



## Harry Chapin Food Bank OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Vol. VIII, No. 1

Newsletter -- Winter 2008

# Urgent Need Grows for Food Bank Services

On the ground in Southwest Florida, the housing slump is translating directly into a significant increase in hunger.

One man drove by an emergency food program three times before he got the courage to come in for assistance in feeding his three children. A woman at the same location couldn't believe she was sitting there asking for food and started crying. Both had been gainfully employed and lost their jobs recently.

The local pantries are reporting an increase in clients of more than 30 percent. Meanwhile, the area is suffering from a 14-year high in unemployment, at 5.3 per-

## Donations Top \$24,000 Through 'WINK NEWS Feeds Families'

Kicking off a year-long program during the recent holiday season, "WINK NEWS Feeds Families" already has delivered \$24,000 to the Harry Chapin Food Bank.

"Our focus is to collect money, not food," said Wayne Simons, WINK-TV Vice President and General Manager. "The cash donations allow the food bank to bring in items it needs the most."

Among the contributions through this initiative were \$5,000 from the Cape Royal Foundation and \$3,000 from Storm Smart.



cent. People working in the construction, real estate and support industries are bearing the brunt of the results of the sub-prime mortgage crisis. The worries are mounting for the working poor, for whom their house generally represents their primary asset. For many, their home is close to, if not already, gone.

"It's really hard to get some of the agencies to report the numbers, so we believe the year-over-year increase in need may be closer to 40 to 50 percent," said Al Brislain, Executive Director of the Harry Chapin Food Bank. While the food the food bank receives has been somewhat level in the aggregate, the looming demand poses a real challenge this winter.

He pointed to the Publix food drive. The numbers were down in December,

but picked up as the Christmas holiday approached. "White collar workers give money, we find, but blue collar workers give food, and we're not seeing as many bags from the Publix drive," Brislain noted. He thought that the additional publicity the drive received this year might offset the poor economy.

Usually when things become tight and a single community has been hit by disaster, it's possible for one food bank to turn to others within the state for an extra load. For example, with Orlando handling 20 million pounds a year, Brislain cited, it could share some food and not even miss it. In this case, however, "we're all getting slammed." This includes America's Second Harvest, whose stocks are down. It had an-

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## Hunger Summit in Planning Stages

Local organizations whose mission is to combat hunger are beginning to recognize that they can improve results community-wide through better coordination among themselves. That's why the Harry Chapin Food Bank, United Way of Lee County and Community Cooperative Ministries are leading the way in planning a Hunger Summit for first quarter of 2008.

The key providers of emergency food in the area are also involved in the planning and expected to participate in the summit: McGregor Baptist, St. Vincent de Paul, the Salvation Army, and Nation's Association.

Right now, most emergency food programs don't talk to each other, noted Harry Chapin Food Bank Executive Director Al

Brislain. That leaves those in need bouncing from program to program. "Depending on where you live, food distribution may take place once a year, three times a year or once a month," he explained. "The way resources are allocated is hardly fair to the end-users."

The day-long event (yet to be sched-

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### SAVE THE DATES!

- River & Blues Festival, Sunday, April 6
- The Blue Jeans Ball Presents a Chapin County Fair — Dinner and Auction, Saturday, April 19





**The Harry Chapin Food Bank of Southwest Florida**

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**Grants, Food Drives Help Fill Coffers**

The Harry Chapin Food Bank gratefully acknowledges the following grants:

**Cape Coral Community Foundation's generosity during the holiday season:** Awarded \$20,000 to support Cape Coral food distribution and \$3,000 to support food rescue efforts in Cape Coral.

**Episcopal Church Women/Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church:** Awarded \$5,000 to purchase bins for perishable food expansion.

**Wal-Mart:** Awarded \$1,000 in unrestricted funding.

**Department of Children and Families:** Awarded \$4,000 cost reimbursement.

**Giving Alliance of Women Program:** Awarded \$1,000 in unrestricted funding through the Cape Coral Community Foundation.

**SAM's CLUB:** Awarded \$1,000 in unrestricted funding.

**Arthur Ashley Williams Foundation:** Awarded \$1,000 on to purchase bins for perishable food expansion.

**Rockwell Foundation:** Awarded \$10,000 on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. William F. Aiken in memory of John B. McClay II.

Food drives sponsored by local supermarkets and community organizations helped the Harry Chapin Food Bank fill its coffers. We extend our thanks to everyone who donated money and food during the holiday season.

**Publix Food Drive** collected 435,000 pounds of food.

**Sweetbay Supermarkets'** customers donated more than 10,000 pounds of food.

Holiday food drives delivered more than 1,000 pounds of food thanks to:

**Palm Island Social Club  
Whitney Education Group**

**Boy Scouts  
Cypress Cove**

**Smith Barney**

**Hair Stylists/Redken BCause**

**Littleton Elementary  
Collier-Lee Chapter Fla. Surveying  
and Mapping Society**

**N. Ft. Myers High**

**Meet Board President Craig Folk**

Craig Folk believes in practicing what he preaches. When new staff join Miller, Helms & Folk, PA, it isn't long before Folk is taking them aside and suggesting that "it's time to get involved in your community."

They can have no better role model than this certified public accountant. For four years Folk has served on the board of directors of the Harry Chapin Food Bank, becoming president this year, and he is also a board member for the United Way of Lee County.

In the 20 years he has been living in Fort Myers with wife Marty, a teacher, and two children, Wendy and Eric, he has

continuously served on a number of non-profit boards. His other passion is teaching, and he often can be found presenting workshops for non-profit organizations about IRS rules for charitable contributions.

Serving on the Food Bank board, though, means that Folk often has to spend his weekends catching up on real work. Yet he wouldn't have it any other way.

"Because I've been very lucky, I am committed to paying back my community," he explained. "I believe in what the Harry Chapin Food Bank is doing."



Craig R. Folk, CPA

**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.

**Food Bank Prepares for Emergency Needs**

As hunger continues to grow in the five-county area including and around Fort Myers, more and more of the Harry Chapin Food Bank's efforts are focused on fulfilling emergency needs.

The food bank's largest emergency food pantry is St. Vincent de Paul Grand Avenue in Fort Myers, which provided food to between 3,000 and 4,000 households every month last year. The next

largest emergency food providers are McGregor Baptist, which served more than 1,000 households each month in fiscal year 2006-07, and Salvation Army Social Services, also serving more than 1,000 households monthly. Community Cooperative Ministries and Guadalupe Soup Kitchen serve approximately 7,000 meals to individuals on a monthly basis.

Indeed, between 60 and 70 percent

of the food bank's activities through 138 partner agencies are delivered to emergency-based organizations through a priority system: Tier I organizations – emergency food pantries or soup kitchens; and Tier II organizations – residential facilities, after-school care centers and foster care homes.

The food bank also has a contract with the United States Department of Agriculture's The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) to deliver government surplus food, including many staple items, to partner agencies for distribution.

The food bank's partner agencies must be a 501(C)(3) non-profit organization or a religious organization, incorporated for a purpose related to serving the ill, needy or infants. They undergo a physical inspection to determine that food will be kept clean, dry and safe. Once approved, the agencies receive food based on the number of people they serve and report monthly distribution statistics to the food bank.

**Pampered Chef's Latest 'Round up' for Hunger**

Every six months, Pampered Chef associates do a "round up for hunger." Most recently, associate Cynthia Higgins delivered a check for \$1,187.39 to the Harry Chapin Food Bank. Thank you!

**Fort Myers High Unloads Sweetbay Donations**



Fort Myers High School's football team and cheerleaders join Mayor Jim Humphrey (third from left at rear), Fort Myers City Manager William Mitchell (far right at rear), executives from Sweetbay and the Harry Chapin Food Bank, and coaching staff to help unload Sweetbay donations to the food bank.

**Urgent Need Grows For Food Services**

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nounced a major move to obtain 600 semi-truck loads by the end of 2007. But one of the troubles is that organizations combating hunger can't ask for the first-line product that retailers sell through normal channels.

Instead, the Harry Chapin Food Bank is expanding its store pick-up program for donations from both Publix and Sweetbay, in order to access as much food as possible. Also, the food bank is awaiting resolution of the federal farm bill, which is in congressional conference waiting to be resolved and signed. Food commodities are down to a trickle, and that won't change until Congress finalizes the farm budget.

You can help! Call 334-7007 to learn the simple steps in setting up a food drive, volunteer with friends to help sort food, or contribute funds so the food bank can buy additional food.

**Hunger Summit To Convene**

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uled) will have multiple goals. It will invite emergency food programs directly or peripherally involved in fighting hunger and start discussions and brainstorm solutions about how they can collaborate to provide people with the most nutritious bag of food as possible. That includes the opportunity to share in a bulk purchase program and expanding perishable food donations.

"Donated food that is available to us will more and more be perishable," said Brislain. "It is highly nutritious, but there are real challenges in handling the food safely and moving it quickly."

His hope for the Hunger Summit is for the participants to begin to look at emergency food in a different way. He also expects the summit will help raise public awareness of the depth of the need.

**Truluck's Festival Contributes \$4,000**



Truluck's Stone Crab Festival during the October Naples Art Fair helped the food bank to the tune of more than \$4,000, through food sales and raffle of prizes.

# Volunteers Provide Wide Range of Skills to Food Bank

How many volunteer opportunities are there at the Harry Chapin Food Bank? Let us count the ways two husband-and-wife teams in 2007 lent their special efforts.

For 12 years, Elizabeth McClymont and Jim Reid, partners in Fort Myers-based EMCC Web Design Company, have been providing the food bank with pro bono web site services, an invaluable gift. They handle everything — hosting the

site, posting the logos of new sponsors, adding forms for partner agencies to use in ordering food and changing the format of web pages for easier access and use of information. They never say “no” and always offer ideas to improve the web site.

“It truly has been a labor of love for us,” said Elizabeth. The two hail from Scotland and have been in the United States for 14 years.

Maxine and Michael Golding’s many years in publishing have been put to good use at the food bank. Michael’s expertise in sales and marketing provided ideas to expand the food bank’s reach and resulted in a new media campaign (at right) focusing on the food bank’s extraordinary “400 percent” return on investment.

Through Michael’s efforts, local publications have donated more than \$25,000 in advertising space to the campaign. Meanwhile, Maxine writes and designs the food bank’s quarterly newsletter and updates the content on the web site.

The food bank gratefully appreciates all that they contribute!



Elizabeth McClymont and Jim Reid (left), and Maxine and Michael Golding (right).

Help the food bank with a few hours of your time for food sorting, assistance at events and clerical work. Contact Marta Hodson at 334-7007, x32.

There is one bank where you can get a

**400%** return on your investment...

## The Harry Chapin Food Bank!

For every \$1 you donate, we can distribute \$5 worth of food. So please help us feed the thousands of people in Southwest Florida who are hungry every day.



Mail your tax-deductible donation to:  
The Harry Chapin Food Bank  
2126 Alicia Street  
Fort Myers, FL 33901  
Call: (239) 334-7007

Donate online at:  
[www.harrychapinfoodbank.org](http://www.harrychapinfoodbank.org)

Free ads for the food bank have appeared in the Fort Myers News-Press, Gulfshore Life, Gulf Coast Times, Natural Awakenings, Home Magazine, Times of the Islands, River Weekly News, SuiteLife, Lee County Parenting & Family, and Gulf Coast Symphony Program

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