



Society of St. Andrew REPORT



VOLUME 25

NUMBER 2

SPRING 2009

GLEANING AMERICA'S FIELDS ~ FEEDING AMERICA'S HUNGRY

Increasing Food Salvage – meeting demand

By STEVEN M. WALDMANN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

With the economy down in the dumps and the need for food by our nation's poor up sharply, how can we at SoSA remain positive? The reason is you and the network you are part of, which saves highly nutritious food and gets it to the tables of our nation's hungry.

When you turn the page and see the results of our first quarter's activities think about all that came together to make that happen. Those are the results of an amazing network of farmers, volunteers, feeding agencies and supporters that decided to do more, even when others were doing less – especially when others were doing less.

The SoSA network has grown in the first few months of this year. Dozens of farmers new to gleaning have offered up their crops to help feed even more people. Dozens of feeding agencies and programs are receiving nutritious fresh produce

for the first time because of this network. Twice as many volunteers have given their time and efforts to see that our growing number of hungry citizens have access to the fresh fruits and vegetables they so desperately need.

Even though the economy is affecting financial donations (and more is needed) it is obvious our supporters are

doing what they can – and some are doing even more because they know the need is so great.

SoSA's excellent stewardship ranking has gotten even better. The results of our just completed 2008 independent audit show that SoSA's already low overhead went down to just 7.4% overall. That is a remarkable achievement by a remarkable organization that believes in and practices good stewardship.

These days most of us can't afford all that we once could. But the hungry among us certainly can't afford for SoSA to do less. That is why SoSA has saved and distributed 72% more fresh produce this first quarter than during the same period last year. The need for highly nutritious food among our nation's poor is both real and great - and SoSA is one of the few sources they have to get it. Your role in the SoSA network is what makes that possible and the hungry are counting on us.

At SoSA we confront the realities of these tough times with a renewed focus on what this ministry does best; because those who are hungry in this country can't afford for us to do less. ♦

From the Sheep Shed

By KEN HORNE, DIRECTOR EMERITUS



I recently realized something that I think might be helpful in these oft mentioned “challenging economic times”. I wandered out onto my back porch clutching a cup of coffee and my morning paper full of woeful economic news and sat down to ingest my daily ration of discouragement and despair. Looking up after a page or two I realized that it's springtime in Virginia. My wife's flowers are up, the grass needs cutting, and any number of birds are looking for mates and/or places to build a nest.

Apparently they haven't heard about the recession. Some things just go on, regardless of the economy. In fact, most of the really important things just go on regardless of the economy. Society of St. Andrew is like that. When the economy tanks, our donations go down, and the need for the food we salvage from the landfill and deliver to the poor goes up. We could, I suppose, conserve our resources by limiting our food distributions. But that is not an option.

The work we do is really important, so it goes on regardless of the economy. Our management has found ways to keep our fiscal ship afloat without laying off any of our valuable staff people. This is very important because our staff is the best in the business and, once you have built an excellent team like ours, keeping it together is crucial to long-term success. In addition to this, our management has actually expanded our food deliveries in the first quarter some 72% above the same time period last year! This is also crucial because the need for our food has increased markedly with the economic downturn.

So, I guess we are kind of like springtime. Sure, we'll make adjustments in accordance with the economy. But the really important things, keeping good food from being wasted, getting that food to people who really need it, and doing it all as economically and efficiently as it can be done, will go on. Thanks so much to all of you, our partners in serving the hungry of America, for your help in making this happen. Better days are ahead. Together we will see a day when hunger is just a bad memory in our country. ♦

SoSA Statistics at a Glance January-March 2009

Fresh food salvaged and donated to feed the hungry:

➤ Potato Project	2,595,344 lbs.	up 73%
➤ Gleaned Produce	2,171,990 lbs.	up 71%
➤ Events	435	up 13%
➤ Volunteers	5,273	up 115%
➤ Total Pounds	4,767,334	up 72%
➤ Total Servings	14,302,002	up 72%

The Lord has sent the sunshine and the rain!

And the fields have come alive! Halleluia! ♦ In the Tidewater area of Virginia, we have gleaned over 22,000 pounds of collard greens, kale, and Hanover salad greens. Virginia has also moved a diversity of large loads of produce – from bananas to sweet bread, and even chocolate just in time for Easter. ♦ North Carolina has experienced a roller coaster ride with the weather so far this year. From warm weather one week to snow the next, finding produce to glean or a time to get into the farmers' fields has been a challenge. Despite these challenges, we had 140 gleaning events in the first quarter resulting in 815,286 pounds of 35 different types of fruits and vegetables! When has SoSA ever let anything stand in the way of providing fresh, nutritious produce to our brother and sisters who are hungry? ♦ Florida has been busy, busy, busy! From hosting college students on their spring breaks to salvaging over a half million pounds of produce, the Florida Gleaning Network has been BUSY! In March, Jacksonville was host to SoSA's first *Harvest of Hope* Alternative Spring Break. Sandy Newman, North Florida Gleaning Coordinator, tenaciously found produce for the students to glean every day. Even when one event fell

through at the last minute, that was no problem for Sandy; she just followed a truck full of cabbage, met the farmer, and set up a glean for the next morning. That's the SoSA spirit! "It's been great witnessing the compassion and dedication of the students we've met recently," said Newman. "I thank God for them and all of the committed volunteers in North Florida who support SoSA's Gleaning Network." ♦ Central Florida has been given the great gift of a dozen NEW orange groves to glean this year! Fortunately they came during March when we had hundreds of college students on spring break and looking for something worthwhile to do! College students from Virginia, North Carolina, Alabama, and Florida joined SoSA in gleaned thousands of pounds of sweet tangelos! ♦ Although citrus is grown abundantly in Florida, believe it or not, there are many folks here who never have access to it. In March, we had our first "Orange Drop for the Hungry," co-sponsored by Christ Our Redeemer Lutheran Church and Thrivent Financial Group in Tampa. 25,000 pounds of tangelos gleaned from groves in Clermont and Winter Garden were trucked to Tampa and "dropped" onto a parking lot where 250 people were waiting to bag and send them to 14 food banks in surrounding areas. ♦ The famous Plant City Strawberry (FL) season began to wrap up in late March but the fields were still loaded with this sweet treat. SoSA Florida director Barbara Sayles was among the volunteers who had "never picked a strawberry before" and quite enjoyed the experience! She and husband Jerry brought 26 flats back to Central Florida and distributed them to the clients at Greater Orlando Food Bank. Not surprisingly, they were very well received and one single mother shared with us that her children love strawberries but she cannot even afford them when they are on sale. She thanked us through tears streaming down her face, and as she turned away we learned that she was volunteering her time at the food bank that day. ♦ The



Bottom l. to r.:

Volunteers bag oranges at our first "citrus drop" in Tampa, FL. Children in FL show off the grapefruits they gleaned. **Top l. to r.:** "KidServe" participants bag potatoes in Montgomery, AL. Alternative Spring Break participants joyfully display gleaned cabbage.

Harvest of Hope – New Faces, New Events

By SARAH LUSK, HARVEST OF HOPE DIRECTOR

We are excited to welcome Scott Briggs on board this month as our new *Harvest of Hope* Director. Scott most recently served as Assistant Pastor at Peakland United Methodist Church in Lynchburg, VA. He joins SoSA with great experience working with the youth of the church. He and his wife, Beth, have four beautiful children. We know he will bring new energy and talent to *Harvest of Hope* events this year! Please join us in welcoming Scott. Though I am relocating to Salem, VA in May, I will continue to work with SoSA and HOH in a volunteer capacity for many years to come.

In March, we held our first *Harvest of Hope* Alternative Spring Break in Jacksonville, FL. It was a great success! Participants from several colleges and universities in Virginia joined with SoSA staff to salvage over 12,000 pounds of broccoli, cabbage, and citrus for various agencies throughout Jacksonville and St. John's County. Many of the participants were first time "Harvesters of Hope" and have covenanted to "keep the Harvest" and carry their experience back to their campuses. We look forward to hosting this event annually!

As always, HOH goes forward through the year impacting participants' sense of responsibility, care for God's creation, awareness of the plight of our hungry brothers and sisters, and devotion to serving others. Come join us to see how much you can learn and make a difference in just one weekend or week!

We have 13 *Harvest of Hope* events lined up for 2009. Summer events are already full, and we are excited to welcome so many new teams to HOH this summer! Fall events are filling up, too, so start planning now to attend. Contact the *Harvest of Hope* office for more information about fall events. ♦

Intergenerational Weekends

Gaston, SC August 7-9
Fincastle, VA Sept. 25-27
Dahlonega, GA Oct. 9-11
Palmyra, PA Oct. 16-18
Gaston, SC Nov. 13-15

College & Young Adult Weekend

Keezletown, VA Oct. 2-4



SoSA's first *Harvest of Hope* Alternative Spring Break participants show their appreciation to a farm where they gleaned cabbage.

Unitarian Universalist Church in Jacksonville, Florida asked the North Florida Gleaning Network to join the Green Sanctuary Committee as a project for the Ethical Eating justice component. To be considered a Green Sanctuary through the UU *Ministry for the Earth*, the church has to commit to environmental sustainability and meet certain requirements such as develop an Action Plan to reduce the church's environmental impact and set goals for the future. In addition to having a SoSA representative speak to the congregation during a Sunday service, they will also glean with us. What a way to show love for God's creation!

♦ The Mississippi Gleaning Network has formed a partnership with the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and their Earth Team volunteers. The NRCS will publicize our work in an effort to get farmers they work with to come forth and donate their produce. This partnership has already produced an Earth Day event held at Mathis Farms near Meridian, MS where Earth Team volunteers picked strawberries and gave them to area feeding agencies. The day after Earth Day, we had three potato drops in the Starkeville area at local elementary schools. Since a lot of the children are from impoverished areas, many of the ones bagging potatoes were also able to take some home.

♦ SoSA-West had a very busy first quarter, salvaging 155,742 pounds of fresh potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers and more, which were delivered to 46 food banks and feeding agencies. We invested a lot of time in reaching out to farmers and growers across the West, with the goal of establishing partnerships prior to the 2009 harvest season. We are excited to announce a new gleaning project to begin this year in Manhattan, KS, with Britt Farms and Flores Farms. Scott Arnold has volunteered to organize this gleaning effort with former SoSA Board Member Paul Fleener. Scott voiced his commitment to our food salvage mission and his personal conviction regarding our charge to feed the hungry. ♦ Thanks to David McCleary, Indiana Hunger Relief Advocate, two Indiana minor league baseball teams, the Fort Wayne Tin Caps and South Bend Silver Hawks, are joining SoSA in sponsoring a "Feeding the Hungry" weekend at their respective ball parks. For three games, their fans are encouraged to bring canned veggies, fruits, soups, etc. and deposit in containers at each entry gate. The Feeding America food bank network (formally America's Second Harvest) will receive all the food and distribute it in their area food agencies to help feed hungry individuals during these difficult economic times. ♦ The Alabama Gleaning Network was fortunate to have children from Frazer United Methodist Church in Montgomery engage in a great day of service in March. "KidServe" participants bagged 40,000 lbs. of potatoes for delivery to agencies and low-income individuals throughout Montgomery. Bright and early, the Men's Ministry arrived to unload the truck and prepare for the children. At 9 a.m., a caravan of cars with more than 100 children and their parents arrived to bag and deliver the food. Within four hours all the potatoes were bagged and on their way to tables throughout the city. ♦

A "Hand Up" with Seed Potatoes!

By MARIAN KELLY, POTATO & PRODUCE PROJECT DIRECTOR

On the east coast, most of us have been joyfully watching daffodils blooming, tulips popping out of the ground, and fruit trees sporting fluffy blooms. Those of you farther west are waiting in anticipation to see the magnificent signs of spring coming forth from a cold and seemingly dead ground.

Along with these first signs of spring, folks will soon be seeing their potato plants burst forth from the soil, where weeks ago old, shriveled spuds with sprouts were buried. With careful tending, these seedlings will grow into beautiful, sturdy plants that will bloom, nourish their root fruit, then die down in late summer. Then, back to the earth we will go to dig out the new potatoes that grew from old potatoes.

Each year the Society of St. Andrew buys tractor trailer loads of seed potatoes and distributes them to agencies that hand out 50-lb. bags to their clients to plant in their own gardens. Nine tractor trailer loads of seed potatoes were distributed in 6 states this year. That is approximately 400,000 lbs. of seed that have been or soon will be planted. When harvest time comes these potatoes will feed families that grew the food for themselves as well as to share with friends and family. During the winter these potatoes will help feed these folks when other fresh produce is at a minimum in many homes. There is more than one way to feed the hungry! ♦

Two Opportunities to help us celebrate 30 years!

Do you know a family that embodies the SoSA lifestyle?

SoSA is looking for families or individuals who are living a simplified, responsible lifestyle while living out their faith by providing in some way for our sisters and brothers who are in need. We will recognize qualifying nominees in SoSA's print and electronic newsletters. To nominate someone you know please provide your contact information as well as contact info for your nominee(s) and a brief description of why they embody the SoSA lifestyle. Email your submissions by July 10, 2009 to megan@endhunger.org or mail to our address on the back of this newsletter.

Looking for Artists – ages 6-12

Do you know an artistically talented child? Have them design an illustration on an 8½" X 11" sheet of paper, in either color or black and white, that represents one of the following themes: fresh produce, food waste, gleanings, feeding the hungry, or a related biblical verse. SoSA will use winning designs on its thank you cards to our major donors. We will also spotlight a different artist each month in our electronic newsletter. Mail original artwork to our address on the back of this newsletter. Send your submissions by July 10, 2009. Artwork will not be returned.

What's in a Widget?

A Quick and Easy Way to Feed 500

A widget is an interactive box that can be added to any webpage, blog, or social networking site that tracks information. SoSA currently has a widget on our website, www.endhunger.org, that offers an opportunity for donations given through the widget to be matched up to \$150,000 by a (VERY) generous offer from an anonymous donor. You can even see our progress at anytime as the widget is always up to the second. Check it out ... make a donation ... tell your friends! Here are some other ways to find SoSA on the web...

Sign up for SoSA's "Gleanings"

www.endhunger.org/newsletter_subscribe

Get this monthly electronic newsletter with SoSA updates delivered right to your email inbox

SoSA's YouTube Page

www.youtube.com/societyofstandrew

View SoSA's video and help spread the word of our ministry by sharing it with others

SoSA's Facebook Cause Page

apps.facebook.com/causes/view_cause/44602

Join the cause of fighting hunger at SoSA's Facebook "cause" page

SoSA's MySpace Page

www.myspace.com/societyofstandrew

SoSA interactive MySpace website. You can become our friend and keep up-to-date with our ministry



Milestones from the past 30 years:



♦ The Gleaning Network started in 1988, connecting the generosity of thousands of farmers, the dedicated work of hundreds of thousands of volunteers, and the needs of thousands of critical feeding agencies. With the help of over 400,000 volunteers, to date SoSA has saved more than 572 million

pounds of fresh produce from farm fields and orchards, providing 1.715 billion servings of nutritious food to America's poor and hungry families.

♦ The Seed Potato Project, SoSA's self-help program, began delivering seed potatoes to impoverished communities in Appalachia and Native American Reservations in 1987. SoSA has purchased and donated 9.8 million pounds of seed potatoes to the poor who have the wherewithal to plant, cultivate, and harvest a small crop for themselves, their families and neighbors in need. This seed has produced about 78 million pounds of potatoes, which provided 234.8 million servings of nutritious food.

♦ The Society of St. Andrew is a founding member of the Alliance to End Hunger and the National Anti-Hunger Organization (NAHO), working to end hunger with such high-profile organizations as Bread for the World, Feeding America (formerly America's Second Harvest-the Nation's Food Bank Network), Feed the Children, MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, Presbyterian Hunger Program, World Vision, Catholic Relief Services, Heifer International, Share Our Strength, the Congressional Hunger Center, and dozens more. One of the efforts of these groups is the annual National Hunger Awareness Day.

♦ At the 2005 two-day National Hunger Awareness Day events held in Washington, D.C., the Society of St. Andrew was recognized during the "celebration" service at the National Cathedral and SoSA conducted a 40,000-pound Potato Drop in front of the Nation's Capital.

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



Truck driver Dale Sherrin noticed our billboard while making a haul through NC. It reminded him that his United Methodist Men's group supports SoSA. He gave us a call and found out one of our donors had donated the advertising space, so he asked his men's group to do the same. The above billboard posted in SC is a result of one man looking up and heeding God's call!

Hunger Action Month: Get Involved with SoSA!

BY REV. JENNIFER VESTAL MOORE, DIRECTOR OF CHURCH RELATIONS

Plan now to observe National Hunger Action Month during the month of September. National Hunger Action month recognizes the 37 million Americans living on the brink of hunger. Here are some things you can do to observe the day:

♦ Fast and pray each Wednesday at lunchtime (or any day of your choosing) during the month of September to remember those who don't have enough to eat. The money you save from not eating can be donated to the Society of St. Andrew so that we can feed those who don't always get to eat lunch.

♦ Design a worship service focused on hunger and the Biblical imperatives to do something about it. The Society of St. Andrew has resources to help.

♦ Volunteer with a hunger-relief agency. The Society of St. Andrew coordinates gleaning events in many locations. Call our office (800-333-4597) or check our website: www.endhunger.org for gleaning offices near you.

♦ Give an offering for the Society of St. Andrew hunger-relief ministry, out of thankfulness for your blessings and concern for America's hungry.

♦ Educate your congregation about hunger. The Society of St. Andrew offers a 12-week adult Bible study entitled, *The Fast that I Choose*.

The Society of St. Andrew is a *National Hunger Action Month* supporting organization. For more information, go to www.endhunger.org, call us at 800-333-4597, or email The Rev. Jennifer Vestal Moore at church@endhunger.org. Jesus said, *"You give them something to eat!" Matthew 14:16.*

You can make a difference to those who are hungry. ♦

Donations to SoSA made in recent months to:

HONOR - Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Camp, Jr. ... Bill & Mary Carsen ... Bob & Judy Erps ... Bob & Diane Finley ... Mr. & Mrs. Mark Gallien ... Jessica Gonia ... Jordan Elizabeth Gray ... Mrs. Violet G. Gray ... Steven L. Gray, Jr. ... Rev. Celeste Heath ... Marilyn Marks ... Mary Louise McKee ... Matthew Miller ... Benjamin Murphy ... Nelle P. Neczyporl ... President Obama ... Rev. & Mrs. Ted Ochs ... Mrs. Connie Richards ... George Richards IV ... Mr. & Mrs. Pat Roeder ... Bob & Mary Ann Schou ... Gail Stevens Shourds ... Paul Starliper ... Billy Ray Tew ... Ms. Sandy Tilley ... Shannon Unterberg ... Heather Whitson ... Mr. & Mrs. Layden Wood

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TREK-Mission Adventure is designed to supplement your church's VBS program. It can be easily adapted to any VBS theme. To obtain a VBS kit, call 800-333-4597, email church@endhunger.org, or go online to <http://www.endhunger.org/vbs.htm>. All materials are free.

Please send me a FREE VBS kit today!

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Mail to: **SOCIETY OF ST. ANDREW**
3383 SWEET HOLLOW RD, BIG ISLAND, VA 24526

(NL 05/09)

SoSA is doing more than ever to meet the growing need. Please help us today with your generous financial donation and your prayers.

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