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Guest column

Mail carriers mark 25 years of action to fight hunger

By 9 hrs ago

This guest column was submitted by Bill Sherman for the National Association of Letter Carriers, South Central Indiana Branch 828.

On Saturday, May 13, the 25th Anniversary Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive will take place at mailboxes throughout our region. Homeowners and renters alike will give what they can, by simply placing a food donation at their mailbox, to help feed hungry Hoosiers. Letter carriers will pick up the donations and deliver it to food banks and food pantries.

In honor of the 25th year, we have set a challenge goal for Monroe County to donate 50,000 pounds of food. We ask that you'll join us to Stamp Out Hunger.

Twenty-five years ago, the first local NALC (National Association of Letter Carriers) Food Drive was launched. Kathy Sample Corcoran, the local NALC Branch 828 president and myself, then secretary-treasurer, worked together to design a postcard using a Family Circus cartoon donated by Bil Keane.

That first year, we received 8,900 pounds of food. Kathy and I were very pleased with this response. Back in those days, the Hoosier Hills Food Bank was located on Packinghouse Road, and it seemed the efforts of that first food drive almost filled up the warehouse.

Over the years, the food drive has grown exponentially, with Secretary Jerry Sutherlin doing a great job getting together posters, food barrels and yard signs.

Eventually, Branch 828 members started stapling grocery bags on every card provided by the NALC National Headquarters and the success of the drive increased.

Now, we design our cards locally, have a website and share information via our Facebook page. Our union

Worthington and other communities. And the need for food has also grown.

Your letter carriers look forward to this day and enjoy picking up food donations knowing that it will help feed hungry local families.

Please join us on Saturday, May 13, for the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive — and encourage your friends to participate also! Simply fill a grocery bag (or two) with healthy, nonperishable food in nonbreakable containers and set the food by your mailbox. Items will be collected throughout the day and delivered to Hoosier Hills Food Bank and other local agencies.

Food donations will stay right here in our community. The food drive will occur rain or shine, so please tie the bags to protect against rain if necessary.

Locally, one in five children are at risk of going hungry. Our community's food pantries are here to help, but they often have trouble providing sufficient food in the summer when supplies are low and kids do not have access to school meals. This food drive is incredibly important to meeting summer food needs.

If you'd like to donate early, we encourage you to bring food donations to either the Bloomington Main Post Office (520 S. Walnut St.) or Woodbridge Station (3210 E. 10th St.). Also look for donation barrels at downtown Bloomington businesses.

A big thank you goes out to all the donors, and also to all the city and rural carriers who have participated over the years.

Help us reach our goal of collecting 50,000 pounds of food to Stamp Out Hunger. Visit www.StampOutHungerSCI.org for more information.