

AAFB MEDIA WATCH: DECEMBER 20, 2011 – DECEMBER 26, 2011
submissions: brian@azfoodbanks.org

12/26: Foothills off-roaders collect peanut butter

<http://www.yumasun.com/news/food-75508-jim-butter.html>

December 26, 2011 10:09 PM - BY CHRIS McDANIEL - SUN STAFF WRITER

Several Foothills-area off-road enthusiasts donated 305 pounds of food to the Yuma Community Food Bank this week. Officials with YCFB estimated the donated food will feed up to 254 people.

The food was gathered as part of the inaugural Jim and Linda Scott Peanut Butter Run.

“There are a lot of people in need this year the way things are,” Jim said, explaining why he and his wife had put the event together.

Off-road enthusiasts got together and were able to gather all the food in one day. They then drove in an 18-vehicle caravan to deliver the food to YCFB.

“I was surprised there were that many people that showed up,” Jim said. “We were scrambling. We all met out here in the Foothills and then got in a big line to drive to the food bank.”

Jim hopes to expand the peanut butter run during the 2012 holiday season.

“I think maybe we can do three times what we did next year.”

12/26: Tucson's "Mr. An" announces when he'll wear the turkey suit

http://azstarnet.com/business/local/tucson-s-mr-an-announces-when-he-ll-wear-the/article_e8e90a60-2dda-11e1-a2f8-001871e3ce6c.html

Arizona Daily Star | Posted: Monday, December 26, 2011 2:02 pm

Well. This isn't precisely what Tucsonans were promised, but “Mr. An” will be wearing a turkey costume Wednesday, just in a different location than expected.

Restaurants owner Kwang C. “Mr.” An lost a wager to Chris Edwards of Tucson Appliance Center, as both high-profile businessmen — known for their respective TV commercials — promoted a drive to increase turkey donations to the Tucson Community Food Bank before the holidays.

Edwards raised the most: 1,292 turkeys, to An's 439 turkeys.

That meant An was supposed to wear a turkey costume and stand outside Tucson Appliance and wave at passing traffic. (If An had won, Edwards said he would have washed dishes or cleared tables at An's restaurant.)

Instead, “Mr. An” has announced he'll stand in front of his own Mr. An's Teppan Steak and Sushi Restaurant, at 6091 N. Oracle Road, from 4-6 p.m. Wednesday.

Whatever. It was a worthy cause, even if Mr. An ends up promoting his own business rather than his friendly rival's business.

12/26: The Gift of the Magi is alive and well (excerpt)

http://www.wmicentral.com/opinion/letters_to_editor/the-gift-of-the-magi-is-alive-and-well/article_f12478b2-2ce6-11e1-b14e-0019bb2963f4.html

Posted: Monday, December 26, 2011 5:00 am | Updated: 9:42 am, Mon Dec 26, 2011 - David Roberts - The Independent White Mountain Independent

The Rotary Club of the White Mountains partners with the White Mountain Firefighters Association and Tate's Auto Group to gather food and distribute it to deserving families at Thanksgiving and Christmas. In the past, the firefighters, especially Lakeside Fire, have added turkeys or hams to the boxes for protein. Imagine how hard that is, buying and storing the meat and making sure someone is home to receive it.

This year we came up with a better solution, one that Walmart management graciously went along with. They agreed to accept our list of recipients and gift certificates that can be redeemed for food items only. This way we know the money will be spent on items for which it is intended.

That's nice enough, but along the way we gets reports of the Magi effect mentioned above. Our collection boxes, generously provided by the **United Food Bank**, are placed in school rooms. Teachers tell us later that some of the most generous givers are unwitting children who will later be on the receiving end of the Christmas boxes.

Touches the heart.

12/25: Winterhaven Festival of Lights ends tonight

<http://www.kold.com/story/16391333/winterhaven-festival-of-lights-ends-tonight>

Posted: Dec 25, 2011 9:31 AM MST - Updated: Dec 25, 2011 10:28 AM MST - By Paul Birmingham

TUCSON, AZ (KOLD) - This evening is your final chance to enjoy this year's Winterhaven Festival of Lights in midtown Tucson.

You can walk through the festival from 6:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. tonight.

Residents in the colorfully-decorated neighborhood have been hosting the event for 62 years.

Admission to Winterhaven is free, but food donations for the Community Food Bank are always appreciated. Organizers say donations have been down this year. That's due in part to three nights of rain.

12/25: Last chance to visit the Winterhaven Festival of Lights

http://azstarnet.com/news/local/last-chance-to-visit-the-winterhaven-festival-of-lights/article_6c9620ee-2da6-11e1-9e2b-0019bb2963f4.html

Arizona Daily Star Arizona Daily Star | Posted: Sunday, December 25, 2011 9:00 am

Tonight is the last night of the Winterhaven Festival of Lights. It is a walk through night, and goes from 6-10 p.m. Winterhaven can be accessed at Country Club and Fort Lowell.

This is the 62nd year for the Winterhaven Festival of Lights, and is visited by hundreds of thousands of people from southern Arizona. It is also an important even for the Community Food Bank. According to the Winter Haven website, over \$27,000 and 44,000 pounds of food were donated to the Food Bank through the festival.

For maps, and other information, visit www.winterhavenfestival.org.

12/25: PHOTO: A season for giving ~ Blankets 4 Kids

<http://www.dcourier.com/main.asp?SectionID=1&SubSectionID=1&ArticleID=101477>

12/25/2011 9:57:00 PM

Charlene Bracke with Blankets 4 Kids hands Guadelupita, 2, and her mother Olga Molina a blanket and stuffed animal at the Yavapai Food Bank in Prescott Valley. Blankets 4 Kids has given out more than 500 comfort items to the kids and their moms this past week.

12/24: Make donations soon to claim 2011 tax credit (excerpt)

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/local/articles/2011/12/19/20111219tax-credit-donations.html>

by Alia Beard Rau - Dec. 24, 2011 09:00 PM - The Arizona Republic

Arizonans paid \$867 million in individual state income taxes and earned \$204 million in tax credits for the 2010 tax year.

There is still time to improve those numbers for next year, but taxpayers must make their donations and purchases required to claim state tax credits by Dec. 31, in most cases.

The deadline to earn 2011 tax-year credits for donations made to qualifying private-school tuition organizations is April 15, 2012.

A tax credit lowers the amount an individual pays in taxes dollar for dollar. For example, taxpayers who donate \$100 to a local food bank or a public-school chess club will likely pay \$100 less in state taxes. Typically, taxpayers cannot collect more in credits than they owe in state taxes in a single year, but some credits can be spread out among multiple years.

Credits are different from tax deductions. A deduction decreases the total amount of an individual's taxable income, so its value depends on which tax bracket the individual falls into. Deductions are common for mortgages or the donations of goods to charitable organizations.

Tax credits

Here are some of the most commonly claimed tax credits.

Working Poor Donations

Details: Credit of up to \$200 for an individual or \$400 for a married couple for cash donations to charities that help the working poor, such as many of the local shelters, food banks and Boys and Girls Clubs. Organizations must qualify with the state before their donors can get this credit. For a list of qualified organizations, go to www.azdor.gov and click on "tax credits."

Credits given in 2010: \$16 million.

12/24: Valley non-profits' funding in peril

<http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/2011/12/21/20111221non-profits-funding-peril.html>

by Parker Leavitt - Dec. 24, 2011 09:44 PM - The Arizona Republic

While some Valley cities have cut back on funding for non-profit agencies because of budget constraints, a conservative faction on the Gilbert Town Council wants to do so for philosophical reasons.

The discussion has sparked concern among non-profits that already are dealing with higher demand and sagging revenue in a tough economy.

Gilbert has slashed the amount it gives to non-profit agencies like food banks and homeless shelters by about 40 percent since fiscal 2009, but some on the council want greater cuts.

Newly elected Councilman Victor Petersen is leading a charge to eliminate general-fund grants altogether. Petersen has been involved with the "tea party" movement and spoke at an anti-tax rally in Gilbert before winning a council seat in May.

"To take one person's property only to make it someone else's property is not appropriate," Petersen said in an e-mail. "In this case, government does the very thing it should be protecting against."

Other municipalities, including Scottsdale, Chandler and Surprise have also cut back on non-profit aid, but for different reasons.

Scottsdale this year reduced its general-fund allocation from \$200,000 to \$100,000, a move that was "strictly a financial decision based on less revenue available in the general fund for everything," spokesman Kelly Corsette said.

The cuts included a 54 percent reduction in funding for Central Arizona Shelter Services, which operates three homeless shelters in Phoenix that serve about 10,000 people from across the Valley.

"It just makes it harder for us to do our job," said Irene Agustin, director of fund development. "We see an increased demand in services, but we have to do more with less."

Budget cuts in Chandler have been much smaller and more gradual. The city has reduced the amount of general-fund money for its community development program by about 6.4 percent since fiscal 2009.

Surprise officials did not respond to a request for comment, but a city report cites the economic downturn as a reason for excluding general-fund revenue from certain community development activities.

Municipalities may differ in the way they view relationships with non-profits as an investment or an expense, said Robert Ashcraft, executive director of the Lodestar Center for Philanthropy & Nonprofit Innovation at Arizona State University.

"Those that see it as an investment see non-profits as allies and partners in providing the very services citizens would expect government to provide," Ashcraft said. "If it's thought of as an expense, then it's something one would just sort of cut."

In Gilbert, a Town Council subcommittee that included Petersen and Mayor John Lewis recently recommended phasing out general-fund grants within five years.

Petersen sees the taxpayer-funded grants as "gifts" without just compensation. Representatives of local charities contend they are providing services that benefit the entire community.

"It's not like you're giving the money and it's just going away," said Ramon Elias, president of Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley. "You're bettering the life of people in your community."

The club's Gilbert chapter serves about 1,900 youth, Elias said. The group receives \$125,000 a year from Gilbert to support an annual budget of about \$650,000.

The grant money funds the organization's Project Learn program, designed to help students succeed in school. A survey found the high-school graduation rate of Boys & Girls Clubs alumni is 90 percent, compared with a national average of slightly less than 70 percent, club officials said.

The club has cultivated a strong relationship with Gilbert over two decades, and the town provided the four-acre parcel where the Gilbert branch is housed, Elias said. But now, he said, "This particular council in there now, they think differently."

Torrie Taj, chief operating officer for A New Leaf in Mesa, said the funding cuts are concerning. The organization requested \$44,038 in grants from Gilbert this year but received \$8,300, a 67 percent reduction from last year.

"Someone might think that \$20,000 here or \$5,000 there won't hurt us as much," Taj said. "It actually hurts us quite a bit. All of those small chunks add up."

Lewis said the council's intention is not to strip funding from non-profits but to make them stronger through private fundraising.

Gilbert recently began a partnership with For Our City, an organization that brings together community leaders, non-profit workers and volunteers to assess and serve the needs of a community.

One of the best ways to encourage private giving, however, is a reliable financial commitment from the public sector, Taj said. "It's kind of like a stamp of approval," Taj said. "Then businesses and community members are more willing to support us personally and privately."

Charitable organizations say they already rely more on private fundraising and individual contributions as cities scale back their financial commitments.

A New Leaf uses radio and social-media campaigns to raise awareness about the working-poor tax credit for contributions to about 500 qualified agencies.

A spokeswoman for Chrysalis, which operates shelters in Phoenix and Scottsdale, said Gilbert could start a "disturbing trend," if it cuts non-profit grants completely.

"These are hard times, and the need for services is up all around," spokeswoman Lorie Simms said. "We have to continue to help our neighbors."

12/24: Winterhaven donations falling short

<http://www.kvoa.com/news/winterhaven-donations-falling-short/>

Posted: Dec 24, 2011 9:23 PM - Updated: Dec 25, 2011 11:05 PM

TUCSON - The Winterhaven Festival of Lights has not filled the shelves of the Community Food Bank as well as last year.

A record number of people has depended on the food bank this year, but one of organization's biggest food drives is falling short of what they hoped.

"With the holiday season, and more and more people needing food," Debra Leffler with the food bank said, "it's critical to help us replenish the shelves."

Tucsonans at the festival were glad they could help.

"We're doing OK this year," William Keith said, "so I like other people to do OK."

"We have it to give," Linda Milner said, "and we want to help the community."

Last year the food bank received 44,000 pounds of food and \$24,000 dollars from the festival.

The food bank encourages food and cash donations. Every dollar they receive can buy more than \$9 worth of food.

12/24: St. John Bosco Dads' Club raises funds for food bank

http://www.ahwatukee.com/community_focus/neighbors/article_1fbee03a-2e6e-11e1-b652-0019bb2963f4.html

Send submissions to Beverly Stidham, Ahwatukee Foothills News Ahwatukee Foothills News

Terry Shannon, president and chief executive officer of St. Mary's Food Bank, recently accepted a check in the amount of \$640.57 from Ian-Thomas Boyle, an eighth-grade student from St. John Bosco Catholic School in Ahwatukee.

According to St. Mary's Food Bank, every dollar donated provides a meal for seven people. Through the efforts of the St. John Bosco Dads' Club, the donation will help provide meals for 4400 men, women, and children who depend on St. Mary's Food Bank for their meals. In addition to the donation, several crates of canned goods were delivered to the food bank. The Dads' Club sponsored a poker tournament with the proceeds benefitting St. Mary's Food Bank.

St. Mary's Food Bank was the first food bank established in the United States and is the longest running food bank in America.

12/24: Churches collaborate for service of baptism at Shepherd of Desert

http://www.yourwestvalley.com/suncity/article_7f5c8806-2dad-11e1-9527-0019bb2963f4.html

Posted: Saturday, December 24, 2011 1:45 pm - Your West Valley

Clergy and lay persons from several congregations will gather at 3 p.m. Jan. 8 at Shepherd of the Desert Lutheran Church, 11025 N. 111th Ave., for a service of baptismal remembrance.

Clergy will form a procession and carry a container of water from their site that will combine in a large bowl for use later in the service.

Rev. Jan Olav Flaaten from the Arizona Ecumenical Council will officiate. His message is "How Much Water do you Need."

An offering of items for **Valley View Community Food bank** will be received at the entrance.

Congregations and clergy interested in being involved should contact Marshall Esty, ecumenical coordinator, at mne@juno.com.

12/24: Tax credit deadline nears; LHUSD reports decline in collections (excerpt)

<http://www.havasunews.com/articles/2011/12/24/news/doc4ef548be2100b638314031.txt>

By JACKIE LEATHERMAN - Today's News-Herald - Published Saturday, December 24, 2011 3:06 AM MST

Donations to the United Way helps provide food assistance, prevent homelessness and helps with legal aid. Contributions to the River Cities program stays in Mohave and La Paz counties, according to a United Way press release. Interagency donations are used for the Community Food Bank and the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program.

12/23: Giving Back: A Donation to the Association of Arizona Food Banks

http://blogs.phoenixnewtimes.com/bella/2011/12/giving_back_giving_a_donation.php

By Laura Hahnefeld Fri., Dec. 23 2011 at 8:00 AM

Here at Chow Bella, we understand how important it is to give (and receive) the perfect foodie gift. So this season, we're helping out by offering 21 food- and drink-focused gift suggestions, one each work day until Christmas, from a local business or provider. You get scads of rock-star ideas, the dollars stay in the Valley, and we get to go shopping -- win, win, win!

1: Giving Back Giving: A Donation to the Association of Arizona Food Banks

Need a last minute gift for the person who has everything? How about a gift that gives to others -- in a most-needed way?

Established in 1984, the Association of Arizona Food Banks (AAFB) is a private, non-profit organization serving five regional food bank members and a network of nearly 1,700 food pantries and agencies.

The AAFB develops food resources, promotes nutrition, advocates for public policy changes to help hungry people, fosters cooperation among food banks, networks with government, local, state and national leaders dedicated to ending hunger, and engages all sectors of society in hunger awareness and sensitivity.

Through their website, you can make a secure, one-time or monthly donation. Plus, acknowledgements, without dollar amounts, can be sent to your honorees.

It's nothing short of a shining example of the true spirit of the holidays.

Miss a Gift?

21: For the Gin Lover: John's Premium Tonic Syrup from Tuck Shop

20: Wrapped Goodness: The Twelve Tamales of Christmas from Los Sombreros

19: Kitchen Confidence: Cooking Classes at the Classic Cooking Culinary Institute

- 18: For the Grillmaster or Aspiring Chef: Artisan Sea Salts from Go Lb. Salt
- 17: Blades of Glory: Lee Zierten Artisan Knives
- 16: Limited Release: 2010 Cochise County Shiraz from Pillsbury Wine Company
- 15: For the Brittle Addict: Christmas Krak from Laura's Gourmet
- 14: For the Holiday Hostess: Salad Servers from Frances Vintage
- 13: The Gift That Grows: Non-GMO Seed Gift Basket From Humble Seed
- 12: For the Downtown Locavore: The CSM Card from Phoenix Public Market
- 11: For the Coffee Connoisseur: Roasters Choice Coffee Subscription from Cartel Coffee Lab
- 10: Signature Goodies From Beckett's Table
- 9: For the Festival Foodie: 2012 Scottsdale Culinary Festival Pre-Sale Special (Limited Time Offer!)
- 8: For the Chocoholic: A Chocolate Affair Class at the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort
- 7: For the Culinary Historian: A Cookbook Celebrating Arizona's Centennial
- 6: Wine & Chocolate Gift Boxes from Dos Cabezas WineWorks and Tracy Dempsey Originals
- 5: For The CenPho Restaurant Lover: Phoenix Dining Cards
- 4: Locally Made Goodies All in One Place at Phoestivus Market
- 3: For the Culinary-Minded Traveler: An Escape to Aravaipa Farms
- 2: For the Local Beer Lover: Four Peaks Gift Card

12/23: Volunteers help feed the hungry in Arizona (w/VIDEO)

http://www.abc15.com/dpp/news/region_northeast_valley/paradise_valley/volunteers-help-feed-the-hungry-in-arizona

Posted: 12/23/2011 - By: Brien McElhatten

PARADISE VALLEY, AZ - The nation's largest food bank distributed more than 60,000 pounds of food at three Valley locations Friday.

Hundreds of people will be able to make a holiday meal for themselves thanks to the St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance and their legion of volunteers.

People lined up to receive food for the holidays in Paradise Valley.

This wasn't the side of Paradise Valley many picture.

There are no fancy cars, big homes or nice views from this side of the town.

Instead, mobile homes, cramped apartments and hungry families reside here.

Food bank officials say they come to the neighborhood several times a month because the people have a difficult time affording healthy food for their families.

"This helps us out a lot because without them, we'd have to go from church to church looking for any extra food they might have," said a woman by the name of Tammy.

She's feeding her family of ten for Christmas and says she couldn't do it without the help of St. Mary's and their volunteers.

More than 20,000 pounds of food were distributed just at the Paradise Valley location and the organization's leaders say they conduct similar distributions 30 to 40 times each month.

12/23: St. Mary's Food Bank Distributes Food Boxes (w/VIDEO)

<http://www.myfoxphoenix.com/dpp/news/local/phoenix/st.-marys-food-bank-distributes-food-boxes-12232011>

Updated: Friday, 23 Dec 2011, 9:39 AM MST - Published : Friday, 23 Dec 2011, 9:39 AM MST

PHOENIX - St. Mary's Food Bank volunteers are handing out food boxes to make sure families who need a little help this Christmas can put together a nice dinner.

FOX 10's Diane Ryan reports.

St. Mary's Food Bank
Annual Holiday Produce & Perishable Food Distribution
Dec. 23, 8:30am
For locations, go to www.firstfoodbank.org

12/23: New Phoenix mayor promises 'humble inauguration' (excerpt)

<http://www.azcentral.com/community/ahwatukee/articles/2011/12/21/20111221phoenix-mayor-humble-inauguration.html>

Dec. 23, 2011 01:09 PM - The Arizona Republic

Food tax donations

The city's 2 percent food tax has received a lot of attention in recent years for being passed with short notice and with critics complaining it creates an economic burden on residents who are already suffering.

But there is some good that comes from the food tax. Four food banks are getting \$250,000 from the city's food tax revenues.

The recipients are ICM Food and Clothing Bank: \$67,500; Desert Mission, \$72,000; St. Vincent de Paul: \$85,500; and St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance, \$25,000.

12/23: Editorial: It's holiday time, why am I sad for Tucson?

http://www.insidetucsonbusiness.com/opinion/columnists/david_hatfield/it-s-holiday-time-why-am-i-sad-for-tucson/article_8221df06-2cc6-11e1-922a-0019bb2963f4.html

Posted: Friday, December 23, 2011 6:00 am | Updated: 10:59 am, Thu Dec 22, 2011 - Posted on December 23, 2011 - by David Hatfield

At this time of year, newspapers and TV news try to tug at our heartstrings with stories about helping the homeless and less fortunate. These stories make me sad. But not for the reasons intended.

They prey on the emotions of the season but what they're asking won't do much to change the plight people are facing.

There are organizations in Tucson doing fine things all year long, not just at the holidays. This year especially, some seem stretched judging by their more desperate pleas.

Our newly elected Mayor Jonathan Rothschild held one of his first press conferences at the Community Food Bank calling on "all Tucsonans who are able to give money or food this holiday season due to the

unprecedented demand." The number of people the Food Bank serves, more than doubled to 225,000 in the past four years.

I sincerely hope the Food Bank and other giving organizations were able to meet the demands placed on them this year. But can't we do better for those who are struggling?

"Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish and he eats for a lifetime," is an old Chinese proverb.

It seems we focus on "helping" the poor with subsidies on programs that merely allow them to get by. Then, at this time of the year, the "compassionate" thing to do is to volunteer to help serve a meal to them.

What does that do to help people find meaning and value in their lives? Come next holiday season, we'll appease our own emotions by giving them a hot meal.

No doubt some people are taking advantage of the situation. They're freeloaders who've come and stayed because, well, they can. It's a lot easier to do that here than it is in some cold place buried under snow.

But there must be at least some people who would seize an opportunity to help themselves and their families.

Does Tucson provide those opportunities?

We've gone through some tough economic times and statistics show Tucson has suffered more than most. Given the choice, where do we Tucsonans spend our smaller amounts of money? Giving to a charity that helps a person get by or toward education, training and creating good-paying jobs that could help more people become successful on their own?

The second choice could mean looking a homeless person in the eye and saying, "sorry, we can't do that. We're putting our money on another priority." That's not easy.

It's also more compassionate because it would help organizations such as the Community Food Bank in two ways: first, it could alleviate "the unprecedented demand" and second, more Tucsonans would have the financial means to contribute.

There will always be people who need help. But I worry that we are motivated more by emotional heartstring-pulling stories rather than taking a more meaningful thing.

We Tucsonans are growing our poor population and failing to provide an environment that would encourage people to be successful enough to give more. That's unsustainable.

That makes me sad.

12/23: Firefighters give family an early Christmas

http://www.nogalesinternational.com/news/firefighters-give-family-an-early-christmas/article_d1e88e78-2d83-11e1-9772-001871e3ce6c.html

Posted: Friday, December 23, 2011 9:29 am - By Karla Valencia - For the Nogales International Nogales International

The Rio Rico Firefighter's Local Union 4631 adopted a family who is struggling financially this holiday season.

Bill and Karen Pewitt and their five children had a special early Christmas after union members heard Bill had been laid off. Karen and her three youngest children are hearing impaired.

Organizers reached out to the union membership and the community and on Sunday, Dec. 18, the Pewitts came to the Rio Rico Fire Station No. 3, where they were given a tour of the station and fire trucks.

After the tour, the children found presents under the fire department's tree.

A union spokesman expressed thanks to Polly Elson, the First Baptist Church in Nogales, and the **Nogales Community Food Bank** for helping brighten up the family's holiday.

12/23: Niners chip in

http://www.yourwestvalley.com/topstory/article_a9a2890e-2cda-11e1-8585-0019bb2963f4.html

Posted: Friday, December 23, 2011 11:00 am | Updated: 1:27 pm, Thu Dec 22, 2011. - STAFF REPORT
Your West Valley

Sally Newell presented Jesse Ramirez, director of the Valley View Community Food Bank, a check for \$340 on behalf of the Sun City Lakes East Niners golf group.

The money was collected at the Lakes East Niners recent Christmas party at Tivoli's Restaurant.

Outgoing club president, Valerie Downes, donated the money to be used for her president's gift to the Valley View Food Bank.

Pat Kaminski, winner of the 50/50 drawing donated her winnings and members of the Niners golf group also donated to the food bank.

Many dozens of socks were also donated to Eve's Place by the club.

12/23: Rivalry continues as hoops teams face Wildcats (excerpt)

http://asunews.asu.edu/20111223_Basketball_Territorial_Cup

December 23, 2011

What is truly unique about the Series, however, is that it goes beyond the field of competition and into local communities through the State Farm Territorial Cup Series Food Fight and the State Farm Good Neighbor Team. "The aim of our partnership is to not only spotlight athletic programs offered by each university, but also to help alleviate hunger in the community and address the educational funding challenges each university is currently experiencing," said State Farm Vice President - Agency, Laura Kunewa. The Territorial Cup Series Food Fight is essentially a year-long food drive where the Phoenix and Tucson communities compete head-to-head to see who can collect more food for local food banks on behalf of their respective universities. To date, the Food Fight has raised over 32,000 meals for Arizona's Hungry.

12/23: Christmas program a big deal in Strawberry and Pine (excerpt)

<http://www.paysonroundup.com/news/2011/dec/23/christmas-program-big-deal-strawberry-and-pine/>

By Joy Hafford - December 23, 2011

Christmas spirit

The Christmas spirit is everywhere. You see shoppers in holiday attire with carts full of toys and goodies, food bank boxes filled with turkeys and canned goods (thank you Pine-Strawberry angels), people mailing and receiving packages, children building snowmen, and homes and businesses adorned with lights and decorations. There is Christmas music like "Joy to the World" and "Silent Night," and holiday movies like "It's A Wonderful Life" and "Miracle on 34th Street."

These stimulate happy feelings and create a time of joy, peace, giving and receiving love, and warm fuzzy feelings. It's all about good times with family and friends, sharing, and making memories. As the song says, "if every day were like Christmas, what a wonderful world this would be."

We can find ways to create these feelings of peace on earth, good will to others, giving, being kind, generous, and sharing on a daily basis.

A good start is by attending a meeting of the Riff Raff Club, Arts & Crafts Guild, Strawberry Patchers, Library Friends, Fuel Reduction Group, Search and Rescue, Senior Center Affairs Foundation, Food Bank, Business Community, or Strawberry's Elite and see how they keep the feelings alive all year. For times and locations, log on to <http://psaznews.com> or any of the group's Web sites.

12/23: Christmas shopping countdown is nearly finished (excerpt)

<http://www.paysonroundup.com/news/2011/dec/23/christmas-shopping-countdown-nearly-finished/>

By Janet Snyder - December 23, 2011

As of this week, the food drive for the food bank, the firefighters, spouses and Fireflies have collected more than 100 pounds of food for the St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank. Thank you to everyone who contributed food and money. The need is great for the needy in Payson and every little bit helps, especially at this time of year.

12/23: Operation Santa Claus car giveaway (w/VIDEO) (excerpt)

http://www.abc15.com/dpp/lifestyle/sonoran_living/operation-santa-claus-car-giveaway

Posted: 12/23/2011 - By: Denise Naughton

This year marks the 10th for Operation Santa Claus, which takes donations for 4 Valley organizations; St. Mary's Food Bank, Operation Home Front, SARRC, and the Tim & Willy Kids Foundation. You can find out more about each of the organizations and Operation Santa Claus at givetotheclaus.com.

12/22: Volunteers sort food, clothes, toys for Operation Santa Claus (w/VIDEO)

<http://www.abc15.com/dpp/news/state/volunteers-sort-food-clothes-toys-for-operation-santa-claus>

Posted: 12/22/2011 - By: ABC15.com staff

PHOENIX - Thanks to the generosity of Valley residents, the amount of donations to Operation Santa Claus saw a much-appreciated increase this year.

The toys, food and clothes will help families in need all across the Valley.

Volunteers got to work Thursday, sorting through large stacks of donations. The piles were divided up for each charity, which will distribute the items to the community.

The donations will benefit Operation Homefront, the Tim and Willy Kids Foundation, St Mary's Food Bank Alliance and SARRC.

12/22: Marines bring Santa to isolated village

http://www.hidesertstar.com/observation_post/news/article_32038c1e-2d0b-11e1-b1f6-001871e3ce6c.html

Posted: Thursday, December 22, 2011 6:07 pm - Lance Cpl. Martin Platek Marine Forces Reserve Hi-Desert Star

GRAND CANYON, Ariz.— As the red Arizona soil cloud cleared from the sky, the Havasupai tribe people turned around and looked toward the loud swooshing sounds.

They had been protecting themselves from the dust stirred up by the CH-46E Sea Knight helicopters flying into the center of their village. The children cheered not only for the Marines, but the very special guest they had been waiting for.

When one of the crewmen lowered the stairs to the helicopter, a big jolly man, in a red suit and white beard, made his way down. The kids and adults started to wave at a friend they knew very well.

With the help of the Reserve Marines from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 764, veterans from the Flagstaff Marine League Charities, Flagstaff Toys for Tots organization and different civilian charities, St. Nick traveled to the bottom of the Grand Canyon Dec. 14 to deliver toys during Operation Havasupai.

"The operation would never happen if the Marines would not do this for us," said Christine McGee, coordinator, Northern Arizona Marine Corps League. "Supai is such a remote location and the only access to Supai is by foot, mule or helicopter." McGee is the one responsible for coordinating with the squadron for this operation.

The trail to the village is not easy. For the Marines flying in, the canyon poses its own unique challenges.

During an earlier delivery attempt Dec. 12, HMM-764 "Moonlighter" Marines had to turn back due to bad weather. A two-day storm made it impossible for them to fly in as it dropped more than a foot of snow.

"With all the fog and clouds, they said it was unsafe to fly so we turned around and flew home," said Sgt. Christopher Morris, airframes mechanic, HMM-764.

Finally, on a third attempt, four helicopters flew back with hopes of helping Santa deliver toys to about 150 Havasupai children in the village.

"It's just awesome to come out here and see what this is all this is about," Morris said.

The Supai village is home to more than 400 permanent Havasupai tribesmen, women and children.

The Havasupai people are the most remote and isolated tribe in the United States.

This is the sixteenth year the Flagstaff Toys for Tots organization and the Marines have flown in to visit them.

In addition to toys, Marines also flew in Christmas trees, crates of food, firewood and other supplies provided by two charities, the **St. Mary's Food Bank** and The Friends from Utah.

"The amount that we provide to the tribe has grown in size and quantity when we realized that we could provide them with more than just a Christmas tree and toys," said McGee, who has been doing the event for 13 years with her husband, retired Lt. Col. James McGee, who passed away last year.

"We evolved to providing them other necessities," she said.

The operation had brought much needed help and Christmas spirit to the children here as they have next to nothing, said Roland Manakaja, the tribe's wisdom keeper. This year the children were growing especially impatient as the event faced possible cancellation due to weather. The operation has grown into somewhat of a Christmas tradition for the tribe.

"The warrior birds, eagles, were flying around this morning, and that was a good sign," he said "They told us you guys were coming, the warriors."

Despite all the obstacles, the warriors did arrive this year, bringing with them happy holidays to the most isolated tribe in America.

12/22: Toy donations up this year, but so is need in Northwest Valley (w/PHOTOS)

<http://www.azcentral.com/community/surprise/articles/2011/12/23/20111223northwest-valley-toy-donations-need-up.html>

by D.S. Woodfill - Dec. 22, 2011 11:12 AM - The Arizona Republic

Officials from several charities in the Northwest Valley say holiday toy donations are up significantly from last year, but so is the demand from struggling families.

Julie Moore, president of the Northwest Valley Firefighters Association, said the donations were so low last year that union members had to dip into their own pockets to provide toys for the 300 children in the program.

"We passed the hat around," she said.

Things are a lot different this year.

Kevin Johnston, a Surprise firefighter and union member who oversees the toy drive, said they had more than enough donations to brighten every child's Christmas.

This year, all 325 kids got two toys.

The surge in donations accompanied an 8 percent increase in requests -- to 325 kids from 300 -- he said, a reflection that families are still struggling with a bad economy.

Officer Monica Rios, who oversees the El Mirage Police Department's annual holiday toy drive, said it, too, saw a bump in collections accompany an increase in requests.

She said the police collected 500 toys for kids this year, up from about 380 last year.

Requests from cash-strapped families also increased, to 93 families from about 70.

The department has been handing out toys during business hours since Monday. Rios said they'll keep going until they run out of toys.

"We've had families coming every half hour," she said. "It's been really, really busy."

St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance reported a 12 percent drop in monetary and food donations. The organization has a dropoff and distribution facility in Surprise.

Jerry Brown, a spokesman, said collections started dropping this summer. Charity officials are not certain how much of a hit the food bank has taken.

Brown speculated that a number of factors could be causing the decrease. Families that once donated may now be falling on hard times, or donors may be trying to spread their resources around to other charities, he said.

Jay Davies, a spokesman with the Peoria Police Department, said fundraising for the officers association's annual Shop with a Cop event was about even compared with last year's. The department, which uses money from fundraisers and corporate donations, treated 50 kids to a shopping trip to Target.

Diane Arthur, a spokeswoman for Surprise, said the donations for the city's annual Giving Tree Program were up, although she didn't have year-over-year figures to compare.

Under the city's Giving Tree Program, staff members select tags from a Christmas tree in City Hall. The tags contain a wish list of necessities from families. Arthur said the program helped 14 families.

12/22: Harvest Prep campuses to get salad bars

<http://www.yumasun.com/news/schools-75419-salad-bars.html>

December 22, 2011 8:48 PM - BY SARAH WOMER - SUN STAFF WRITER

Harvest Preparatory Academy campuses in both Yuma and San Luis, Ariz. were selected as two of five schools nationally to be awarded with funding to equip their cafeteria with a new salad bar.

To help schools better meet national nutrition requirements, produce company Tanimura and Antle, Inc. partnered with Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools founded in part by The United Fresh Produce Association to make this happen.

"Every day, hundreds of these students will now be able to enjoy more fresh fruits and vegetables during lunch — right in the heart of our nation's winter lettuce and vegetable growing area," said United Fresh vice president of nutrition and health Dr. Lorelei DiSogra. "To date, Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools has donated salad bars to over 1,035 schools in 45 states, thanks to generous contributions from companies like Tanimura & Antle."

Harvest Preparatory Academy operations assistant Minerva Flores-Carrasco noted that the staff first caught wind of the opportunity to receive the salad bars on its campuses while attending a training conference through the Arizona Department of Education.

Food service coordinator Aaron Mitchell worked on the project and happened to apply for the funding at the correct time, she said.

"It was on a first-come, first-serve basis," Flores-Carrasco explained.

"We're really excited to be able to offer this to our children to help them live a healthier lifestyle. Every day we're required by the nutritional standards to offer fruit or vegetables to students — but now being able to give them the option to choose whatever they want, I know kids are going to be completely ecstatic about that."

12/22: Tomorrow: 6 stories to watch in Arizona (excerpt)

<http://www.abc15.com/dpp/news/state/tomorrow-6-stories-to-watch-in-arizona-122311>

Posted: 12/22/2011 - By: Dan Siegel

So you can stay ahead of the news, here's a quick look at some of the stories ABC15 will be keeping an eye on Friday, December 23.

FOOD BANK DISTRIBUTION

St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance will distribute more than 20,000 pounds of produce and perishable food at three locations before the food bank takes a three-day holiday break. 8:30am, Palomino Elementary School, Phoenix; 9am, St. Catherine's of Siena Church, Phoenix; 9am, Wise Owl Senior Center, Wickenburg.

12/22: The Skinny (excerpt)

<http://www.tucsonweekly.com/tucson/the-skinny/Content?oid=3200533>

by Jim Nintzel

With the end of the year approaching, you're rapidly running out of time to help out a local nonprofit and claim a charitable tax credit—which allows you to get the money back as soon as you file your tax return in 2012.

Under the program, you can give up to \$200 (or \$400 for a couple filing a joint return) to a charity that helps the working poor.

Given how many cuts that nonprofits have seen as a result of tight state, city and county budgets, the charitable tax credit is a great way to help out folks who are in desperate need—without it costing you a dime.

At the top of our list is the Community Food Bank. The pressure on the nonprofit, which serves Pima, Santa Cruz, Cochise, Graham and Greenlee counties, has been enormous in recent years.

Food Bank CEO Bill Carnegie tells us that four years ago, the Community Food Bank was serving 98,000 people a month. In October of this year, the number had climbed to 240,000. "It's really unprecedented," Carnegie says.

Call 622-0525 for details on donating, or visit communityfoodbank.com.

12/22: Police evict Occupy Tucson from downtown park (excerpt)

http://www.tucsonsentinel.com/local/report/122211_occupy_tucson/police-evict-occupy-tucson-from-downtown-park/

Updated Dec 22, 2011, 10:17 am - Dylan Smith - TucsonSentinel.com

Some protesters said they would return to the park to assist with the "Take Care of Tucson" event. McClusky said he would welcome their help.

"The Community Food Bank shelves will be bare come Dec. 25," he said, saying that the organization serves 3 times as many people monthly as two years ago.

McClusky hopes to have 40,000 pounds of food donated, he said.

12/22: Letter to the Editor: A Circle of Friends, indeed

<http://campverdebugleonline.com/main.asp?SectionID=36&SubSectionID=73&ArticleID=33031>

12/22/2011 1:01:00 PM

Editor:

The 2011 edition of the Circle Of Friends Concert sure did bring us together.

A glowing and heartfelt thank you to all who revealed their wonderful talents on stage, to all who brought their warmth to the audience, to all who worked behind the scenes, to Mingus Union High School for the use of their beautiful auditorium and to Mount Hope Foods for your matching donations to the AZ Food Bank, your gluten-free cookies and above all for making this annual event possible.

We are an ever-growing circle of friends because of each and every one of you.

Johnny Ziegler
Cottonwood

12/22: East side calendar (excerpt)

http://azstarnet.com/news/local/east/east-side-calendar/article_b09bdf95-aa8c-5014-b4c9-23c864f0e247.html

Arizona Daily Star | Posted: Thursday, December 22, 2011 12:00 am

Picture With Santa at Little Anthony's Diner - Little Anthony's Diner, 7010 E. Broadway. Kids may sit on Santa's lap and tell him what they want for Christmas. Bring one can of food for the food bank to get a souvenir picture. 6-8 p.m. Dec. 22; 9-11 a.m. Dec. 24. Free. 296-0456.

12/21: Lines out the door for Community Food Bank holiday meals (w/VIDEO)

<http://www.fox11az.com/news/local/Lines-out-the-door-for-Community-Food-Bank-meals-136012788.html>

fox11az.com - Posted on December 21, 2011 at 11:48 AM - Updated Wednesday, Dec 21 at 12:02 PM

TUCSON, Ariz. -- The lines at the Community Food Bank were out the door Tuesday morning as word got out, the Food Bank was handing out its annual holiday meals.

The carts were lined up and so were the people at the Community Food Bank.

"I arrived at about 8 O'clock this morning and we had about 100 people in line by the time we opened at 9 there's probably between 300 to 400 people in line," said Bill Carnegie from the Southern Arizona Community Food Bank.

Arthur Hugues came to the Food Bank later in the morning. It's his first time and he said it took him about 15 minutes to get through the line.

But he believes it's a sign of the times.

"Probably all the struggling that's been going on with trying to find a job and the market the way it is there are a lot of people who just needed help," said Hughes.

Hugues knows about the struggle to find work. He just found a part-time job last week.

"We've been having a little trouble finding work and staying on our feet. Just need a little extra help," Hughes said.

For families in need they say getting boxes like these and turkeys in these carts is an early Christmas present.

"We have a turkey and everything that we needed for a good Christmas dinner. With the way everything is we just really need a little extra help the dinner is perfect for us," said Hughes.

Hughes says, he plans to recommend the Community Food Bank to some friends who are struggling.

"They may want to hurry because the Food Bank says the meals are going fast," Hughes said.

The Food Bank says many of the turkeys being handed out were donated last week as part of their "20,000 Turkeys for Tucson" charity drive.

12/21: Desert Mission assists struggling area families

<http://www.azcentral.com/community/phoenix/articles/2011/12/19/20111219desert-mission-assists-struggling-area-families.html>

by Connie Cone Sexton - Dec. 21, 2011 09:18 AM - The Arizona Republic

The Desert Mission Community Center was established in 1927 to meet the health and social needs of struggling families in north Phoenix and surrounding areas.

"Desert Mission continues the legacy of caring by helping clients overcome a multitude of obstacles so they can reach their full potential," said Laura Dix, director of grants for the John C. Lincoln Health Foundation, which oversees the center, 9201 N. Fifth St. in Phoenix.

Services include a food bank, children's dental clinic, community health center, behavioral health clinic and an early childhood educational center.

More than 500,000 residents live in Desert Mission's general service area, which encompasses 150 square miles. During 2010, more than 30,000 people of diverse ages, ethnic, economic and social backgrounds requested assistance, Dix said. Almost half the clients are children.

Desert Mission is among more than 135 organizations aided by proceeds from Season for Sharing, a holiday-season campaign sponsored by The Arizona Republic and 12 News.

"The economic downturn of 2008 and continuing recession has had a significant impact on our local community," Dix said. Of the 30,000 clients served last year, more than 4,300 were first-time Desert Mission clients.

The food bank alone saw a 13 percent increase in the number of requests for emergency food assistance this year, Dix said. "In this challenging economic climate, Desert Mission continues to respond to the increased needs of the north Phoenix community through each of its programs," she added.

The health center works to address basic medical needs of low-income and uninsured children and their families. Wellness exams, immunizations, health screenings, treatment of minor illness and injury, and chronic disease management are among the services offered.

Nearly 1,800 individuals were seen last year at the health center. Of those, 43 percent (764 patients) were not eligible for the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (the Medicaid program in Arizona) and had no other insurance, Dix said.

Season for Sharing

Season for Sharing is the annual holiday gift-giving campaign of The Arizona Republic, 12 News and the Gannett Foundation.

Donations are matched 50 cents on the dollar until the funds reach \$800,000. Since 1993, more than \$46 million has been distributed to Arizona non-profit agencies serving children and families, education, the elderly and domestic violence victims.

To donate, go to www.sharing.azcentral.com.

12/21: Phoenix grocery store hosts real life 'Supermarket Sweep'

<http://www.azfamily.com/news/Valley-supermarket-hosts-real-life-Supermarket-Sweep-135976278.html>

by Stacey Delikat - azfamily.com - Posted on December 21, 2011 at 8:55 AM - Updated Wednesday, Dec 21 at 11:08 AM

PHOENIX -- A Phoenix supermarket hosted a special 60-second shopping spree Tuesday, allowing two lucky shoppers and a local charity to stock up on thousands of dollars of free groceries.

Food City on 21st Street and McDowell Road held the event, which was also sponsored by Smirnoff.

Two lucky shoppers were chosen from more than 800 who entered a text-message contest to get as many free groceries as they could stockpile into a cart in a minute's time.

The store also invited St. Mary's Food Bank to participate.

The shoppers checked out with about \$300 worth of groceries each, plus got additional store gift certificates.

Members of the Valley Hispanic Bomberos, a group of firefighters, shopped on behalf of St. Mary's, loading nearly \$600 worth of non-perishable food into carts in 60 seconds.

The food bank also received a \$1,000 donation from Food City and Smirnoff.

"The green beans and the corn and the tuna and the peanut butter and the soup, all the things the Bomberos were able to get for us those will go right into emergency food boxes," said Jerry Brown, spokesperson for St. Mary's.

"This is a very good day for the food bank and a very good day for the hungry of Arizona," Brown said.

12/21: TINSEL KOREY TO VOLUNTEER AT ST. MARY'S FOOD BANK

<http://www.openpr.com/news/205041/TINSEL-KOREY-TO-VOLUNTEER-AT-ST-MARY-S-FOOD-BANK.html>

Press release from: MLC PR - PR Agency: MLC PR

(openPR) - Los Angeles, CA (December 21, 2011) – On Wednesday, December 21st, 2011, Tinsel Korey, of The Twilight Saga film series will return to St. Mary Food Bank in Phoenix, Arizona to volunteer and assist in the campaign against hunger in hopes that her efforts will help create awareness of hunger in America.

Last year, while working with DoSomething.org, Korey became aware of the hunger many American families faced during the holidays. She states, "I helped last year with DoSomething.org's hunger campaign and didn't realize that millions of people in the US go hungry every year. It was a harsh reality." She now continues to show her support of St. Mary's Food Bank and the fight against hunger by volunteering her time this year. She goes on to say "I decided to go back this year to show my support and to continue raising awareness of how many people go hungry, and how important it is to donate to your local food bank, whether it be food, monetary or time."

St. Mary's Food Bank is a non-sectarian, nonprofit that helps alleviate hunger by gathering and distributing food to hunger sites. They serve approximately two-thirds of Arizona's 15 counties and is committed to easing hunger in Arizona through the vision of John Van Hengel.

For more information on Tinsel Korey please contact MLC PR at contact@monaloring.com. For more information on St. Mary's Food Bank please visit www.firstbank.org.

12/21: 'Tis the season to 'plot' for membership in the Prescott Valley Community Garden: APS donates \$1,500 to support garden effort

<http://prescottvalleytribune.com/main.asp?SectionID=74&SubSectionID=405&ArticleID=55300>

12/21/2011 9:35:00 AM - Sue Tone - Reporter

By the time the beds were put to sleep at Our Prescott Valley Community Garden, members had harvested and donated 2,685 pounds of fresh vegetables to the Yavapai Food Bank.

It's not too early to think about purchasing a private plot (\$75 plus \$25 refundable deposit) measuring 10 feet by 15 feet each, for the 2012 growing season. If that sounds like a lot of work, half plots also are available (\$40 plus \$15 refundable deposit). The Garden is located directly behind Albertsons grocery store at the southwest corner of Lake Valley and Florentine roads.

Gardening fits right into New Year's Resolutions that one might make to eat healthier, get some exercise, or meet new neighbors. But only eight plots are available out of 22, and gardeners must pay for their plots by the end of January.

By holding a plot in the Garden, members also are responsible for volunteering at least 20 hours on the community side of the garden between February and October. This is where freshly picked vegetables are grown for the Food Bank.

The Garden does not allow the use of pesticides or chemicals. Other benefits of gardening, as listed on the Garden's website, include exercise, stress relief, meeting people, turning vacant land into a thriving resource, and learning from Master Gardeners. In fact, several members will be teaching how to increase one's yield by growing vertical this coming year.

Members must bring their own tools, and keep their plots free of weeds and trash. Pets, smoking and alcohol are not permitted. The season ends Nov. 1, 2012, and members must leave the plot in a clean condition for the next year.

The Town of Prescott Valley provides water on the one-acre piece of land donated by the Fain Signature Group. Arizona Public Service donated the use of machinery and manpower to put in trenches for irrigation. APS also donated \$1,000 towards the pipes, and wood chips that line the pathways. A timed drip system serves all garden plots, eliminating over- or under-watering. The Northern Arizona Council for Governments paid for the 6-foot chain link fencing that encloses the garden for the first year. For more information, visit www.pvcommunitygarden.com or call Bonnie Flores at 772-3308.

12/21: Mayor Honea's holiday message

http://explorernews.com/voices/article_358afa6a-2b40-11e1-be03-0019bb2963f4.html

Posted: Wednesday, December 21, 2011 4:00 am | Updated: 12:42 pm, Tue Dec 20, 2011 - By Ed Honea, Special to The Explorer Explorer News

The holidays are here, the New Year is coming and those of us who serve the Town of Marana are in the mood to celebrate.

Christmas and Hanukkah are special times of year for everyone. All are occasions for family and friends to gather and appreciate all that life has provided them. It can also be an occasion to help the less fortunate among us. Marana's Town Council and employees are no different.

Over the past few months, dozens of us have rolled up our sleeves during Red Cross blood drives at our municipal complex. Giving blood doesn't take much time and each donation has the potential to save as many as three lives. Blood supplies typically run low when they are most needed, during the summer and end of the year. Please consider making a donation the next time you hear about a drive. We have one scheduled for our building on March 22.

We also recognize the tremendous need that exists at the Marana Community Food Bank. While Executive Director Linda Hampton and her staff do an excellent job, they often must deal with dwindling stock for a fast-growing clientele. The economic problems of the past several years have caused many people who never needed help in the past to ask for assistance.

Town Council and employees help the Food Bank whenever possible, whether through volunteer hours or the numerous drives we hold each year. Just this month, Town departments collected more than 20

holiday food bags filled with the necessities for a Christmas dinner and dropped them off at the Food Bank. Employees also made monetary contributions, which are key because the Food Bank turns each dollar donated into around \$10 worth of food.

We wish you and yours a Merry Christmas or Happy Hanukkah and prosperous New Year. Please enjoy the company of loved ones during this season of hope and generosity. Keep the less fortunate among us in your thoughts and deeds. We are blessed to live in a community that truly cares about the people who live and work here.

To sign up for the Town blood drive, please call 382-1936. To learn more about the Marana Community Food Bank, please call 682-3001 or visit www.communityfoodbank.com.

12/21: El Sol Briefs (excerpt)

http://explorernews.com/el_sol/article_7be30cee-2b60-11e1-88dd-0019bb2963f4.html

Posted: Wednesday, December 21, 2011 4:00 am

Make bowls to donate to food bank fundraiser

Experienced potters and people who are interested in learning to work with clay are invited to make bowls that will be donated to a local food bank for a fundraising event.

Four Bowl-a-Thons will be held in January, February and March in Studio 302 at the Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Department's Northwest Art Center, 7770 N. Shannon Road.

Longtime potter, clay artist and teacher Jada Ahern will lead and provide instruction at the free Bowl-a-Thons from 1 to 5 p.m. on Jan. 7 and March 1 and from 6 to 9 p.m. on Jan. 26 and Feb. 10. Clay is being donated by Marjon Ceramics.

Pre-registration is required as space is limited. People can attend more than one session.

Bowls will be hand-built and wheel-thrown and will be donated to the Interfaith Community Services Food Bank, 2820 W. Ina Road, for an Empty Bowls fundraising event on March 17. People who buy a bowl at the event will also get soup, bread and a beverage.

"Our goal is to produce 500 bowls," Ahern said.

Ahern's students made 100 bowls for an Empty Bowls event in November at Kino Community Center, 2805 E. Ajo Way, that benefited the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona. Other artists also contributed to the event that raised \$9,500.

For more information about the Bowl-a-Thons or to register, call Ahern at 520-870-0823.

Ahern's website is www.jadasclay.com.

12/21: Letter to the Editor: Farmers' donations

<http://www.willcoxrange.com/articles/2011/12/21/opinion/letters/letter3.txt>

Published: Wednesday, December 21, 2011 12:11 PM CST

On behalf of the Southeast Arizona Food Bank, Inc., Rey Martinez and K. Ellen Wilson, we would like to say a sincere thank you to all the Willcox Farmers for their most generous cash donation.

Working together, in hard times, we can make a change in the face of hunger. Your contribution will help enrich the lives of the elderly, children, homeless, and low-income families.

With all your generosity and support, it allows us to continue our mission.

Again, thanks to all of you Willcox Farmers for your generous cash donation.

Have Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Rey Martinez, Executive Director
Southeast Arizona Food Bank

12/21: 3 winners score big Operation Santa prize packages (excerpt)

http://www.abc15.com/dpp/about_us/news_releases/3-winners-score-big-operation-santa-prize-packages

Posted: 12/21/2011 - By: ABC15.com staff

Donations from Operation Santa Claus will benefit St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance, Time and Willy's Kid's FUNdation, The Southwest Autism Research and Resource Center and Operation Homefront of Arizona.

12/21: Editorial: Holidays a time for sharing good news (excerpt)

http://azdailysun.com/news/opinion/editorial/holidays-a-time-for-sharing-good-news/article_978611a2-0504-5104-8dac-1679f3b772a6.html

Posted: Wednesday, December 21, 2011 5:05 am

Also on the good news front this holiday season is the continuing cascade of coins into Salvation Army kettles amidst a seemingly nonstop procession of toy and food drives in Flagstaff. Each day brings news of another group or business stepping up to help the less fortunate -- look for a story soon on all the food raised for just the St. Mary's Food Bank alone.

12/20: Turn \$10 into a bag of groceries for the hungry

<http://www.kvoa.com/news/turn-10-into-a-bag-of-groceries-for-the-hungry/>

Posted: Dec 20, 2011 5:03 PM - Updated: Dec 20, 2011 5:03 PM

TUCSON - Sometimes we want to give, but we forget about buying those extra few cans of food until we're already out of the store.

Now, one store is doing the charity shopping for us.

At any Safeway, your \$10 can turn into a full bag of Christmas groceries that will feed those in need.

Crackers, macaroni and cheese, a can of tuna, canned vegetables, rice, stuffing, and cranberry sauce are what you can give the hungry this Christmas for ten dollars.

The program is called "Help Us End Hunger."

Nancy Keane, Director of Public Affairs and Government Relations for Safeway, says it's right thing to do for families during hard economic times.

"We believe in helping to eliminate the hunger in our communities and we believe in using our resources to create healthy families," Keane said.

The bags are making their way to Tucson's Community Food Bank, where there's a shortage of 2 million pounds of food this year.

CEO of the Tucson Community Food Bank, Bill Carnegie, says it's easy to transfer the food because it's already prepackaged.

"It's a great way for people when they're out there at Safeway, run out and pick-up one of those bags, and it's going to go directly to a local person in need," Carnegie said.

So far, 9,353 bags have been donated in Arizona, and if you would like to donate, there's still time thru December 24th.

12/20: Valley citrus picking program needs volunteers

<http://www.abc15.com/dpp/news/state/valley-citrus-picking-program-needs-volunteers>

Posted: 12/20/2011 - By: Deborah Stocks

PHOENIX - St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance is looking for volunteers for its 2012 citrus gleaning program.

The program is taken from the tradition of collecting leftover crops from farmers' fields following harvest.

Food bank volunteers will pick any leftover or unneeded grapefruits or oranges from neighborhood trees to help the 1.4 million Arizonans in need.

There's a donation fee of \$15 per tree picked, which goes toward covering the costs of the materials used in the program.

According to St. Mary's Food Bank, as much as 2 million pounds of citrus has been collected through the program in years past.

St. Mary's Food Bank will partner with Sun Orchard in Tempe to have a portion of the gleaning bounty juiced and frozen to be used both at the food bank and shared with other Western states.

Requests are now being accepted at the Food Bank's special "Citrus Hotline" at 602-343-5658.

Volunteer teams will pick trees beginning in early to mid-January and will continue into March, trying to reach as many homes as possible.

The food bank needs as many volunteers as possible for the program to be successful and the same phone number may be used for those interested in volunteering as a gleaner.

Residents in the Arcadia area are asked to contact the Arcadia Water Company at 480-945-4621 or via email at awcwater@qwestoffice.net to schedule St. Mary's volunteers for tree gleaning.

12/20: Food bank in desperate need of donations

<http://www.kpho.com/story/16366197/food-bank-in-desperate-need-of-donations>

Posted: Dec 20, 2011 7:21 PM MST - Updated: Dec 20, 2011 7:56 PM MST - By Jason Kadah

PHOENIX (KPHO) - To say that the St. Mary's food bank could use your help, especially this time of year, would be an understatement. Believe it or not, you can provide seven meals by donating just \$1.

"Just one single dollar can get seven meals to needy families here in the area. We appreciate the monetary donations. Food donations go a long way as well. We need contributions from across the board," said Michael Cox of St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance.

Contributing food, money or your time is desperately needed. At the Central Phoenix facility, 700 to 1,000 people a day receive meal boxes. That number has grown significantly throughout the year and is expected to continue into 2012. The food bank attributes the growing demand to the poor economy.

Cox tell us they are giving out 75 percent more food now then they were five years ago. Something else he notices is that he's seeing a lot of people come through the doors that in the past have donated to St Mary's. Now, they are coming in for assistance.

"Traditionally, one of the hardest things to do as humans is to ask for assistance. So for some folks it takes a lot of courage to approach a food bank," adds Cox.

The folks at St. Mary's want the public to understand that hunger doesn't discriminate. It doesn't care about color, sex, age, economic level or time of year. The need for donations in our community is year-round, and they're hoping that Valley residents will consider donating even after the holidays are over

12/20: Winterhaven food donations drastically low

<http://www.kold.com/story/16361251/winter>

Posted: Dec 20, 2011 8:37 AM MST - Updated: Dec 20, 2011 8:42 AM MST - By David Gonzalez

TUCSON, AZ (KOLD) - The Winterhaven Festival of Lights 2011 is coming to a close on Christmas night but the need for food donations will last for some time.

The festival is the second largest fundraiser for the Community Food Bank every year.

Jeff Parris, spokesman for the Community Food Bank, says the food bank does not set goals on how much food they hope to collect.

"We try not to set them so we are not disappointed," Parris says.

Last year, more than 44,000 pounds of food were collected during the festival.

This year is has proven to be a lot harder.

A total of 13,324 pounds as food have been donated during the first ten nights of the festival.

The community is encouraged to bring non-perishable food items and canned good during the last five days of Winterhaven.

Items like peanut butter and canned tuna are a top priority for the food bank.

Winterhaven officials say the rainy weather is to blame for the drop in donations.

Tuesday is the final drive-thru night of the festival.

There will be volunteers at all the entrances collecting donations.

The Winterhaven Festival of Lights runs every night from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.

12/20: Santa stops by today's Season 4 Hope live drive

<http://www.kvoa.com/news/santa-stops-by-today-s-season-4-hope-live-drive/>

Posted: Dec 20, 2011 4:21 PM - Updated: Dec 20, 2011 4:24 PM

TUCSON - News 4 Tucson's final live drive for Season 4 Hope is happening right now, and we have a special guest to take your donations of food, clothes and toys - Santa!

Today, News 4 Tucson's Kristi Tedesco and Santa are broadcasting live from outside the News 4 Tucson studios, located in midtown at 209 W. Elm St., near Oracle Rd. and Grant Rd. Click here for directions from Google Maps.

She'll be taking your donations of new clothing, food and toys from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., as part of our Season 4 Hope campaign.

Food Bank representatives say they are still well short of donations needed to feed those in need this holiday.

We'll also be collecting clothes for the Gospel Rescue Mission and the Emerge! Center, and new toys for Toys for Tots.

So stop by the KVOA News 4 Tucson Studios this evening to donate for a great cause, meet News 4's Kristi Tedesco (and Santa!), and maybe see yourself on TV!

12/20: 'Better Community' program seeks holiday donations

http://www.eastvalleytribune.com/local/article_edd5d032-29e1-11e1-b539-001871e3ce6c.html

Posted: Tuesday, December 20, 2011 9:15 am - East Valley Tribune

Mesa's A Better Community program is asking residents to donate to the needy for the holidays — and reminding them they can claim the contribution on their 2011 tax return by donating before the end of the year.

The ABC program provides emergency boxes, home-delivered meals to seniors, shelters to families and other services to agencies that include the **United Food Bank**, Marc Center, Child Crisis Center and more. In the last year, ABC granted more than \$145,000 to the community that resulted in 19,349 meals to seniors, 23,597 shelter nights and 195,871 emergency food boxes.

There are several ways to donate. City utility customers can automatically donate money with their monthly bill payment. Go to www.mesaaz.gov, click on the "abc" tab and then "secure online form" to donate. Or, call (480) 644-2221 for options, including a one-time donation. People who aren't Mesa utility customers can donate with a check to City of Mesa Customer Service, P.O. Box 1466, Mesa, AZ 85211-1466. In the memo area, write ABC: A Better Community.

12/20: Beaulieu Vineyard Fights Hunger With Social Effort

<http://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/164442/beaulieu-vineyard-fights-hunger-with-social-effort.html>

by Tanya Irwin, Dec 20, 2011, 5:38 AM

Beaulieu Vineyard is launching a Facebook campaign to encourage wine lovers to donate and volunteer food banks and other hunger relief organizations.

The BV Give & Give Back Campaign, at facebook.com/bvwines, has the potential to provide 2,500,000 meals for American hunger relief. The Napa, Calif.-based winery started a program in the fall with donations to help provide more than 1,000,000 meals to 12 national and regional hunger relief agencies.

"The fact that so many people are not able to put food on that table is a critical issue of our times," said BV Marketing Brand Manager Noelle Campbell, in a release.

More than 50 million people go hungry each day, and 17 million of those are children, she says. "Hunger relief has become a focus of our BV Coastal Estates mission and a way to give back to the community," Campbell added.

Working with hunger relief experts at Feeding America, a hunger relief charity, and other community advisors, Campbell identified 12 food relief agencies with whom to collaborate.

BV Coastal Estate Wines has donated funds to agencies nationwide, including: **St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance** in Arizona, Greater Chicago Food Depository, Food Bank of the Rockies in Colorado, Freestore Food Bank in Ohio, the North Texas Food Bank, The Greater Boston Food Bank in Massachusetts, the Food Lifeline in Washington, the Food Bank of Southern California, the San Francisco and Marin Food Bank in California, the Napa Valley Food Bank in California, the Florida Association of Food Banks and the Food Bank Association of New York State.

The company also made a donation to the national efforts of Feeding America.

As part of the Give & Give Back online challenge, BV asks Americans to commit at least 1 million volunteer minutes to food banks, soup kitchens and hunger relief agencies nationally. When BV reaches the challenge goal of 1 million volunteer minutes, American wine lovers will have contributed the volunteer time equivalent of \$356,000.

"The economy is a challenge for everyone right now, we want to remind people that volunteering their time can be as valuable as a donation of money or food," Campbell said.

Beaulieu Vineyard is produced by Diageo Chateau & Estate Wines (DC&E), which is part of Diageo.

12/20: Ideas for affordable and helping holidays (excerpt)

http://www.nogalesinternational.com/opinion/guest_opinion/ideas-for-affordable-and-helping-holidays/article_0a1f75e0-2b22-11e1-b55d-001871e3ce6c.html

Posted: Tuesday, December 20, 2011 8:47 am - By Joe Wright

At Safeway all you need is \$10 to feed a family in need. Right when you walk into the supermarket you'll find a table covered in paper bags full of food for the price of \$10. Simply pick up one of the bags, take it to a register to pay, and place the bag in the donation box at the front of the store.

Another way to help feed those who might not have enough to eat this season is by donating time or food to the Nogales Community and Borderlands Food Banks. Both are responsible for providing hundreds if not thousands in our community with fresh nutritious food. Hours of operation for the Nogales Community Food Bank are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. All that is required in order to volunteer is to show up and fill out an application. You can contact the food bank by calling (520) 281-2790 or go to their website at www.communityfoodbank.com. To get more info on Borderlands Food Bank check out their website at borderlandsfoodbank.com.

You can also contact the Crossroads Rescue Mission at (520) 287-6335 or go to their website at www.crossroadnewlifecenter.org to find out more ways that you can volunteer or donate for those in need. Possibly the most satisfying gift that we can give this holiday season is help to those less fortunate than ourselves.

12/20: News & Notes (excerpt)

http://azstarnet.com/business/local/news-notes/article_8434577b-0c24-5567-aa09-12235f5755a6.html

Arizona Daily Star | Posted: Tuesday, December 20, 2011 12:00 am

'Mr. An' loses friendly wager, is expected to don turkey suit

The results are in for the Dec. 15 "Twenty Thousand Turkeys for Tucson" donation drive.

Chris Edwards from Tucson Appliance Co. raised the most: 1,292 turkeys, to "Mr. An's" 439 turkeys and Casino del Sol Resort's 112 turkeys.

Under the friendly competition set up by those local businesses, that means Kwang C. "Mr." An of Mr. An's Teppan Steak and Sushi will have to wear a turkey costume and stand outside Tucson Appliance and wave at passing traffic. An hasn't scheduled the date yet.

If An had won, Edwards would have washed dishes at his restaurant.

Thanks to the many Tucsonans who donated to the drive, 17,200 pounds of food were given to the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona.

12/20: The Prudential Foundation provides \$655,000 in grants to food banks across the country during the holiday season (excerpt)

http://www.cnbc.com/id/45741001/The_Prudential_Foundation_provides_655_000_in_grants_to_food_banks_across_the_country_during_the_holiday_season

Published: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2011 | 2:30 PM ET

NEWARK, N.J., Dec 20, 2011 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- To help make the holidays brighter for people in need, The Prudential Foundation announced today that its 2011 Fund for Families will immediately disperse more than \$655,000 to food banks in several U.S. cities, including \$50,000 to Feeding America, the nation's leading domestic-hunger relief agency.

The \$655,000 Fund for Families grants will be distributed to food banks between now and the end of the year to bolster their ability to make their services available throughout the holiday season and into the next year. In addition to Feeding America, which will receive \$50,000 to help advocate for policies that help solve our nation's growing hunger crisis, organizations that will receive grants from the Prudential Foundation's 2011 Fund for Families are: -- **St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank** (Phoenix),