

MEET EACH NEED WITH DIGNITY



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‘Stamp Out Hunger’ Annual Letter Carrier’s Food Drive is Coming!

United States Postal Workers deliver again!

On Saturday, May 12th, 2012 the US postal workers will lend a hand in the effort to ‘Stamp Out Hunger.’ On that day, all across the country, they collect bags and boxes of non-perishable food items left by residents along their postal routes. With the generosity and compassion of residents, the NALC (National Association of Letter Carriers) and the USPS will help to stock food banks nationwide at a time of year when donations tend to fall and needs rise.

MEND – Meet Each Need with Dignity, with the support of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Actress Mariette Hartley, and Actor Bill Sanderson, along with the USPS, NALC, Ralphs Supermarkets and the LA Regional Food Bank will hold a press conference with on May 8th, 2012 to kick off the 20th Anniversary of the drive and discuss the need in local communities. The press conference will be held at 10:30 a.m. at MEND – Meet Each Need with Dignity, 10641 San Fernando Rd. Pacoima, CA.

This year’s drive promises to be a much needed boost to food banks and pantries as the demand for food assistance throughout Los Angeles and the country continues to increase. Inventory levels at Los Angeles Regional Food Bank have declined drastically. The decline is due to a combination of several factors including a decrease in commodities received from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), high unemployment and a struggling economy.

“The effects of the recession and unemployment are having a dramatic impact on the agencies like ours that help the hungry. That is why events like this are critical” said MEND President and CEO Marianne Haver Hill. She added, “The donated food helps fill community food banks and pantries throughout the summer months when donations are at their lowest and the need for food soars.”

Now in its 20th year, the ‘Stamp Out Hunger’ effort is the nation’s biggest single-day food drive, benefiting food banks around the country. In the San Fernando Valley, MEND has worked closely with NALC to coordinate food collection at the Post Offices and sort and redistribute the donations for the

last 20 years. “It’s truly a collaborative effort and brings the community together” says Richard Weinroth, MEND Food Bank Director. “It’s a day when SF Valley residents, thousands of volunteers, and private and public organizations all work together to assure that local families don’t go to bed hungry. It’s humbling,” He adds.

Participation is simple. Residents of Los Angeles and surrounding areas don’t even need to leave their homes to make a difference. They can leave their non-perishable food item(s) right next to their mailbox for the letter carriers to collect. As a reminder, food banks ask that people don’t use this as an opportunity to get rid of expired or undesirable items. “We suggest people give food that they themselves would want to eat,” says Weinroth.

Many Southern California residents will find reminder cards and an empty grocery bag in their mailbox a couple of days before the drive. Ralphs Supermarkets has donated 1,155,000 printed biodegradable bags that letter carriers will leave in designated Southland neighborhoods to encourage food donations, but any sturdy bag or box can be used. Food banks hope to receive non-glass, non-perishable items such as canned soups, fruits or vegetables, canned meats or tuna, peanut butter, and rice, cereal or pasta.

To learn more about Stamp Out Hunger visit the official website at <http://www.helpstampouthunger.com/>

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About MEND

MEND-- Meet Each Need with Dignity, which serves as many as 30,000 poverty-level clients each month while remarkably keeping operating costs to 5%, is the largest, most efficient and most comprehensive poverty-relief organization in the San Fernando Valley. MEND’s mission is to relieve the effects of poverty by providing basic human needs while giving their clients the tools, education, training, support and opportunities that foster self-reliance.

MEND was born as a volunteer-powered organization four decades ago in a garage in suburban LA, and today benefits from the assistance of more than 3000 volunteers (and only 25 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 a community wide Adopt-a-Family Christmas Program.