



WESTSIDE FOOD BANK



Help Give the Gift of Nourishment



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—2007—

A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF WESTSIDE FOOD BANK

2007 has been a year filled with exciting events and great challenges for Westside Food Bank. We have worked hard to distribute a variety of nutritious foods so that those who receive our food have access to a balanced diet. That is especially important for local children who receive nearly half of all the food we distribute each year. This year, we have seen the need for food assistance among low-income individuals and families increase again, and our member agencies are having to provide food to a growing number of local people. For the most current Food Bank information, please visit our website at www.westsidefoodbankca.org. For now, we hope you enjoy this slice of Food Bank life.



Executive Director Bruce Rankin, Development Director Genevieve Riutort and Board Member Edna R.S. Alvarez attended a luncheon given by Kaiser Permanente in honor of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. At the event we were presented with a \$25,000 check and thousands of pounds of food that had been collected by Kaiser employees.



February This February Westside Food Bank received a grant from the McCormick Tribune Foundation/Los Angeles Times' matching funds program that translated into enough food for 650,000 meals. When the Times' annual insert on fundraising came out, Westside Food Bank was featured with a full page description and photo of our food being distributed at the St. Joseph Center food pantry.

March This Spring, Westside Food Bank participated in Santa Monica City TV's Public Service Announcement Workshop. The City TV staff donated their time and expertise, and the result was a 30 second Public Service Announcement about Westside Food Bank which can now be seen on City TV and other local stations.

April This spring's "Phantom Dinner" fundraiser invitation told the ancient legend of a poor man whose willingness to share what little food he had led to a miraculous abundance of food for all. Once again, our supporters responded generously, allowing us to acquire and distribute food for over 750,000 additional meals.

April is also when Church World Service held its annual Crop Walk in Pacific Palisades. The walk raises funds to combat hunger locally, and around the world. This year, our portion of the proceeds provided food for an additional 200,000 meals for local people in need.



In addition to receiving thousands of pounds of food and significant financial support from the Parish of Saint Matthews' abundant Easter and Holiday food drives, Westside Food Bank was honored at the Parish's annual Garden Party luncheon this year. Children from the parish school built a charming cottage made of canned food, and Food Bank staffers Milton Gonzalez, Genevieve Riutort and Bruce Rankin had an opportunity to share personal thoughts on hunger and food insecurity with the attendees.

Also in May, we again participated in the National Letter Carrier's Association Food Drive. Thanks to the generous donations from the community and the efforts of local letter carriers and nearly a hundred volunteers, we brought in a whopping 110,000 pounds of food on that one afternoon – the most food ever collected during that drive.

June This summer, WSFB began participating in the California Association of Food Banks "Farm to Family Produce Project" which brought thousands of pounds of produce donated from farms in the Central Valley to food banks around the state. We were also able to use funding from the Association to increase our cooler space by 50%, allowing us to receive and distribute more donated produce than ever before.

July Westside Food Bank welcomed two new Board members this year. Amy Shapiro is the Marketing Director at an organization called P.S. Arts, and brings to us fresh ideas and enthusiasm in the areas of marketing and fundraising. Dr. Olga Mohan is a pediatrician whose expertise serves us well in ensuring that we meet the nutritional needs of the young children who receive our food. Welcome Amy and Olga!

Westwood Presbyterian Church held its annual "Musicale" in July this year. Westside Food Bank was again one of three organizations benefiting from the event. With our proceeds from the Musicale, plus other support provided by the WPC, we were able to acquire enough food for an additional 350,000 meals in 2007.

August In mid-summer we again held our Annual all-agency meeting. This meeting provided a forum for us to collaborate with our member agencies face to face so that we can better meet community needs. Elizabeth Cervantes from the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank provided a primer on USDA food requirements, and Westside Food Bank's Allison Griffith shared highlights of our disaster preparedness work with the Santa Monica Red Cross.

Westside Food Bank was also a featured charity at the Santa Monica Pier's annual Summer Concert Series. Each Thursday night for ten weeks, we operated a booth at each concert where we collected cash and food donations, distributed information, and raffled off a beautiful Epiphone guitar, generously donated by Gibson Guitars.

September Throughout September, Food Bank staff and volunteers helped to prepare for the Westside Shelter and Hunger Coalition's 12th annual Celebrating Success Breakfast. The annual event honors formerly homeless agency clients who have achieved self-sufficiency. Jewish High Holiday food drives were held for us by several Temples, with Temple Kehillat Israel's collection leading the pack by bringing us a record-breaking 23,478 pounds of food.

October Westside Food Bank's 17th annual Hunger Walk: "Walking Toward a Hunger Free Community," was held on Sunday, October 28 at Santa Monica High School with "Ugly Betty's" Ana Ortiz acting as emcee. Once again our Youth Committee came through with great raffle prizes and volunteered at the Walk. The New Directions Choir inspired us with song, and the event raised enough funds to provide food for an additional 350,000 meals.

November Over 200 schools, congregations and businesses hold food drives for us at this time of year, keeping warehouse assistant manager Rocael Garcia busy picking up food. Food collected at this time helps us to sustain a steady distribution of food throughout the winter. Frozen Turkey drives like the one held by Calvary Christian School help to ensure that local families in need can enjoy a hearty and festive holiday meal. We also benefit from food collected at the California Society of CPA's Annual Run/Walk. This year we also received the largest single donation in the Food Bank's 26 year history; 60 pallets loaded with food and goods from Whole Foods. The food collected in these and other drives makes up the fastest growing part of our distribution.



December During the holiday season, we will again be featured in Brentwood Presbyterian Church's "Angel Store Catalog, and Westwood United Methodist Church's "Scattered for Service" catalog, both of which provide congregants with an opportunity to donate funds for purchases of baby food, peanut butter, cereal and other needed food items. Families from our member agencies will again have an opportunity to enjoy a Los Angeles Clippers basketball game, courtesy of the Donald T. Sterling Foundation, and food donations continue to come in through the New Year. From the volunteers who work in our office, warehouse, and in the field, to our event sponsors, hunger walkers, foundation and community partners and our day to day contributors, support from the community continues to be the backbone of our service.

*Thank you for
doing your part.*

