

## Honor Roll of Food Donors 2006

*Thank you to the following groups for conducting food drives or donating groceries to the Food Bank:*

- Apex Logistics Inc.
- Barnes & Noble, Marketfair
- Bristol-Myers Squibb Child Care Center
- Capital Health Systems
- Ceridan
- Comag Marketing Group
- Community FoodBank of New Jersey
- Dutch Prime Foods
- Faith Christian School
- Federal Highway Administration
- First Presbyterian Church of Dutch Neck Vacation Bible School
- Fisher Middle School
- Girl Scout Troop 128
- Girl Scout Brownie Troop 628
- Girl Scout Senior Troop 1684
- Girl Scouts White Horse-Mercerville Service Unit
- Grover Middle School
- GS1 US
- Hands of Change
- HMS Host
- Janssen Pharmaceutica
- Johnson, Kendall and Johnson
- Kiwanis Club of Hamilton Township
- McCarter Theatre Education Dept.
- Mercer County Administration Offices
- Mercer County Library System
- Mercer Street Friends Finance Dept.
- Merrill Lynch Private Client Group
- Montgomery Upper Middle School
- National Association of Letter Carriers
- New Horizons Montessori School
- New Jersey Business and Industry Association
- New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance
- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

## 2006 ANNUAL REPORT

**T**hank you to our food suppliers, donors, volunteers and supporters for being partners in our mission to alleviate hunger. This is what we accomplished together in 2006.

- ✓ **Distributed more than 1.6 million pounds of food and groceries** (an increase of 100,000 lbs. from 2005)
  - Donated food and groceries.....535,675 pounds (34 percent)
  - USDA commodities .....449,852 pounds (28 percent)
  - Purchased.....615,017 pounds (38 percent)

- ✓ **Provided over 90 tons of perishable food through our *Healthy Eating Initiatives***—poultry, lean meat, fish; fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables; 100 percent fruit juices; eggs and dairy products

- ✓ **Supplied food and groceries to 54 local faith-based and social service programs and charities**
  - Pantries .....53%
  - Shelters.....20%
  - Soup Kitchens and meal programs.....9%
  - Day Care Centers.....9%
  - Youth Programs.....9%

- ✓ **Helped to feed 18,000 men, women and children at risk for food insecurity and hunger**

- ✓ **Partnered with 63 local food donors**

- ✓ **Mobilized over 250 community volunteers who donated more than 3,300 hours**

- New Jersey Department of Labor
- New Jersey Department of Treasury Division of Pensions and Benefits
- New Jersey Manufacturers Insurance Company
- Newtown Friends Meeting
- NRG Energy, Inc.
- Notre Dame High School
- On Campus Marketing
- Princeton Mortgage Corporation
- Princeton University Alumni Association
- Princeton University Human Resource Department
- Riverside Elementary School
- Sleepy's Robbinsville
- Small World Roasters
- Smithfield Global Products
- Sodexo Campus Services
- The College of New Jersey
- Solebury Friends Meeting
- Steinert High School
- St. Gregory the Great Church
- Target East Windsor
- Temple Micah
- Timberlane Middle School
- Trenton Ski Club
- United Way of Greater Mercer County-Young Leaders
- Van Note-Harvey Associates

### Produce Donors:

- Farmers Against Hunger
- Howell Living History Farm
- NORWESCAP Food Bank

***If you would like to organize a food drive at your place of work, house of worship, school, etc., please call us at (609) 406-0503.***

# HAVE A HEART FOR THE HUNGRY

Dear Partner,

Around the time that most people gathered around the dining table to enjoy the Thanksgiving meal, the US Department of Agriculture released its annual report on **HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY IN THE UNITED STATES, 2005**. According to the report, based on Census Bureau data, most households in America have consistent, dependable access to enough food for active, healthy living. They are called food secure. But 22.7 million adults and 12.4 million children experience what the USDA identifies as food insecurity. These households had difficulty providing enough food for all their members due to a lack of resources. Among the **food insecure** households, about one-third were further classified as having **very low food security**. In these households, food intake of some household members is reduced and their normal eating patterns are disrupted.

In plain English, these very low food secure households subsist on barely adequate quantities of food. These folks—the poorest of the poor—used to be called **food insecure with hunger**, but with the release of this report, the word “hunger” was eliminated. The USDA changed the terminology because “hunger” is “not a scientifically accurate term for the specific phenomenon being measured.” Huh? Is the government suggesting that we cannot understand the difference between the discomfort and physically uneasy sensation that comes from skipping a meal because we are in a hurry to get to school or work and the plight faced by those who skip meals because they cannot afford to put food on the table?

Eliminating the word “hunger” and calling it “very low food security” is like referring to taxes as revenue enhancements. It does not make it any more palatable. Now here’s the kicker. The survey showed a slight improvement in the total number of people who are food insecure, from 38 million in 2004 to 35 million in 2005. But, the number of people in the worse-off households—the people who used to be acknowledged as living with hunger but now are labeled as people with very low food security—rose from 10.7 million in 2004 to 10.8 million in 2005.

Call it what you want, there are still millions of Americans going without enough to eat. Changing how one describes a condition of poverty does not change the reality of poverty for the thousands of residents of New Jersey who turn to food pantries and soup kitchens each day.

Regardless of what government officials may think, we are not changing the Mercer Street Friends Food Bank tag line to “A Community Response to Very Low Food Security”.

*Phellis*

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### LETTER CARRIERS FOOD DRIVE

**Saturday, May 12, 2007**

Help Stamp Out Hunger. Leave your nonperishable food donations by your mailbox on Saturday, May 12 for pickup by your letter carrier, who will make a “special delivery” to the Mercer Street Friends Food Bank.



Members of the NJ Anti-Hunger Coalition gathered at the State House Annex on February 16 to display 10,000 signed valentines collected as part of the “Have a Heart for the Hungry” campaign. The valentines were sent to Trenton as a way of

thanking Governor Corzine for including three million dollars in the state budget as first year funding for the new State Food Purchase Program.

The State Food Purchase Program (SFPP) gives grants to the state’s food banks to purchase food for food pantries, shelters and soup kitchens. Moreover, the purchases must be for healthy foods—fruits and vegetables, protein, grains and dairy products that are so often beyond the budgets of poor and low-income households. An additional \$1-million is for the purchase of refrigerators, freezers, stoves, etc., to help local charities add or upgrade equipment needed to store food or prepare meals.

To date, the Mercer Street Friends Food Bank has used the funding to distribute whiting, tilapia, whole turkeys, ground turkey and cubed beef; fresh apples, bananas, carrots, green peppers and onions; frozen collard greens, black eyed peas, broccoli and cauliflower medley; raisins; frozen grape juice concentrate; brown rice, raisin bran, and oatmeal; and canned tuna, chunk chicken and whole tomatoes.

The impact of the State Food Purchase Program goes beyond just reaching more of the hungry. There is a strong correlation between poverty and poor health. The poor and hungry experience high incidences of obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure and other health problems and illnesses. With its emphasis on nutrition and increased access to healthful foods, the State Food Purchase Program improves the diets and thus the health and well-being of the poor and undernourished.

This has not been overlooked by the very people receiving the food. The following is an excerpt from a letter we received from Carolyn Brown, director of the Trenton Family Preservation House, a shelter for homeless families:

*First, the apples—I have never seen 200 apples disappear so quickly—and at the right time... the children were delighted and I even had to stop some of them from eating too many—one right behind the other—even though fruit is good for them. The fresh carrots were more enjoyable by the adults—they made the perfect snack—and some of the children were walking around with a bag—munching away. Our cook prepared some delicious glazed carrots—that was the hit of the meal.*

*Now the “Home Run Hit”—the whiting fish. Our residents could not believe they were being served fresh fried fish for dinner. We had to monitor the portions because they were eating so fast—in order to get some more, we had to ensure that everyone received fish with their dinner.*

The Have a Heart messages sent to Governor Corzine were noted and we are pleased to report that the Governor has proposed increasing FY 07-08 funding for food purchases under SFPP to \$4 million. We hope that the legislature will equally have a “Heart for the Hungry” and not cut the proposed appropriation.

# Princeton Deliverance Center

Sister Rose Bradley has a certain way about her. From the very first introduction, you know that Rose is passionate about her work, her ministry and about feeding the hungry in her midst. “People are not hungry at our convenience. Our pantry has to be there for them.”

The Princeton Deliverance Center began nearly 33 years ago on Birch Avenue in Princeton and retained its name after moving to a Princeton Avenue address near the Battle Monument in Trenton. It has been at its present location, on Southard Street in the North Ward for eleven years.

“When we first began, we were just collecting food hit and miss to give to those in need. Then we found out about Mercer Street Friends and things changed fast.” Sister Bradley now receives nearly 80% of the food she distributes from the Mercer Street Friends Food Bank. “Let’s put it this way, without the Food Bank, we wouldn’t have a pantry.”

That would translate to immense hardship for the mothers and fathers who depend on the Princeton Deliverance Center to feed their families. The pantry currently distributes food to 351 families at risk for hunger each Wednesday and Friday, with the latter being her largest distribution as the weekend approaches. Her dispersal has changed over the past few years with fewer single men being served and larger families taking their place. The pantry currently provides food to 977 men, women and children each month.

Clients are primarily Trenton residents, although there are a fair amount from the



Rose Bradley ready to leave the Food Bank with a fully loaded van.

Lawrence area. Some walk; some drive, if they’re lucky; and some arrive by public transportation. The families are a mix of ethnicities, with such a strong Hispanic presence that Rose sometimes wishes for a translator. Some clients are unemployed but many are members of the ‘working poor’, those families existing from paycheck to paycheck with a substantial need for assistance.

Sadly, Sister Bradley has seen an increase in her senior citizen population. “They just don’t seem to be able to make ends meet any more,” she comments.

In addition to the food pantry, the Princeton Deliverance Center provides a number of programs to the community for enrichment purposes. These include “Parents Supporting Parents”, which promotes effective parenting skills; “Mothers United With Daughters”, which concentrates on life skills and “Strengthening Families”, a program dedicated to family support. Nearly 70 attendees participate in the programs each week and Sister Bradley makes sure that each one gets a meal. In fact, she has seen a marked increase in attendance since she began feeding the participants.

“Our thrust now is to reach more people, more families,” an impassioned Bradley declares, “that would be impossible without the Mercer Street Friends Food Bank.”

# Recent Grants and Awards

## *Mary Owen Borden Foundation:*

\$10,000 toward the purchase of a new vehicle.

## *Concordia Foundation:*

\$15,000 to support the work of the food bank to access, store and provide healthy food to people at risk for hunger and food insecurity,

## *Janssen Pharmaceutica:*

\$12,000 to support the food bank’s Healthy Eating Initiatives and the distribution of nutritious food.

## *MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger:*

\$12,000 to Mercer Street Friends to support our policy analysis and advocacy efforts directed toward safeguarding and strengthening government funded child nutrition and food assistance programs that help to prevent hunger.

## *Share Our Strength–Taste of the Nation:*

\$14,739.16 to support the day to day work of the food bank. The dollars were raised from proceeds of the 2006 Princeton Taste of the Nation.

## *ShopRite–Partners in Caring:*

\$70,000 to provide food to families, children and elderly who may otherwise go without. Partners in Caring is a year round focus by ShopRite Supermarkets to raise awareness about hunger in the communities they serve. Each ShopRite store selects qualified local organizations to receive grants to be used at their food bank to obtain food and groceries. Twenty-seven member agencies of the Mercer Street Friends Food Bank (emergency food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters) share in the funding.

# FAVORITE PLACES

We all have on our computer an icon that links to one’s “Favorite Places.” For us, “Favorite Places” could easily be the food and grocery retailers that support the work of the Food Bank in so many ways. From raising funds, to donating food, promoting awareness of hunger, or facilitating donations of equipment, our local supermarkets and food stores are important partners in the fight against hunger. Here is how they help:

- **ShopRite**–Check-Out Hunger, Partners in Caring, Thanksgiving turkey donation, technical advice and linkages to equipment donations
- **Wegmans**–Check-Out Hunger (in 2006, the Princeton Wegmans raised \$48,539 from their customers, the most dollars ever raised in a single store in NJ for Check-Out Hunger), donation of trailer load of food and grocery products
- **Whole Foods**–Five Percent Day donation, Clementine Bag Sales donation
- **Target Nassau Park**–Weekly food and grocery donations, donations of warehouse equipment
- **McCaffrey’s**–Check-Out Hunger, weekly food donations from the Princeton store
- **SuperFresh**–Check-Out Hunger
- **Pennington Quality Market**–Check-Out Hunger, Food Crusade Against Hunger–Food For All donation
- **Marrazzo’s of Robbinsville**–Check-Out Hunger
- **WaWa**–Check Out Hunger

We do not have a “favorite” among these stores. Maybe you do, and if so, please let them know that their good deeds for the Food Bank are greatly appreciated.



# TableTalk

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U.S. POSTAGE  
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TRENTON, NJ

## MERCER STREET FRIENDS FOOD BANK

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## Connecting with Our Community to End Hunger



County Executive Brian Hughes (right) with the help of John Worth (left) of the county's weights and measures department, with a turkey the County Executive purchased and then donated, along with other holiday food, to Mercer Street Friends. With donations from ShopRite, Notre Dame High School, Capital Health Systems, Princeton Mortgage, HMS Host, and individuals, as well as purchases made under the State Food Purchase Program, the Food Bank was able to distribute 1,275 turkeys for the holidays.

*Photo credit: Beverly Schaffer, Times of Trenton*



NRG Energy Inc., stateside sponsor of Check-Out Hunger, sent its employees to volunteer at Mercer Street Friends to see first hand how the Food Bank puts Check-Out Hunger dollars to work.



Students from Riverside Elementary School in Princeton drop off the proceeds of food they collected for the Food Bank.

## Volunteer Counts

*Thank you to the following groups for helping in the warehouse this fall and winter.*

Number of Volunteers .....**92**

Number of Hours .....**298**

### GROUPS:

- Bloomberg
- Bristol-Myers Squibb
- Hyatt Regency Princeton
- Lawrenceville School
- Niagara University – Campus Ministry
- NRG Energy, Inc.
- Princeton University – Woodrow Wilson School
- Williams Transco
- Trenton Thunder

*If you would like to volunteer, please call us at (609) 406-0503.*