



Society of St. Andrew REPORT



VOLUME 25

NUMBER 1

WINTER 2009

GLEANING AMERICA'S FIELDS ~ FEEDING AMERICA'S HUNGRY

SoSA does more ... with your help

By STEVEN M. WALDMANN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

For most of us the New Year offers a fresh start, a time of new beginnings, in ways big and small. I hope and trust that we all make the most of the opportunity presented to us by the turning of the calendar to a new year. History and experience tell us that by the time you are reading this newsletter most of us have already given up on or forgotten that "new beginning" we resolved to take. Whatever it was in us that saw the need and desire to seize that opportunity to start-afew has probably already been replaced by the activities and realities that face us each day.

For the hungry in this country the oppressive and unrelenting reality of insufficient food and nutrition make the mere opportunity for a new start something that can only be hoped for and never received. The injustice of this should give us all pause.

The weak economy is no longer news; it is a daily reality that

concerns us all. While many in our country focus on economic stimulus, the poor among us are simply focused on food and other very basic needs. Society of St. Andrew has also been focused on food. Food banks and feeding agencies across the nation have encountered historic lows in food inventories at a time when the need is greatest. While other organizations were cutting back due to economic uncertainties, SoSA was doing more. Since the economic news broke in September, SoSA has saved and distributed 90% more food

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than we did during the same period the previous year. We've continued that pace as the new year started because we know that there is such tremendous need and that there is no one else who saves and distributes highly nutritious fresh produce to the hungry on a national scale like we do and as efficiently as we do. Just 2 cents per serving!

You, obviously, are part of making that happen. SoSA has "pressed on" in these uncertain times because the need is so enormous and we know that those who support and partner with SoSA understand that need. For the poor among us, this is not the time to do less but to do far more! Through the Society of St. Andrew more is being done to ensure that highly nutritious food makes it to the tables of those who need it so much. ♦

From the Sheep Shed

By KEN HORNE, DIRECTOR EMERITUS



By now everyone is well aware that hard economic times are upon us. In times as hard as these two things happen to charities that serve the poor. Donations tend to go down as more and more people cut back on what they may feel are unnecessary expenditures.

At the same time demand for help for the poor goes up as more and more people find it impossible to provide those very necessities for themselves. All too often charities can't keep up with demand and the most vulnerable among us, those hardest hit by economic troubles, are forced to go hungry.

It doesn't have to be this way. We at Society of St. Andrew are able to ramp up our gleaning to meet the increased demand. There are plenty of vegetables going to waste that could be saved from the landfill and provided to the hungry. We have a national network of volunteers and growers in place who can provide the food and see that it gets delivered to the food banks, soup kitchens and other feeding agencies that so desperately need it.

We can do all this because we are the largest and oldest produce gleaning operation in the country. We've been doing this for thirty years and we've learned over those years to save food in the most efficient, cost effective way possible. In fact, over ninety cents of every dollar donated goes directly toward the salvage, packaging and transportation of good, nutritious produce for the poor. I continue to be amazed at how much work gets done around here with so few staff people and so little in the way of overhead.

So, the good news in all this economic misery is that we are doing something about the need, and we can do much more with additional support. So if you are a donor, or would like to become one, please be as generous as you can this winter. As you look, as we all do, at what spending you can cut back on as not essential, please remember those people who don't have to make that choice. They can't afford the bare essentials. We can help them, if you will help us, and together we will get through this. ♦

SoSA Statistics at a Glance January-December 2008

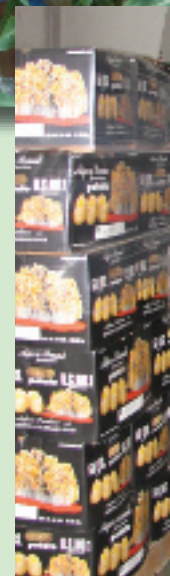
Fresh food salvaged and donated to feed the hungry:		
➤ Potato Project	11,452,133 lbs.	up 8%
➤ Gleaned Produce	12,053,925 lbs.	up 25%
➤ Events	3,215	up 19%
➤ Volunteers	31,585	up 13%
➤ Total Pounds	23,506,058	up 16%
➤ Total Servings	70,518,174	up 16%

SoSA responds to the cry of the recession!

Agencies across the country are making cutbacks while responding to record high requests from their clients. SoSA answered this need by providing over 3 million more pounds of nourishing food to agencies nationwide in 2008. ♦ The Salem High School Culinary Arts department in Roanoke, Virginia gleaned over 2,800 pounds of apples this fall. These very fortunate young students were blessed to follow these apples from the trees, into the pies they learned how to bake, to the appreciative mouths of the local Rescue Mission's clients. They also learned how to make delicious old-fashioned apple butter and gave it away to local food pantries. This project was a great way to get the students involved and connected on many levels that benefited them as well as those they served. ♦

An early frost in North and South Carolina made for some tricky gleaning of sweet potatoes and collard greens. Gleaning of apples in the mountains of North Carolina had to be postponed due to snow! Amazingly, during the same period the previous year, gleanings were canceled due to drought. Despite constantly changing weather challenges the Carolinas increased their gleaning by 31% over 2007! ♦

The Alabama Gleaning Network was gleaning cabbage in sub-freezing temperatures until three days before Christmas and providing a brighter Christmas to many in the Wedowee, Alabama area. ♦ For two years, Steve Congdon has worked tirelessly to coordinate older adult volunteers from The Villages near Ocala, Florida to glean for the hungry. His enthusiasm is contagious! Steve spent the holiday weeks during Thanksgiving and Christmas not shopping and eating like most people, but coordinating gleanings with his faithful volunteers. Not only does this group glean for the hungry, but they take this wonderful food directly to the local food pantries and soup kitchens in their own community. These agencies have become dependant on Steve and his gleaners to keep them well stocked with fresh fruits and vegetables. ♦ Weather problems in Georgia created interesting obstacles during the gleaning season but did not slow down the Georgia Gleaning Network, which salvaged almost 2 millions pounds in 2008 — its first full year of operation! ♦ Helping to alleviate the need that so many more families were experiencing in 2008, the Mississippi Gleaning Network salvaged about a million pounds of food. What a blessing to all those families that found themselves facing new, challenging situations. ♦ The Society of St. Andrew's Western Headquarters (SoSA West), which only opened its doors in May 2008, distributed over 300,000 pounds to 4 states that normally might not have seen as much fresh produce from SoSA: Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, and New Mexico. SoSA West salvaged peaches, tomatoes, apples, lettuce, turnips, and peppers in Missouri and Kansas and worked



with growers and packers to move potatoes and onions out of Colorado. These states have been in desperate need of a salvage organization such as ours and now they have a strong partnership with SoSA. ♦ Our volunteer gleaning coordinator in New York, John Conklin, helped to salvage some gourmet treats for agencies across the state. Blueberries, butternut squash, and acorn squash, as well as carrots, apples, and potatoes were among the selection of beautifully nutritious produce gleaned and distributed throughout New York. ♦ Hunger Relief Advocate (HRA) George "Tater" Jensen in Ohio, working with the Maumee Watershed District United Methodist Men, established an email system that helped keep volunteers informed and active. The email updates kept volunteers inspired and up-to-date on all food salvage opportunities. SoSA would like to thank them for their well organized efforts that made the coordinating aspect of gleaning more streamlined and efficient.

SoSA moves forward - primed to do even more in 2009!

Gateway Trinity Lutheran Church in Fort Myers, Florida, which has developed a strong partnership with SoSA, is unveiling an exciting and innovative new ministry to help feed the poor. In the month of February, the church is housing a farmers' market in its parking lot. This project will provide a venue for participating farmers to sell their produce directly to consumers, and the only fee they will pay is a tithe of their harvest, which will be distributed to local food banks. ♦ Rev. Ashley N. McCoy-Bruce joins us as a Gleaning Coordinator in Greenville, South

Carolina. We look forward to working with her and saving even more food in the Greenville area. ♦ Sandy McBurnett began as the Montgomery Alabama Area Coordinator in November. She is working hard to add new gleaning volunteers, recipient agencies, and new food providers. ♦ As the Georgia Gleaning Network continues to grow we are always in need of gleaners, pick up trucks with drivers, and donations for large load transportation. Please contact Janet Sheldon if you are interested in helping in Georgia: 229-386-5800 or gleanga@endhunger.org. ♦ The Mississippi Gleaning Network is looking forward to extending

its work into Arkansas and Tennessee in 2009. ♦ The Virginia Gleaning Network is making plans to expand peach gleaning in 2009 as well as adding more farmers to the network of those who care about feeding the hungry. ♦

Bottom l. to r.: A pre-Christmas cabbage gleaning in AL. Having fun and feeding the hungry with corn in FL. Harvesters - The Community Food Network, in Kansas City was stocked with white potatoes just in time for Christmas. **Top l. to r.:** With snow of the ground and a chill in the air, youth from Epworth UMC in OH bagged 4,800 pounds of potatoes in 3 hours. A tiny tot tackles a tall task in a corn field in FL.

Make a resolution to: Do Something about Hunger!

By SARAH LUSK, HARVEST OF HOPE DIRECTOR

Harvest of Hope had another successful season in 2008, and I'm greatly anticipating the 2009 season! In 2008, 473 Harvesters salvaged 140,300 pounds of fresh produce during 11 events. Thank you all for your hard work and desire to learn about the hunger problem in this country and around the world. There are lots of great opportunities to get involved and answer God's call to feed the hungry. Join with us at one of the 14 *Harvest of Hope* events this year, and let's do something about hunger together! A full listing of events and locations is available on our website. http://www.endhunger.org/hoh_schedule.htm

Alternative Spring Break!

Calling all college students! Put down the books March 8-14 and come glean with us in sunny Jacksonville, FL. We'll spend the week gleaning and going more in-depth with the issue of hunger, as well as brainstorming how students can impact their own communities. Also, how does a day at the beach sound? Check out the *Harvest of Hope* webpage for more info: http://www.endhunger.org/hoh_spring_break.htm

Phase II!

Been to a *Harvest of Hope* event and want to see a different side of the hunger issue? Phase II is just what you're looking for! Come join us for a week this June in Washington, D.C. to engage national and international relief organizations, probe political legislation affecting hunger and poverty, and reach out in service to the poor. Applicants should be ages 15 or older who have attended at least one previous HOH event. Contact Sarah Lusk for more information at sosahoh@endhunger.org ♦

Summer Internship

Résumé submissions for *Harvest of Hope's* 2009 Summer Intern will be accepted now through April 1st. Applicants should be college-aged or young adults, hardworking, and dedicated to fighting hunger. *Harvest of Hope* experience is preferred but not required. The internship is 10 weeks during the summer and involves traveling to HOH events as well as some in-office work. Interns receive a stipend and are also housed by a host family near Big Island, VA for the duration of the job. For more information, email Sarah at sosahoh@endhunger.org. ♦

Rise to the Challenge

THE FEINSTEIN CHALLENGE 2009

Each year the Feinstein Foundation divides \$1 million among participating hunger fighting charities nationwide, using it to help them raise funds during March and April. Last year SoSA got \$24,212.

The more money donated and pledged to SoSA from March 1 thru April 30, the larger a share of the \$1 million we will receive. The million will be divided proportionately among all participating agencies, exponentially increasing each donor's gift! So now is the time to be as generous as possible to help stop food waste and feed the hungry! **You can pledge now and pay later in the year, but please pledge before April 30. Use the coupon on the back page.** Thank you!

Please Help!

Giving in Troubled Times

By KEN BRADFORD, DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

There is no escaping the fact that our economy is in the midst of the worst downturn in decades. Every day we hear about failing banks, workers losing their jobs, and homeowners losing their homes. People are worried about their shrinking retirement plans. Many are wondering how to make ends meet. And it is no wonder that in troubled economic times, the demand increases on ministries like ours that provide for the basic needs of people.

We rely heavily on the generosity of individual donors and churches for the resources necessary for us to glean America's fields to feed America's hungry. That makes the news from a recently published book on Christian giving somewhat disturbing. *Passing the Plate*, by sociologists of religion Michael Emerson, Christian Smith, and Patricia Snell, shows that very few American Christians actually are generous givers to religious and charitable causes. Perhaps the most surprising finding in the book is that the median annual philanthropic giving for an American Christian is only \$200. And a startling 25% of self-identified Christians give nothing at all.

As it turns out, about 5% of American Christians provide 60% of the money churches and faith-based ministries use to operate. The lack of generosity by the balance of American Christians is even more astounding when contrasted with their incredible wealth. *Passing the Plate* reports that those who say their Christian faith is very important to them and those who attend church at least twice a month earn more than \$2.5 trillion dollars every year. If these Christians gave away 10 % of their after-tax earnings, they would add another \$46 billion to ministry around the world.

The hard truth is that, as our economy travels down the long road of recovery, our hungry neighbors are going to need much more assistance than ever before. The good news is that our donors have always responded to God's call on their lives by giving generously to our ministry even in times of economic crisis. We are grateful for their continued support as we seek to fulfill God's command to feed the hungry in His name. ♦

Donations to SoSA made in recent months to: HONOR -

Joseph Andrews ... Hildegard Bloodgood ... Paul Bowen ... Mr. & Mrs. Thomas L. Bryant ... Rev. A. J. Eure, Jr. ... Whitney Drew Gray ... Johnnie Hargrove ... Arnold McPeters ... Meredith Pinchak ... Dr. Jane Carswell Roberts ... Jim & Judy Tongue ... Sarah Whitten & Jordan ... Steve & Kylie Williams

IN MEMORY OF - Mary T. Bryant ... Dr. Fred Clark ... Neil W. Cox ... Bud Curtis ... Richard L. Eubank ... Annie Faura ... Randolph Few ... Catherine Smart Greer ... Bill Hampton ... Lynda Hewitt ... Olive Karch ... Helen L. Kirchner ... Delvern Korth ... Marge Lopata ... Mr. Myrtle Morris ... Paul Richardson ... Ryan Shoaf ... Gary Franklin Walls ... Gail Wood ♦

New Florida Program Coordinator

Rebecca (Becky) Brown began her duties as Florida Program Coordinator on January 5, 2009. Becky received her Bachelor of Arts in English Literature from the University of Central Florida and her graduate degree in Business Administration from Rollin College. Becky brings to Society of St. Andrew her skills in marketing, leadership and writing, her passion for mission and love for people. She has over ten years of professional and volunteer experience in non-profit work. She has Volunteered with the American Red Cross, Florida Hospital, Hubbard House, Habitat for Humanity, United Way, Hospice, and COTN's ministry in Malawi, Africa. For fun she enjoys a game of "fish tag"— we'll let you ask her what that is! Becky is eager to share her passion for the hungry and her vast knowledge and experience through her new work with Society of St. Andrew. ♦



Becky Brown

Bananas provide needed nourishment

By MARIAN KELLY, POTATO PROJECT DIRECTOR

The fourth quarter of 2008 was an interesting three months in that we not only shipped loads of white and sweet potatoes, but we were given six loads of bananas. What a wonderful treat for our feeding agencies! In years past the old adage, "an apple a day keeps the doctor away," has almost turned into "a banana a day keeps the doctor away." Many folks, especially our seniors, are on medications that deplete their potassium levels and they are encouraged to eat bananas on a regular basis. These donated bananas had at least a week of life left in them, so there was plenty of fruit to be distributed. No, we are not going to become the "Banana Project," but will continue to operate as the "Produce Project," fondly known as the "Potato Project."

During this last quarter of the year we salvaged and distributed over 2.5 million pounds of fresh nutritious produce to agencies across the country.

A prime example of one of our successful potato drops was a drop made in Richland, Iowa in November. I worked with Bill Anderson from Prairie View UMC to organize the event. 43 organizations, churches, and food banks were invited to participate in the event. Some of the volunteers were young people from a confirmation class who used the experience as their service project. Mr. Anderson recently wrote in an email about the event: "We had never seen such joy and compassion and caring as we witnessed on November 8."

During 2008, 21 food & produce donors from 15 different states helped us serve 104 agencies in 32 states. Over 11 million pounds of excess food was donated to the Society of St. Andrew and was re-routed to agencies all across the country. Once again, it is proven that when all of us work together, a difference is made. ♦

SoSA marks 30 years of hunger ministry

By CAROL A. BREITINGER, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR



This year the Society of St. Andrew marks the 30th anniversary of its founding. There have been many milestones and successes along the way. However, over the years, whenever co-founder Ken Horne was asked what SoSA's goals were, he would immediately reply, "to work

ourselves right out of a job – and that will happen when there is no more hunger in America."

We may not be out of a job yet, but there is no doubt that during these 30 years SoSA has dramatically raised the national level of awareness of domestic hunger. SoSA has been recognized by Congress, the United States Department of Agriculture, state legislatures, other national hunger organizations, and many church denominations for its contribution to fighting hunger in America.

Indeed, before SoSA came on the scene and began gleaning and shipping large quantities of excess fresh produce to critical feeding agencies around the nation, this type of hunger-relief work was simply not being done. Perfectly good food was going to waste to the tune of 96 billion pounds a year. SoSA demonstrated that fresh food salvage could be done efficiently and economically, and our example has spawned many "copy cat" programs over the years. These, taken as a whole and combined with our present efforts, now deliver over a quarter of a billion pounds of produce each year to agencies that feed the poor! Yet there is so much more that still needs to be done. Join SoSA in continuing the fight against hunger until we work ourselves out of a job!

A few highlights and milestones from the past 30 years:

- Start of SoSA's *Potato Project* in 1983 – the beginning of bulk fresh food salvage in the United States.
- 1.7 billion servings of nutritious food have been provided to the nation's hungry.
- United States Department of Agriculture presented SoSA with its Hero of Food Recovery & Gleaning Award at its first National Summit on Food Recovery & Gleaning in 1997.
- The United Methodist Church adopted a resolution during its 2008 General Conference commending the "Society of St. Andrew as a partner organization with the United Methodist Church in the alleviation of hunger in the United States".
- SoSA opened regional offices in North Carolina, Florida, Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, and its Western Headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri.

Watch for more SoSA successes and milestones in future newsletters. ♦

Christ's Marvelous Hands Devotions for Lent

By REV. JENNIFER VESTAL MOORE, DIRECTOR OF CHURCH RELATIONS

In keeping with the traditions of Lent, the Society of St. Andrew invites your congregation to participate in a program of spiritual reflection, prayer and giving. Our Lenten devotion program challenges readers to take seriously the scriptural injunctions

to care for the poor, while it also provides an opportunity to feed our hungry neighbors. This year's theme is "Christ's Marvelous Hands." Each day during Lent, you will be introduced to a unique way to see Jesus through His divine, yet human hands. As you read each day's devotion, you will have an opportunity to reflect and pray about how you might use your hands to be more Christ-like to others.

To obtain a free sample church packet or personal packet of our devotion and giving program and the Good Friday Fast, call 1-800-333-4597, or email Rev. Jennifer Vestal Moore at church@endhunger.org. An order form is also available on our website: <http://www.endhunger.org/lent.htm>.

We hope your congregation will participate and make hunger a priority during Lent. Through your involvement in the Society of St. Andrew's ministry, you and your church can provide nourishing food to those most in need – especially during these challenging economic times. ♦



TREK — Mission Adventure VBS Mission Project

Join us as we make the TREK [Travel, Rejoice & Explore God's Kingdom] across God's beautiful world during the Society of St. Andrew's 2009 mission program.

TREK – Mission Adventure is designed to supplement your VBS program and help your students learn about hunger in America and how Jesus wants us to help. Student sheets, containing a short scripture story, facts about hunger and our ministry, potato trivia, and a pencil activity, are included for each day. Tips for keeping God's word beautiful are also part of this year's program.

To order a free copy of the TREK—Mission Adventure VBS program email Rev. Jennifer Vestal Moore at church@endhunger.org. An order form is also available at http://www.endhunger.org/order_material.htm. ♦



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Society of St. Andrew REPORT

Christ's Marvelous Hands Lenten Devotions



This Lent, take seriously Jesus' call to care for the poor and use **Christ's Marvelous Hands** as your guide. To obtain a free sample church packet or personal packet of our Lenten devotion and giving program and the Good Friday Fast, call 1-800-333-4597, email church@endhunger.org, or go online to <http://www.endhunger.org/lent.htm>. All materials are free.

Please send me a FREE Lent starter kit today!

Contact Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Daytime Phone (____) _____
Email _____
Church Name _____
Mail to: **SOCIETY OF ST. ANDREW**

3383 SWEET HOLLOW RD, BIG ISLAND, VA 24526

(NL 02/09)

***During economic uncertainties
one thing is certain—SoSA can feed
millions with your generous help!***

**Donations received between March 1st - April 30th
are counted toward the Feinstein Challenge!**

☐ \$500 ☐ \$365 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ Other \$ _____

(Make check payable to Society of St. Andrew)

☐ **This is my pledge for payment later in 2009.**

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