

Hi {Fname},



# The Cooperative Feeding Program Seeds of Change

An E-Newsletter Created By The Cooperative Feeding Program

May 2009

## A MESSAGE FROM MARTI

I use this space in our newsletter to give you an overview of how we are doing here at The Cooperative Feeding Program and also to give you a snapshot of hunger and poverty in our community and our nation. Because of the diverse and numerous services we provide here at our one stop center, we really have a feel for what's going on in the world of hunger, poverty and homelessness. We don't have to be the bearer of this bad news anymore as cities, mayors, community leaders, faith-based groups and countless others are now very outspoken on these matters. Why the shift in awareness? Our middle class supporters, like those around the globe who have been the base of support for charities, have now, all too often, taken their place on the lines with those seeking help. Whether it is a pending foreclosure, an inability to keep up with the cost of supermarket food, the loss of a job, etc., our former philanthropists are now here seeking food, are signing up for emergency food stamps or financial assistance, or are cutting back on their giving for fear they too may find they can no longer make their way in this struggling economy.



Seeing children living in cars and drinking water to curb their bellyaches has always been a reality we have to face here. It's just that now, it's no longer easily hidden. The phones ring with people inquiring about where they can safely and legally park their cars to sleep safe. Everything they could fit in their cars, along with the kids and the family pets, now moves about from place to place seeking somewhere to rest without threat to their safety and possessions or without running the risk of arrest. WalMart's across America open their parking lots and restrooms for stranded motorists, campers, and weary travelers needing a few hours sleep. In South Florida, our communities prohibit this generous and neighborly practice via threat of arrest. We've not only lost our neighborliness, we've lost our humanity and our way when creating and enforcing such silliness.

I can see the bread lines forming. Not just the ones that cover the length and width of The CFP's property, but the ones that will be forming in neighborhood after neighborhood. The lines that will form outside city halls, in front of churches, at local non profits, fire and police stations---anywhere people can line up to ask for, beg for, or demand help from anyone who has anything to share with the elderly, the sick, the homeless, and now, the newly poor "first timers" who don't have clue about where to go or how to ask for help. We've got to come up with a plan for what many are telling us is sure to happen in the next year. Perhaps this note will trigger the alarm needed to start a process to prepare. Remember post Wilma when even those with big bank accounts could not find food on supermarket shelves? Where the heck could you find a loaf of bread or a cup of coffee during those rough days? Now, take that memory and imagine it not happening for four of five days, but for four or five months, or a year, or more. Then ask yourself, what could we, should we be doing about it today? We can't run and hide from this anymore. We've got to prepare. And if the doomsday plan is never needed, we can all breathe a sigh of relief. If it is needed, I'd like to know that someone cared

enough to plan and get ready for it to ward off that “catastrophe” President Obama speaks about.

Please go to [www.FeedingBroward](http://www.FeedingBroward) to click on and make a donation to help us.

### Consider Joining the Bread & Butter Club



The Bread and Butter Club is a group of extraordinary CFP Donors who commit to supporting the CFP mission on an ongoing sustaining basis. To join the Bread & Butter Club, just select the Bread & Butter Club on the donation page. The donation amount you enter on the credit card information page will be charged to your credit card each month. There are two levels of giving, a \$12 minimum - which would purchase a bag of groceries for one individual and \$25 minimum - which would purchase a box of groceries for a family.

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## **BATTLING HUNGER**

### **2008 HOLIDAY SEASON BREAKS ALL RECORD**

What could have been a holiday season where countless Broward families went without any special celebrations, turned into CFP’s most successful holiday food distribution on record. More than 8,200 families were able to receive holiday food thanks to a caring community and several major donors who stepped up and filled our empty shelves. Business was so brisk, The CFP was forced to set up a drive through to accommodate the 300-350 families each day who lined up to get their turkeys, holiday food boxes, fresh produce, milk, cheese and other wonderful holiday food selection. In the dining room, more than 400 individuals were provided with holiday meals in the days surrounding both holidays. In addition, many families received gift cards to select their own holiday turkey or ham.

The CFP is thankful to the faith community who filled our brown bags, Publix Supermarkets, The Batchelor Foundation, Gore Family Foundation, Weston Rotary, The Florida Panthers, Letter Carriers Union 2550, Cross Country Services, The MASONS, US Foods and the cast of thousands (far too many to list) who helped us pull off this gigantic food distribution.

Lines were so long this holiday season, The Cooperative Feeding Program had to institute a drive through food pickup service. More than 8,200 food boxes were distributed.

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## **THE NEED**

### **A DAY IN THE LIFE**

Today, we fed a hungry, homeless child. We squeezed that in between doing a few hundred homeless census surveys, 30 food stamp applications, and serving 400 hundred meals and handing out 175 family food boxes. Oh, there were lots of showers, phone calls, mail pickups and a hundred other things happening. But her story was the most important one. She's living in a car with her grandma. No luck today in finding her a better place to live. But snowball was in for a visit. Snowball once was homeless living and in a car and we helped his Dad find work and get an apartment. Today he was in for his monthly visit to show us all how well he is doing. As for our new visitor, Dora, our customer service coordinator, fixed spaghetti and meatballs for lunch and put her into a big chair to eat. The child scraped the bowl clean, with a grin from ear to ear. She'd only had water today to stop the ache of hunger, so lunch at 2:00 p.m. was gobbled down. After some cuddles with Snowball, she fell off to sleep. Maybe tomorrow, like Snowball, she'll get to find a home to go to. We'll sure be trying to find her one.



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## **THE HOPE**

### **SHIP TO SHELTER PROGRAM LAUNCHED**

Broward and Holland America Officials launch the Ship to Shelter project with a press conference followed by a tour of one of the ships and a luncheon for area dignitaries.

Holland America, Broward County Port Authority and Broward County Commission have partnered with The Cooperative Feeding Program (CFP) on a Ship to Shelter project which salvages useable hygiene and other items from the Holland American ships and directs them local non profits for use by the needy. The CFP, which now provides up to sixty showers each day, is able to obtain shower gel, shampoo, lotions and conditioners to give to those taking showers. Based on a model that started in Seattle, Holland American believes in playing a role in supporting local communities where its ships have a port of call. Local media, as well as CNN have been by The CFP to cover the story and see how the program works. The CFP is honored to partner with the cruise line on this important project.



## CFP HAPPENINGS

- Thomas Lanahan, Community Job Development Coordinator with Broward Sheriff's Office Department of Detention and Community Control, is now assisting our customers, who are ex-offenders, gain lawful employment. Thomas received an award for his services from President Obama early February.
- -Red Cross will be giving us Gatorade and cookies once a month, they already started in February.
- -More and more customers are coming to us to ask help with immigration, we have been successful getting help for these customers at the USCIS newest office on Oakland Park.
- -Every Thursday from 10-12PM Henderson Homeless Outreach comes to assess our customers that are mentally ill and link them with services provided by their organization.
- -Broward County Elderly Services are here every Monday & Tuesday from 9-12PM . Vaughn Ryan from BCES links our elders with services available in our community.

## VOLUNTEERISM & SPECIAL PROGRAMS

- Each month our volunteers make such an important contribution to the great work of the CFP possible. Last year our volunteer group donated over 36,600 volunteer hours. In January 2009 the volunteer corp had donated 2849 hours (a 15% increase over January 2008).
- We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Cub Pack 406, Broward Bahai Youth, Sagemont School National Honor Society, the Boys & girls Club, Pinecrest Middle School, Broward College Nursing Students, NSU Pharmacy students, National Urban Fellows, Everglades High School, River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Church and the Kultikvah Temple. If volunteerism appeals to you, contact Chris at [chris@feedingbroward.org](mailto:chris@feedingbroward.org).
- **Serving and Service Program.** Corporate, business and Community Associations regularly use the volunteer opportunities for team building and social services. Here are two such groups who spent a morning servicing and providing service to the CFP: The Doric Lodge of the Masons and Bank Atlantic for their outstanding service. **(include pictures with captions Doric Lodge of the MASONs & Bank Atlantic)**



If interested in the CFP Serving & Service program contact [Scott@feedingbroward.org](mailto:Scott@feedingbroward.org).

## **AMAZING CFP SUCCESS STORIES**

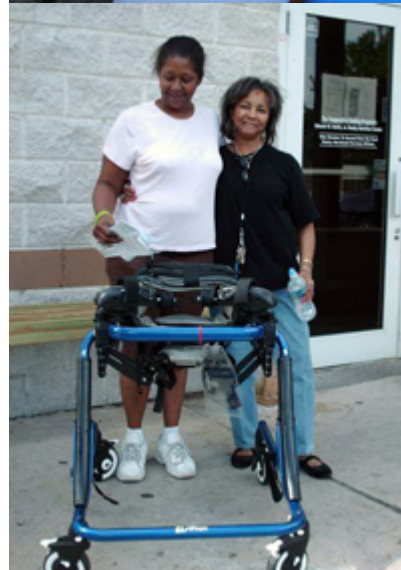
Mr. Chester, our long time customer finally got his birth certificate! He had been trying to prove that he “exists. For almost two years Mr. Chester had been denied a birth certification because the State of Georgia did not have any records. Therefore, Mr. Chester did not exist, according to their records. Born in Georgia, with several brothers and sisters, all by the way have birth certificates. Through persistent investigations we were able to get proof of his existence; He is now getting his birth certificate and finally marrying his long time girlfriend.

Through the Cooperative Feeding Program’s Partnership with the Miami Dolphins, many of our customers have been blessed; but one stays front & center. Wanda Dennis and family. At the recent Lift Up America function, sponsored by Tyson Chicken and the Dolphins, out of 55 non profit agencies and their clients, Wanda, a CFP client, was selected to speak to tell her story and showcase her family.

Wanda is a single parent with 3 children. She is also helping to care for her nephew as well, who is in a wheelchair. Wanda is a giver. No matter what she is going through she will always have a kind word.

As a result of her story presentation, Gwen, our family customer service worker, witnessed representatives from the Dolphins visiting their residence during the Christmas Holiday with bags of toys for the kids, gifts for Mom along with a huge check for household expenses and a state of the art walker for Andrian, her nephew, which cost \$3,000. Andrian’s doctor had told the family that there was a chance he could learn to walk but only with the right walker.

We are in awe of her, the CFP and the Dolphins generosity. The day this picture was taken, we couldn’t help but smile; we kept thinking these two programs were saving a deserving family and boy’s life.



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