforts."

The Richmond County, NC, *Daily Journal* reported that the county has



Ocala, FL Branch 1103

an estimated 10,900 residents—24 percent of the population—living in poverty. Their food security depends on food banks such as Our Daily Bread in Rockingham, NC, which received about 16,000 pounds of food on May 12. Rockingham Post Office letter carrier and Fayetteville, NC Branch 1128 member **Clifton Garrison** told the newspaper that carriers picked up 1,700 bags of food from 13 city and rural routes. "I'm just happy to be able to contribute to the needy," Garrison said.

## Expressions of gratitude

Food pantries were delighted by the commitment of letter carriers and their communities and the bounty of food their efforts produced, especially in areas hit by rain and thunderstorms on Food Drive Day.

"It was rain on Saturday, May 12, that challenged our letter carriers, but they were not stayed from their rounds of bearing not just mail, but also about 12,000 lbs. of food to benefit the Marblehead Food Pantry," Marblehead, MA, Food Pantry Director Janet Fitch Parker wrote in a letter to the editor published by the *Marblehead Reporter*. "Our pan-

Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100





# Top 110 branches by size category

## Category 1 (2,000 or more members)

Los Angeles, CA Br. 24.....	2,017,939
South Florida Br. 1071 .....	1,482,885
Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100.....	1,203,767
Pittsburgh, PA Br. 84.....	1,151,719
New Jersey Mgd. Br. 38.....	720,934
Dallas, TX Br. 132 .....	587,200
San Diego, CA Br. 70 .....	489,110
Oak Brook, IL Br. 825.....	391,665
St. Louis, MO Br. 343.....	335,143
Chicago, IL Br. 11.....	322,600

## Category 2 (1,500-1,999 members)

Central Florida Br. 1091.....	1,062,835
Portland, OR Br. 82.....	574,137
Milwaukee, WI Br. 2.....	571,008
Buffalo-Western New York Br. 3 .....	542,361
Seattle, WA Br. 79.....	520,741
Sacramento, CA Br. 133 .....	520,270
Tri-Valley, CA Br. 2902.....	385,358
Las Vegas, NV Br. 2502.....	367,925
Hartford, CT Br. 86.....	315,011
Phoenix, AZ Br. 576.....	313,852

## Category 3 (1,000-1,499 members)

West Coast Florida Br. 1477 .....	1,312,092
Tampa, FL Br. 599 .....	1,150,000
West Palm Beach, FL Br. 1690.....	692,056
St. Paul, MN Br. 28 .....	691,451
Northeastern Florida Br. 53 .....	633,782
Salt Lake City, UT Br. 111.....	394,265
Rochester, NY Br. 210.....	382,002
South Suburban Illinois Br. 4016....	310,264
Kansas City, MO Br. 30 .....	289,482
Western Wayne Co., MI Br. 2184 .....	278,200

## Category 4 (700-999 members)

Oklahoma City, OK Br. 458 .....	1,802,922
San Juan, PR Br. 869.....	1,729,750
Clearwater, FL Br. 2008.....	1,226,850
Tucson, AZ Br. 704.....	578,176
Pasadena, CA Br. 2200.....	400,130
Worcester, MA Br. 12 .....	354,963
Honolulu, HI Br. 860.....	302,929
Omaha, NE Br. 5 .....	266,273
Youngstown, OH Br. 385 .....	248,500
Tulsa, OK Br. 1358.....	220,939

## Category 5 (500-699 members)

North Oakland Co., MI Br. 320 .....	537,683
Madison, WI Br. 507 .....	229,928
Tacoma, WA Br. 130 .....	196,720
New Castle, PA Br. 22 .....	174,491
Maine Mgd. Br. 92.....	156,218
Marietta, GA Br. 1119.....	155,145
Birmingham, AL Br. 530 .....	150,391
Wichita, KS Br. 201 .....	149,842
Central Kentucky Br. 361 .....	139,613
Grand Rapids, MI Br. 56 .....	138,591



try is grateful to our local letter carriers for picking up food at residents' homes in addition to their already full schedules and despite the rain."

"We are deeply grateful for our local letter carriers and their coordination of this event: dropping off the collection bags earlier in the week, picking up the food and then delivering it to the food bank," Henry D. Kok, executive director of the Christian Hope Association Project Hope Food Bank of Lynden, WA, wrote in a letter to the editor of the *Lynden Tribune*.

Shirley Woessner, director of the Bowling Green Christian Food Pantry, wrote in a letter to the *Sentinel-Tribune* in Bowling Green, OH, that the efforts by letter carriers and volunteers had gathered 11,300 pounds, nearly 1,000 more than last year.

"I don't know why I am always so surprised at the response all our friends give when these collections come. We have the most caring, kind friends in BG," Woessner wrote, especially letter carriers: "It was extra work for them but they always do it with a smile on their face."

In the Phoenix area, local news website *AZfamily.com* reported that, as Food Drive Day wound down, St. Mary's Food Bank was approaching the 400,000-pound mark in donated food from the drive—a 40 percent increase from last year's result.

The donations were critical, the site reported, because local emergencies, including a wildfire, "took a large bite out of the food bank's supplies for the summer."

One state over, in Albuquerque, NM, Roadrunner Food Bank reported that the food drive collected nearly 170,000 pounds of donated food.

"We are so grateful so many took action to help solve hunger this past Saturday," Roadrunner President and CEO Mag Strittmatter told KOB 4 News. "Thank you to the letter carriers and the United States Postal Service who hauled tens of thousands of additional pounds, volunteers for sorting food at post offices, and our wonderful community for responding. Your efforts combined truly make a difference."

The *Osceola Sentinel-Tribune* reported that the Osceola, IA, post office participated in the food drive for the third time this year, and as word about the food drive has spread among area residents, donations have grown rapidly each year.

"I remember hearing in our video where it said there were kids in the summer that didn't have enough to eat," rural carrier John Wilcox told the newspaper. "And it really struck





Left: Annapolis, MD  
Branch 651  
Below left: Centralia, IL  
Branch 738  
Right: St. Louis, MO  
Branch 343



a chord and I thought, look at where we live, we're in the middle of the Midwest where we grow food for the rest of the world and our own kids are hungry. So I was really glad to pick up food for them."

"Our families with children usually qualify for free or reduced breakfast and lunch when the kids are in school," Arlyn Post told the *Villages Daily Sun* newspaper of central Florida. Post, who is day manager of Beyond the Walls Food Pantry in Fruitland Park, FL, said, "When school is out, it is difficult to feed the children."

That's why Beyond the Walls depends so much on the food drive each May, Post said. "Right now, a lot of our shelves are almost bare, so this donation will help for a while," she added.

## #StampOutHunger

In recent years, social media has played a growing role in publicity efforts for the food drive. This year, NALC and the Postal Service encouraged letter carriers and others who posted items about the food drive to use #StampOutHunger to direct attention to the food drive. Thousands of posts on Twitter and other social media outlets included this hashtag and reached millions of readers after they were shared.

In the weeks leading up to the big day, letter carriers and food drive partners, food bank staff, volunteers and media outlets began tweeting and sharing items on Facebook and other social media outlets about the Letter Carrier Food Drive. As the food rolled in on May 12, many posted photos and video clips showing postal employees and volunteers gathering food, or depicting the donated food items stacked in trucks or in post offices. Here is a sample of some of the tweets from food banks thanking letter carriers and

their communities for their generosity:

"The final numbers are added up for the #StampOutHunger Food Drive. In Meridian alone letter carriers gathered 25,825 pounds of food! That will go a long to helping us help the hungry through the spring and summer. Thank you to everyone who donated!"

—Meridian Food Bank, Meridian, ID

"We are so grateful for @NALC\_National for collecting food all over the country and for our volunteers who helped us sort food for @StampOutHunger!"—Oakland HOPE, Oakland County, MI

"Stamp Out Hunger collected 29,524 pounds of food for our pantries in Benton and Franklin counties. Big thanks to our incredible letter carriers, sponsors, volunteers and to all who gave so generously! Special thanks to UFCW Local 1439 and Safeway/Albertson's. #StampOutHunger"—Second Harvest, Spokane, WA

"Wow! Our community came together to donate over 72,000 pounds of food items to the National Association of Letter Carriers' #StampOutHunger food drive. That equates to more than 60,000 meals for our neighbors in need! Thank you!"—Action Pathways/Second Harvest Food Bank, Fayetteville, NC

"Thank you to everyone who donated to the 26th Annual Letter Carriers' Food Drive. This year, we collected 100,274 pounds of food in Kalamazoo and Battle Creek! Your donations will surely help us #StampOutHunger in our community!"—United Way of the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region, MI

Planning for the NALC Food Drive never ends, and preparations for next year's food drive on Saturday, May 11—as always, the second Saturday in May—already have begun. NALC's mission to help millions of Americans who face hunger each day continues.

### Category 6 (350-499 members)

Fort Myers, FL Br. 2072 .....	292,095
Fort Wayne, IN Br. 116 .....	282,375
Spacecoast Florida Br. 2689 .....	281,500
Ozark Mountain, MO Br. 203 .....	255,000
Snohomish Co., WA Br. 791 .....	238,917
Scranton, PA Br. 17 .....	229,300
Lakeland, FL Br. 1779 .....	229,065
Ponce, PR Br. 826 .....	194,406
Kalamazoo, MI Br. 246 .....	180,545
Winston-Salem, NC Br. 461 .....	173,110

### Category 7 (200-349 members)

Columbia, MO Br. 763 .....	1,095,148
Green Bay, WI Br. 619 .....	282,827
Naples, FL Br. 4716 .....	257,800
Asheville, NC Br. 248 .....	253,181
Roanoke, VA Br. 524 .....	251,837
Savannah, GA Br. 578 .....	212,200
Muskegon, MI Br. 13 .....	184,191
Wilmington, NC Br. 464 .....	181,916
Mobile, AL Br. 469 .....	162,510
Vancouver, WA Br. 1104 .....	157,498

### Category 8 (100-199 members)

Charlottesville, VA Br. 518 .....	349,164
Venice, FL Br. 5480 .....	195,418
Central Maine Mgd. Br. 391 .....	160,400
Emerald Coast Florida Br. 4559 .....	147,425
Anderson, SC Br. 1871 .....	145,661
Huntington, WV Br. 359 .....	131,667
Southern Delaware Br. 906 .....	130,668
La Crosse, WI Br. 59 .....	125,137
Bradenton, FL Br. 1753 .....	116,165
Terre Haute, IN Br. 479 .....	115,041

### Category 9 (50-99 members)

Albany, GA Br. 4040 .....	124,639
Hattiesburg, MI Br. 938 .....	92,501
Pine Bluff, AR Br. 240 .....	89,810
Valdosta, GA Br. 998 .....	80,170
Aiken, SC Br. 1569 .....	77,988
Provo, UT Br. 887 .....	75,080
Ocala, FL Br. 1103 .....	74,445
Rutland, VT Br. 495 .....	64,000
Aiea-Pearl City, HI Br. 4682 .....	60,379
Lenoir, NC Br. 1852 .....	58,523

### Category 10 (26-49 members)

Sebring, FL Br. 2744 .....	58,000
Beaufort, SC Br. 3262 .....	57,000
Marshfield, WI Br. 978 .....	45,574
Oconomowoc, WI Br. 1267 .....	42,000
Greer, SC Br. 2553 .....	39,785
Clovis, NM Br. 2691 .....	32,500
Wisconsin Rapids, WI Br. 1083 .....	29,775
Logan, UT Br. 970 .....	29,313
Elizabeth City, NC Br. 1127 .....	28,930
Benton, AR Br. 3706 .....	28,590

### Category 11 (1-25 members)

Avon Park, FL Br. 4000 .....	63,992
Carbondale, PA Br. 163 .....	59,000
Dallas, NC Br. 5690 .....	59,000
Natchez, MI Br. 476 .....	36,000
Conway, AR Br. 1592 .....	31,350
American Fork, UT Br. 2609 .....	28,800
Princeton, IL Br. 953 .....	27,234
Meridian, ID Br. 4745 .....	25,825
Thomasville, GA Br. 1026 .....	21,201
Somerset, KY Br. 2039 .....	21,100