Sometimes, farmers call in January to invite SoSA volunteers out to glean in July. Other times, they call at 4 p.m. on a Thursday, offering to share an abundance of perfectly good food the same day. Either way, one of the unwritten codes at The Society of St. Andrew (SoSA) is never to miss a farmer’s call!

Just as important as a farmer’s call is the call that happens right after it: the call to volunteers to come out to glean at that farm.

In fact, people who volunteer with SoSA are so passionate they’re known to do something unconventional—they’re known to answer every phone call they receive. These days, that seems crazy! Typically, if you see a call...
2019 Year End Totals
Fresh food saved and
donated to feed hungry people

Produce Gleaned......................... 19,062,845 lbs
Servings of Fresh Food Provided........ 57,188,535
Events ........................................................... 6,039
Volunteers .................................................. 25,544
Farms/Providers .............................................. 905
Distributing Agencies ......................... 2,131

Total Historical Pounds 870 Million
Total Historical Servings 2.6 Billion

Executive Director’s Report
By Lynette Johnson

Finding Joy Outside Your Comfort Zone
Last year, the Society of St. Andrew hosted more than 6,000 food recovery events — on average about 16 events every single day of the year! Those events included field gleaning and farmers market or farmstand gleaning and pickups from packing houses of bins or boxes of culled and graded-out vegetables or fruit. It also included crop drops where tens of thousands of pounds of vegetables were bagged and readied for local distribution; and food show recovery where first-quality produce brought for display was gathered up and shared with hungry families nearby.

It takes something special to be a Society of St. Andrew volunteer. It’s not like any other volunteer opportunity. Field gleanings often happen on very short notice. The farmer may call just one or two days before they are ready for gleaners to pick the field clean! Gleaners are people who respond quickly when the phone rings or the email arrives. Fields may be 30 or 40 minutes from town, so gleaners are willing to spend some time and gas heading out to the country... where dirt and heat and flies await them while they spend a few hours picking, digging, or gathering the good food remaining in the field. It’s not unusual for a person in need to glean next to a bank executive, or for extended families to glean together.

It takes something special to be a Society of St. Andrew volunteer. It’s not like any other volunteer opportunity.

Most first-time SoSA volunteers have never been in a field before. But when they finish gleaning, big grins stretch across their faces. They’ve had fun! They’ve made a game to see who could glean a row the fastest, or who found the biggest zucchini. When you ask how their morning went, they take the dirt and heat in stride, and answer in amazement about how much food they found, still in the

Abundance Orchard for VBS!
Year 1: Old Testament
Year 2: New Testament

Learn more and order your VBS program at:
EndHunger.org/vbs

Start planning now for your church’s summer Vacation Bible School.

Both programs are a complete hunger action-themed VBS, a 2-3 hour program for up to 5 days.

Continued – See Finding Joy Outside of Your Comfort Zone on page 2
A Tale of Two Truckloads

Toward the end of 2019, the Society of St. Andrew received two calls in a single day about truckloads of food needing to be rescued. One call was about a load of potatoes, the other bananas. Sadly, SoSA was able to rescue only one of the loads.

Wasted food is already heartbreaking when we know so many of our neighbors are hungry. It’s even more difficult to accept when it’s due to a solvable problem. A grocery store rejected a load of potatoes due to a simple computer error. Computer logs had failed to communicate with each other, and the grocery store just didn’t need that truckload of potatoes.

This simple error destined 4,000 bags of potatoes for a landfill until SoSA volunteers jumped in and organized an impromptu “crop drop” to sort and distribute them. As it happened, SoSA’s volunteer records showed a lot of volunteers nearby, ready to serve. Once alerted, these volunteers spread the word to feeding agencies, like soup kitchens and shelters. Arranging the logistics so quickly was challenging, but these volunteers were determined not to miss this opportunity. In a single day, all of the potatoes were unloaded and shared with 20 agencies across a 100-mile span of North Alabama. These agencies were able to share fresh food with hundreds in their communities, due to the efforts of dedicated SoSA volunteers who pitched in and worked ‘til the job was done.

Unfortunately, in another state that same day, the load of bananas met a different fate. We couldn’t rescue them before they were discarded. A few more volunteers nearby could have changed the outcome and shared this nutritious fruit with thousands of families. We can’t expect to rescue every load of food, in every location. But these bananas were a solvable problem. YOU could have been part of the solution if you lived nearby!

A Tale of Two Truckloads

Continued – See A Tale of Two Truckloads on page 2
A Tale of Two Truckloads – continued from page 1

Sign up today to be an on-call volunteer with SoSA. Help rescue and share good food with your community the next time.

Each box of these wasted bananas weighs 40lbs and contains an average of 100 individual bananas inside.

When you sign up to volunteer at endhunger.org/register your name is added to a list of people interested in rescuing food—like these great bananas—so healthy food can be shared and not wasted.

Sign your group up too! Invite your friends from church, school, or the office. It really only takes a few people to make a huge difference!

We're so grateful for every single person who makes the time to glean or to bag or transport produce with the Society of St. Andrew. The volume of food SoSA distributes would be impossible without the thousands of people who volunteer with SoSA every year. First-time volunteers, stepping outside their comfort zone to glean, are crucial to this ministry. And we are ecstatic when first-time volunteers step up to become regular volunteers, looking for every opportunity to do whatever they can to share good food with hungry neighbors. What those regular volunteers have in common is joy. They've found joy in the outdoors, joy in the hard work, and joy in offering nourishing food to people who need it most.

Need more joy in your life? Join us in the fields and at the markets this year. Signup to volunteer at EndHunger.org/abfn

Finding Joy Outside Your Comfort Zone – continued from inside cover

field. They know that what they gleaned is good food and it would have been a real shame, had that good food gone to waste. Often, they load the vegetables into their own vehicles to take to a food pantry, shelter, or soup kitchen in town. When the pantry volunteer or the chef at the soup kitchen is overjoyed to receive the fresh produce, SoSA volunteers have another affirmation that the work they've done is going to make a difference in the lives of people in need.

We hear stories of first-time SoSA volunteers who begin buying their produce at farmstands or farmers markets, after they've been into a field to glean and have met the farmer who grew the food they gleaned. That first step, stretching outside their comfort zone to glean, leads to healthier eating and a real sense of connection and commitment to supporting local farmers. It's exciting to hear people talk, even years later, about their gleaning experience with the Society of St. Andrew.

Harvest of Hope

Plan Now for Your Church Mission Trip

Spring Break ★ Summer ★ Fall

Find details at EndHunger.org/hoh
Recent Donations

These names represent gifts made “In Memory Of” and “In Honor Of” special people and/or significant occasions. As loved ones are honored or remembered these gifts bring people together to harvest and share healthy food, reduce food waste, and build caring communities by offering nourishment to hungry neighbors. Thank you.

In Memory Of
Becky Aduddell
Bobby Banks
Virginia Bealer
Bill Beardall
Eileen M. Bickett
Chet Boone
Dave Borlas
Peggy Purnell Bowen
Andrew Brannan
Carl A. Breitinger
Tom Bryant
Bud “the Spud” Curtis
Jack & Dorothy Christie
Charles Chupe
Rebecca Collins
Aduddell
Della Craven
Ed Daniels
Edwin, Cecil, Stephen, and William Daniels
Barbara Eddie McDaniel
Tom Evans
Sewall Fultz
William Hemp, Jr.
Linda Hewitt
Patti Kay
Ron Kiley
Lambs UMC–deceased members
Audrey Levy
David Andrew Lewis
Nancy Looker
Jean Makouy
Ernie McElveen
Clarence & Maye McKinney
Ginna Minasain Dalton
Cleveland “Buck” Morris
Ronnie Nickles
Charles Pennington
Polly Jane (Roach) Peters
Lillian Pielnik
Jo Richardson
Eric Robinson, Sr.
Herbert Schade
Ryan Shoaf
Earl & Helen Simpson, Jr.
Frances & Uno Sironen
R. Marston Speight
Lula Spiva
Larry Ward
Nancy White
James Wilmouth
Rev. William G. Davidson
Fenn Davis
Emma Davis
Wesley Delaughter
Rev. Dirk Elliott
Episcopal Community
Evelyn & Sonny Evans
Jesse Evans
Farnville District Retired Pastors and Clergy Widows
Anne Pauley Finlayson
Mary Fleming
Marilyn Frenk
Patsy B. Frizzell
Amos Goldie
Mollie & Marshall Guthrie
Gwen Hamrick
Gilbert Hanke
Leigh Avery Hart
Betty Heishman
Andrew & Sharon Hiestand
Lin Hoffman
Edward & Janet Hopkins
Ken Horne
Janine Howard
Jesse Hoyer
Bruce Jackson
Jeffrey Family
Dr. John Kay
Matt Kirsner
Marie Knapp
Bill Leach
Cecilia Lemmon
Lindwood Christian Church Elders
Jan Luymes
Bobbi Lynch
T.J. Martin Family
Christopher McCormack
Meals For Millions UMM Of Michigan, East Winds District
Merle & Pam
Jacob Mohler
Steve Mosler
Marlene Napp
Ms. Sandy Newman
Rev. Ann Norton
Our Family & Friends
Bill Perry
Linda Perry
Lee & Norma Pletke
Stella Pool
Raymond & Shirley Rawls
Marilyn S. Reid
Eleysa Richards
Todd Richards
Harold Rodgers
Paul & Janice Routh & Family
John Rust
James B. Sineath
Jim Smith
SoSA Indianapolis
South Hill UMW
Kathy Spradlin
Ken & Von Staiger
Kat Stratton
Mark & Bonnie Swecker
Team Optimist
Molly Thorne
Richard & Bonny Trevillian
Uncle Ray
Carolyn Vines
Jennifer Wainwright-Baker
Mike Waldmann
Bill & Betty Waller
Abi Warmack
Peter D. Weaver
Eva Wiggins Mapp
Terry & Diane Wilson
Every year, thousands of farmers make the call to share an abundance of food they’ve grown. And none of it can be rescued without volunteers answering SoSA’s call to help. But when you’re serving in the mission to end hunger, you more than likely answer most calls. Because you know that the call may be for a last-minute opportunity to rescue food. Or it may be for a field gleaning right around the corner from your church.

Farmers are a critical component of the gleaning network. Without them, there wouldn’t be any food. But as a volunteer, you are an equally important part of the gleaning network.

Prepared with hats, gloves, and glasses, people of all ages, from four churches in Virginia and North Carolina both serve in the fields to help feed hungry families.

Every year, thousands of calls are made and emails sent to people just like you! Asking you to serve. Because the food cannot be rescued without you answering the call to serve.

Burch Farms has been a long-time partner of SoSA. They’re one of the largest farms in North Carolina and they grow food to sell it. Like many farms, they don’t guarantee SoSA gleaning opportunities every year.

Abby and Claire from Virginia enjoy meeting new friends as well as serving with old friends.
But every year, they do call. For more than a decade, Burch Farms has called SoSA volunteers offering to share fresh food and every year, that partnership feeds more people. In 2018, 27 agencies received food from Burch Farms to share with their hungry clients. By 2019, food shared by Burch Farms went to 49 nearby feeding agencies.

The late “Big Jimmy” of Burch Farms once explained growing food was his “passion” and he lived that passion by sharing good food with his local community.

Sometimes, gleanings need 30 volunteers and other times there’s room for 100 or more, in the fields at one time. One time, there was so much food the volunteers ran out of bags for the gleaned food – twice! They ran out, sent someone for more bags, filled up those, and sent them out again to buy more bags.

Your community needs you. When you glean with the Society of St. Andrew, you are sharing healthy food with hungry people in your own community. Help your community this year by answering the call to serve. Don’t wait! Go to EndHunger.org/register and sign up today to volunteer with SoSA in 2020.

Join the mission to end hunger. You’re more than welcome, you’re invited!

12 baskets Monthly Giving Program

While volunteering is an exciting way to get involved, it’s not a perfect fit for everyone. If you live far from the nearest gleaning event or have a physical limitation that might make gleaning in farm fields difficult, or don’t have a desire to be outdoors lifting, bending, and stooping, then there are other ways you can serve.

Make a donation to SoSA. We do not charge fees for our services but rely 100% on donations. Gleaned food is shared with recipients at no cost to them.

Your donation covers all the logistics of rescuing food, including packaging materials and transportation of the food gleaned by volunteers as well as rejected food from the grocery stores that SoSA rescues. Those materials and transportation bring food safely from the fields and stores to the tables of families who need it most.

It’s simple and a small gift makes a huge impact. A $25 monthly donation through the 12 Baskets Monthly Giving Program is a great way to start. Your monthly gift brings more than 800 servings of food, every single month, to the tables of families in need.

For more information about 12 Baskets Monthly Giving Program, go to EndHunger.org/12

Receive a daily Lent devotion in your email throughout Lent.

It’s not too late to sign up.

EndHunger.org/lent

Deepen your faith & experience renewal in your own life with Society of St. Andrew, as you join our online readership family during the season of Lent.

February 26 – April 12, 2020
Volunteer Spotlight

Jodi is a volunteer with SoSA, in Indiana. When she’s not working full-time, she’s volunteering with SoSA or at another hunger relief organization that rescues unsold food from restaurants and grocery stores. Jodi was even named a “Recycling Rock Star” by the Indiana Recycling Coalition for her significant impact in her local community.

“I have done gleaning through the Society of St. Andrew several times in the last few years, as my schedule has allowed, and tried to recruit as many others as possible. I find it an incredibly rewarding experience to be out in the fields. I learn something every time I do it because I don’t know a whole lot about our food system or farming. It’s always interesting to see what is growing on the farms, the animals, and the machinery used.

From my perspective, gleaning is an act of food waste reduction. Even if the food were to be plowed back into the soil to decay and serve as nutrients for the next crop, it’s not the highest and best expression of all the labor and energy that went into growing that food. Knowing that the work we are doing is feeding people who need assistance is also a driving force. The work is often not easy, but it feels great to be outside, more connected with the cycles of life, and doing something that is meaningful.

I’ve had a chance to engage with coworkers; I’ve recruited to glean, in ways that we never would have interacted before. We have been able to encourage and help each other in physical work, in different kinds of weather to make a difference in something, which really puts into perspective some of the aspects of our normal workday. Gleaning helps me appreciate what I have, but I also gain from the experience every time.”

- Jodi Leamon, Sustainability Coordinator, Allen County Environmental Management Company (Indiana) and Rockstar SoSA Volunteer

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING FOUNDATIONS & CORPORATIONS that donated $1,000+ in the 4th quarter of 2019

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For information about SoSA programs call 800-333-4597 • sosainfo@EndHunger.org • EndHunger.org
Connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and sign up for monthly updates
EndHunger.org/signup