

MEET EACH NEED WITH DIGNITY



10641 N. San Fernando Rd.
Pacoima, CA 91331
phone | 818.896.0246
fax | 818.897.0128
www.mendpoverty.org

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Media contact: Marianne Haver Hill
Tel: 818-686-7321

marianne@mendpoverty.org

Letter Carriers to Help Stamp Out Hunger

Nation's Largest Single-Day Food Drive Expected to Surpass One Billion Pounds of Donations This Year

On Saturday, May 8, letter carriers across America will deliver much more than mail along their postal routes. They will also collect the goodness and compassion of their postal customers who will participate in the NALC (National Association of Letter Carriers) Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive.

Now in its 18th year, the Stamp Out Hunger effort is the nation's largest single-day food drive benefitting food banks around the country.

Residents of Los Angeles and surrounding areas are asked to leave nonperishable food donations by their mailboxes, which will be picked up by their letter carriers as they deliver mail on their routes.

MEND (Meet Each Need with Dignity), the San Fernando Valley's largest poverty relief organization, is working closely with the NALC to coordinate food collection and distribution to local food banks, pantries and shelters.

MEND President Marianne Haver Hill says the need for food assistance has never been greater and food banks are struggling to meet the surging needs of their clients.

"The effects of the recession and unemployment are having a dramatic impact on agencies like ours that help the hungry. We have seen a 100% increase in families asking for help in the last year," says Haver Hill.

"In these trying times it's important for people to rally behind causes like the Letter Carriers Food Drive to help their neighbors struggling with hunger."

Ralphs , one of the sponsors this year, is donating 750,000 bags that letter carriers will leave in pre-designated neighborhoods to encourage food donations, but any sturdy bag can be used. Residents are asked to leave the bag containing non-perishable foods such as canned soup, canned vegetables, pasta, rice or cereal next to their mailbox prior to the time of regular mail delivery on Saturday, May 8. Food items should be in non-breakable containers, such as boxes and cans.

Led by the National Association of Letter Carriers, with the help of rural letter carriers, other postal employees and numerous other volunteers, the drive has resulted in delivery of 980 million pounds of donations to community food banks and pantries over the past 17 years. This year, organizers are optimistic they will surpass the one billion mark for donated food.

The drive relies on the backing of the National Rural Letter Carriers Association, America's Second Harvest, the nation's food bank network; the United Way of America and its local United Ways, the AFL-CIO Community Services network, and countless local sponsors such as KCBS2, KCAL9 and Ralphs.

ABOUT MEND

[MEND \(Meet Each Need with Dignity\)](#), which serves as many as 31,000 poverty-level clients each month while keeping operating costs at or under 9%, is the largest, most efficient and most comprehensive poverty-relief organization in the San Fernando Valley. MEND's mission is to break the bonds of poverty by providing basic human needs and a pathway to self-reliance.

MEND was born a volunteer-driven organization nearly four decades ago in a garage in suburbia, and today utilizes more than 3700 volunteers (and only 23 paid staffers) to implement its vast array of programs that provide food, clothing, medical, dental and vision care; job training, classes in English as a Second Language, literacy, computers, office skills, sewing and parenting; math, reading and science tutoring for kids; hot meals, food, clothing and showers to the homeless; and an adopt-a-family Christmas Program.

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