



Harry Chapin Food Bank OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

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As Hurricane Season Nears, Food Bank Plans Response

When disasters strike, people in distress require the most basic of necessities – shelter, clothing, water and food. Overwhelmed and often alone, they literally don't know where to turn.

That's where the Harry Chapin Food Bank comes in, providing disaster relief to its Southwest Florida community struck by hurricane, flood, fire, explosion, pandemic or catastrophic accident.

The food bank taps America's Second Harvest's national network for support and resources, as needed. At the same time, it gets to work immediately with local Red Cross chapters, emergency management

agencies and the United Way to coordinate response efforts.

Meanwhile, it sources necessary equipment, supplies and additional warehouse sites, and puts in place facility controls, transportation, and communication systems. The food bank also lays out the responsibilities of key managers in directing disaster relief efforts. These actions enable much-needed food to be distributed quickly and efficiently.

Finally, the food bank turns to its network of volunteers, who become the critical lifeline in delivering food to the agencies serving those in need.

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Upcoming Food Bank Events and Activities:

Publix Presents...



...a check for \$14,474.24 from the supermarket retailer's very successful "Food for All" drive to Al Brislain (second from left), Executive Director of the Harry Chapin Food Bank.

In a Flash

This year, the Harry Chapin Food Bank will receive more than \$90,000 from the United Way. So when the United Way fields its disaster hotline calls, the Food Bank responds in a flash with food and water, and the trucks and drivers to get these resources where they are needed. "The food bank is absolutely key to our efforts," says Greg Gardner, Vice President, Allocations and Planning, for the United Way.

Letter Carriers Collect 351,000 Pounds

"Stamp Out Hunger," which takes place on the Saturday before Mother's Day, remains the nation's largest single-day food drive, collecting more than 765 million pounds since its inception 15 years ago.

This year, continuing the team effort of the National Association of Letter Carriers, The Rural Letter Carriers, Campbell Soup Company and America's Second Harvest, 351,000 pounds of food were collected in Lee County.



Hundreds of volunteers (above and left) unload and sort bags overflowing with cans, jars and dry goods from letter carrier vans.





The Harry Chapin Food Bank of Southwest Florida

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From Executive Director Al Brislain

Banking on Your Support

I can't tell you how pleased I am to be part of the Southwest Florida community. Since my arrival about two months ago, everyone I've met has been supportive, friendly and caring.

Let me tell you about some of the people who make the Harry Chapin Food Bank so special. First, an amazing group of committed people serves on our **Board of Directors**. They make time in their busy lives to provide wise guidance, raise funds, and keep us focused on our mission.

Dozens of **volunteers** help every week. Some are retirees who care deeply about their neighbors in need. Others are students, learning to give back to their community. Last year, they contributed more than 10,000 hours of good work and sorted more than a million pounds of food!

Our **food donors** are a critical resource. Publix donates food and coordinates our largest food drive during the holidays, as well as a second drive in the spring. Publix also is the largest contributor to the local United Way campaign; as a proud United Way agency, we benefit from Publix employees' generosity. Sweetbay has a meat donation program that delivers tens of thousands of pounds of nutritious protein every year. Bagel Bites and other local food companies also contribute to the food bank.

The generosity of our **financial donors**

is just as impressive. Whether larger gifts from "snowbird" friends or smaller gifts from a school class, the community does a wonderful job of supporting the food bank.

The **charities** we serve are a vital part of the effort to feed Southwest Floridians in need. We serve 130 different non-profit organizations, and their staff and volunteers are true community heroes.

The list of supporters goes on and on: members of the Chapin Family, who have carried on Harry's commitment to end hunger for more than 25 years; the Restaurant and Lodging Association, which conducts the River & Blues Festival on our behalf; and the folks on Boca Grande with an annual fund-raiser.

Finally, our dedicated **staff** works hard to meet the demands of the charities we serve, and to coordinate all the activities that enable us to meet the needs of so many neighbors every day.

Can you tell I'm impressed? It is an honor to serve with such a wonderful group, and I look forward to our working together to help the Harry Chapin Food Bank reach its full potential. The need is great, but so is our community's heart. Together, we can make a difference!



Richards Joins As Development Director

Fred Richards joined the staff of the Harry Chapin Food Bank in mid-May as its new Development Director. Areas he will focus on include grant writing, funds development and educational outreach.

Most recently, Richards served as Director of Adult Community Services for five years at the David Lawrence Center in Collier County. There he managed five departments and a staff of 22. Previously, Richards was Executive Director of the Collier County Homeless Coalition for three years.



He is an experienced grant writer, securing more than a million dollars through a combination of federal, state, and private grants.

Richards received a Master's degree in Health Service Administration and is completing an MBA at St. Francis University.

Originally from Allentown, Penn., Richards is married, and his interests include hiking and kayaking. He also enjoys music and has been a guitarist and lyricist for 19 years.

Our Mission...

To overcome hunger in our communities through education and by working in a cooperative effort with affiliated agencies in the procurement and distribution of food, equitably and without discrimination.

'I Love What I Do at the Food Bank'

Long-time volunteer Bernadette Deis shares what brought her to the Harry Chapin Food Bank and what keeps her passionate about its mission.

I first got wind of the Harry Chapin Food Bank perhaps 11 or 12 years ago. A friend and I went to The River & Blues Festival and saw Harry Chapin volunteers dressed in their colorful t-shirts. We wanted to know how to get a free t-shirt and how to volunteer at the beer wagon.

We went to the volunteer tent, where we learned all about the food bank and when they had openings for volunteers. My friend and I worked two jobs, and the only day we were available to volunteer was Saturday. We began as Saturday sorters and volunteered nearly every Saturday for the next year so that we could secure our spot at the beer wagon (which we did!).

Even though the beer wagon was the incentive for my volunteering, I certainly know about hunger. I was born in El Paso, Texas, and grew up in a very tiny town in upstate New York. My father was an alcoholic, and my mother did the best she could with five children and an unreliable husband.



Bernadette Deis as "Peanut Butter" with "Jelly" friend Eva King at the Edison Children's Parade.

In those days (the early 1950s), people took care of their own, and many times we awoke to find that someone had dropped off a bushel basket of food at our front door. The town also made sure that we got toys at Christmas. More often than not, however, the only meal my siblings and I had was school lunch.

When I turned nine, my maternal grandmother arrived from Mexico and finally threw my father out of the house for good. Things got a little better. We were one of the first "welfare" families in my hometown, but only for a few years – little by little we got back on our feet and off welfare.

Even in apparently affluent communities, there is hunger. Employed by the School District of Lee County since 1987, I have worked in several elementary schools, and I see hungry children on a daily basis.

I truly believe in the mission of the Harry Chapin Food Bank...so much so that, except for the six months I was ordered to take off in 2002 when I shattered my left humerus, I have faithfully volunteered just about every Saturday.

I love what I do at the food bank and I feel that I am truly making a difference in my community.

Hunger Does Not Take A Summer Vacation!

Southwest Florida may slow down in summer, but hunger does not. Not only do food donations dip during the summer months, but many of our volunteers are snowbirds who have already left for their northern homes.

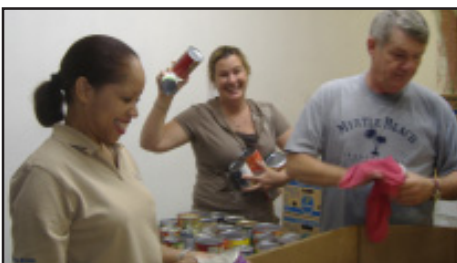
You can help the Food Bank sustain its level of support for our

community by continuing (and increasing where possible) donations of money and food, as well as volunteering to sort food. Please contact Marta Hodson at (239) 334-7007 to learn more.

And don't forget that you can donate right from our home page at www.harrychapinfoodbank.org.

Fast Facts on Food Needs In Southwest Florida

- The Harry Chapin Food Bank distributes 3.6 million pounds of food annually.
- The food bank serves more than 20,000 people monthly through 130 charities.
- Donated food comes from America's Second Harvest and its food banks (35%), government (35%), and food drives and local donations (30%).



Pitney Bowes Supports Employee Team Volunteer Initiative at Food Bank

For the second year in a row, the Pitney Bowes Management Group came to the Harry Chapin Food Bank's Alicia Street

headquarters on May 19 to sort and repack food from the Letter Carriers Food Drive. The group, managed by Thomas Aquino,

also raised its 2006 donation check of \$500 to \$1,000, through the efforts of Dominic Pierotti, Pitney Bowes Team Lead.



Pitney Bowes Management Group (left and far left) enthusiastically joined in the company's volunteer initiative at the Food Bank.

Save Us Money...

When you allow the Harry Chapin Food Bank to communicate with you via e-mail, you help us contribute more dollars to emergency food distribution. Please send your e-mail address to joycejacobs@harrychapinfoodbank.org. Thank you!

Agency Spotlight: Guadalupe Center Soup Kitchen

Carol is a warm, extroverted Hispanic mother of nine who still has young children of her own and is helping raise her grandchildren.

Daily, while the older children are at school, she cares for three grandsons: her daughter's toddler son, who was born with a cleft palate, and her son's five-year-old twin boys. Carol and her grandchildren eat at the Guadalupe Center Soup Kitchen several times a week.

A U.S. citizen, Carol came to Florida from Michigan when she was 12 because her family was promised work picking lemons and limes. Carol worked in the fields alongside her parents while attending school until she was 14, when she had her first child.

Despite the difficulties of being a teenage mom, she pursued her education and earned a GED.

Carol has worked on and off while raising her children and now her grandchildren, but work is not always available in the hours when she does not have to care for the children. Plus, work must be

close by; Carol does not have a car and walks everywhere she needs to go. She lost her home in the last hurricane and is still waiting for a government-provided trailer. Meanwhile, Carol lives with a sister.

Carol depends on the help of the Harry Chapin Food Bank and the Guadalupe Center Soup Kitchen to feed her family, and she frequently brings other hungry families along with her for a meal. She is well known at the kitchen for her friendliness and her caring attitude toward others in her community who struggle to make ends meet and feed their families.



Yolanda Cisneros, director of the Guadalupe Center Soup Kitchen, with cans of donated food, some from the Harry Chapin Food Bank. It is the only soup kitchen for about 50 miles.

The Guadalupe Center Soup Kitchen in Immokalee serves 44 people at a seating, three or four seatings a day (more during season or bad weather), five days a week from Monday through Friday. Members of different church groups and organizations help serve the food. Those in need do not have to qualify – just arrive to get a time slot and be in the door at the time on the ticket. The agency also provides a clothing room and shower program three days a week.