

Scouting for Food

In Spring 2011, thousands of Scouts participating in the Scouting for Food “Good Turn” will experience the highest ideals of the Scouting movement and they will help affect someone’s life – by helping to place food on the table of those that are hungry. The Scouting for Food event is an extremely important food for the High Plains Food Bank and other food pantries throughout the Golden Spread Council. During the spring time, the demand for food increases while supply dwindles. In addition, many food drives do not take place during the spring. This is why this event is so important – it helps meet a need the High Plains Food Bank and other food pantries have during the spring time and helps keep our shelves stocked throughout the spring and summer months.

In order to get the most from the experience, two activities have been prepared for you to use with your Scouts at your meetings (Den or Patrol) prior to March 26, 2011 to prepare for Scouting for Food and one to complete after the event to recap the experience you had. We highly encourage all unit leaders to promote and educate your scouts and parents on why this event is so important to all of the communities we live in. This document will help you accomplish this goal.

Activity #1: Hunger in the Texas Panhandle Quiz

Take the time to read the following quiz with your scouts and discuss the answers. Also review the enclosed facts and programs of the High Plains Food Bank. Topics of discussion: does anyone know of anyone that is hungry or didn’t have enough to eat? What do you think causes hunger? What are some solutions you can give that you think will help people solve the problem of hunger?

Activity #2: Hunger: Young and Old

Please take the time to read these two stories to your scouts. Begin discussion on what everyone thought of the stories. These are two true stories that have taken place here in the Texas Panhandle. Discuss the importance of how Scouting for Food will help prevent more stories and situations as described here.

Activity #3: Evaluation of Scouting for Food

Please take a few minutes at your next meeting to talk with your scouts and discuss their experience with Scouting for Food. Encourage your scouts to give their honest opinions on what they saw, how they felt, and suggestions on how to make the following years Scouting for Food even better. Please summarize your discussion on the attached form and send it to the Scout Office at the address listed on the form.

Hunger in the Texas Panhandle – Quiz

- **There are not many people who are hungry in the Texas Panhandle. FICTION.**
There are over 61,000 people in the Texas Panhandle who live on or below the poverty line – meaning they do not have enough money to purchase items needed to live or cannot pay all of their monthly bills. Of this number 20,478 people live in Potter County – this number is larger than the population of the city of Canyon.
- **Many people who struggle with getting enough food sometimes have to pay bills first. FACT.** Many people have to make a choice each month: do I pay my electric bill or rent or do I purchase food for me and my family? There are thousands of people who face losing the place that they live in if they do not pay bills. 48 percent of clients served by the High Plains Food Bank report having to choose between paying for food and paying for utilities. Also, 36 percent chose between paying for food and paying their rent or mortgage.
- **Adults who struggle with purchasing food are the most likely group to go hungry. FICTION.** The age group that is most affected by hunger are children. This is mostly due to the fact that children depend on their parents, guardian or caregiver to provide them with their essential needs. Also, if the parents or guardians work, many children may have to prepare their own meals or depend on an older sibling to provide a meal. Of all the member households served by the High Plains Food Bank, 35 percent of these households have children under 18 years old. Twelve percent of the members of households are children age 0 to 5 years.
- **Only a certain amount of people are subject to hunger. FICTION.** This is probably the most false statement on this quiz. The truth is that hunger can strike *anyone*. Hunger knows no gender, age or ethnicity and hunger has no season. It can strike at anytime of the year, summer or winter. For example, about 59 percent of clients assisted by the High Plains Food Bank are non-Hispanic white, 10 percent are non-Hispanic black, 29 percent are Hispanic and the remaining 2 percent are from other ethnic groups.
- **Households with hunger problems are due to the fact that the members do not have jobs and are not working. FICTION.** Once again, this is a very false misconception. The vast majority of people that we assist are those that are working multiple jobs but still cannot make ends meet. However, working multiple jobs does not necessarily mean an increase in the amount of money made. Sixty-eight percent of households surveyed by the High Plains Food Bank in 2005 have incomes below the official federal poverty level. This means that even though they have jobs, they still cannot make ends meet.
- **The problem of hunger can be solved. FACT.** Even though the problem of hunger seems insurmountable, it is actually an issue than can be solved or conquered. You are helping in that effort – by collecting food items so the High Plains Food Bank can distribute them to those in need. On average, the High Plains Food Bank distributes about 350,000 pounds each month (this is about 280,000 meals!) to those in need. You are helping this need with Scouting for Food!

Hunger: Young and Old

Please read these 2 stories to your Pack/Troop/Crew

Story #1

During December several years ago, one of our staff members was volunteering at the Food Bank's Kids Cafe program at San Jacinto Elementary. Volunteers are needed at our Kids Cafes to help serve the children as they come in. It was a very cold December for the Texas Panhandle; the temperature was in teens. Most of the children had already eaten and everyone was about to begin cleaning up. Suddenly a group of 4 children came in the cafeteria doors and ran up to the serving line. Our staff noticed the children as they came closer: they were wearing shorts and short-sleeved t-shirts – the shorts and t-shirts they were wearing were razor thin and had holes in multiple places. The children's faces were flush red from the below freezing temperatures and they were anxious to warm up. Our staff member was horrified – why would children get out in these temperatures and risk hypothermia and getting sick? It was also obvious that the children had nothing warm to wear – they put on the only clothes they had. Our staff member asked the children why they would get out in this freezing weather. One of the older siblings replied “because we knew if we got out and came here that there would be something to eat.” Our staff member has always remembered that day – this is why the High Plains Food Bank exists: to help those who need it.

Story #2

Meals on Wheels is an agency of the High Plains Food Bank and helps senior citizens with meals throughout the Texas Panhandle. Their job is exactly how it sounds: they provide the elderly with a hot meal and they deliver it to their home or place of residence, free of charge. In one of our rural towns, Meals on Wheels noticed an elderly lady and her cat on one of their daily routes. They had never delivered to her house but after hearing more about her from her neighbors, they decided to ask her if they could bring her some food to eat. One of the Meals on Wheels volunteers knocked on her door one day and she answered. After a discussion, she said yes, she would love to receive a free meal. Her husband had passed away and she did not have any steady source of income. When the volunteer looked in her pantry, the volunteer found that she had no food. When asked what she ate to survive, the woman replied she ate her cat's food to save money. This story proves that many people who need help may not ask for it. She was eating what she had to survive.

As you can see from the previous two stories, hunger strikes people of all ages. The Scouting for Food “Good Turn” helps the High Plains Food Bank send food to people all over the Texas Panhandle who need assistance. By going door to door, you will be helping to deliver that same food to someone in need within a week!

Quick Facts about the High Plains Food Bank

Please review with your Pack/Troop/Crew

In 2009, the High Plains Food Bank distributed 4.2 million pounds of food to the Texas Panhandle – or about 3.3 million meals!

Our food distribution per month is down 14 percent from this time last year

Through our Kids Cafe program, we serve over 1,000 meals on average to at-risk children each week night to over 800 children throughout the Texas Panhandle.

In 2009, we served 112,000 total meals through our 8 Kids Cafe locations

Approximately 13,500 different people receive assistance through emergency food programs through the High Plains Food Bank in any given week

35 percent of the members of households served by the High Plains Food Bank are children under 18 years old

Among all client households served by emergency food programs of the High Plains Food Bank, 73 percent are food insecure – 31 percent of those are experiencing hunger right now

48 percent of clients served by the High Plains Food Bank report having to choose between paying for food and paying for utilities

For every \$1 donated, the High Plains Food Bank can distribute \$8 worth of food! (this is due to receiving food from all over the country)

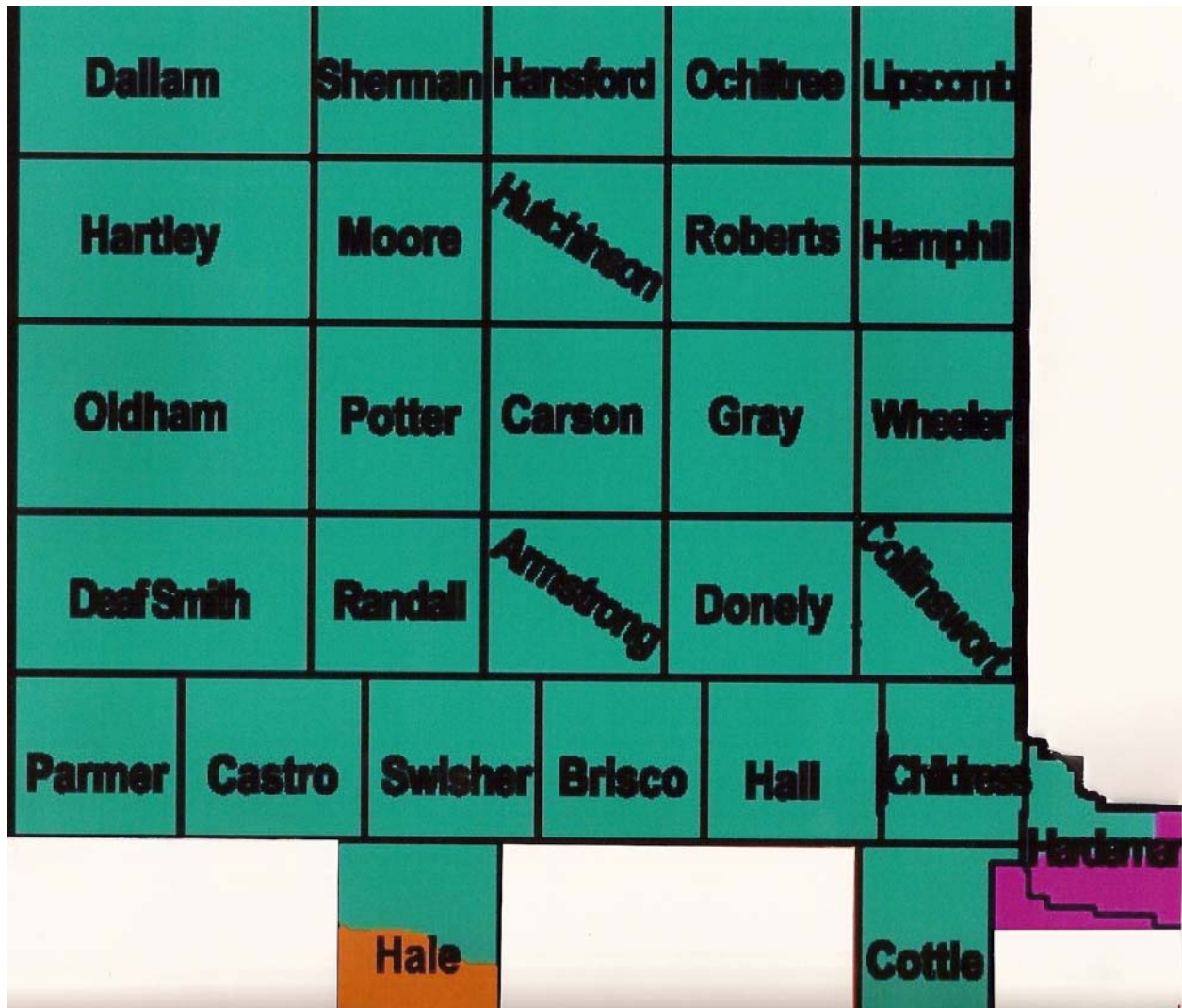
In previous years, inventory in our warehouse was approximately 1.5 million pounds – in 2008, we are averaging 800,000 pounds of inventory

The High Plains Food Bank serves 29 total counties in the Texas Panhandle – 30,000 square miles! Please see the enclosed county map and show your Pack/Troop/Crew the area in which the High Plains Food Bank serves

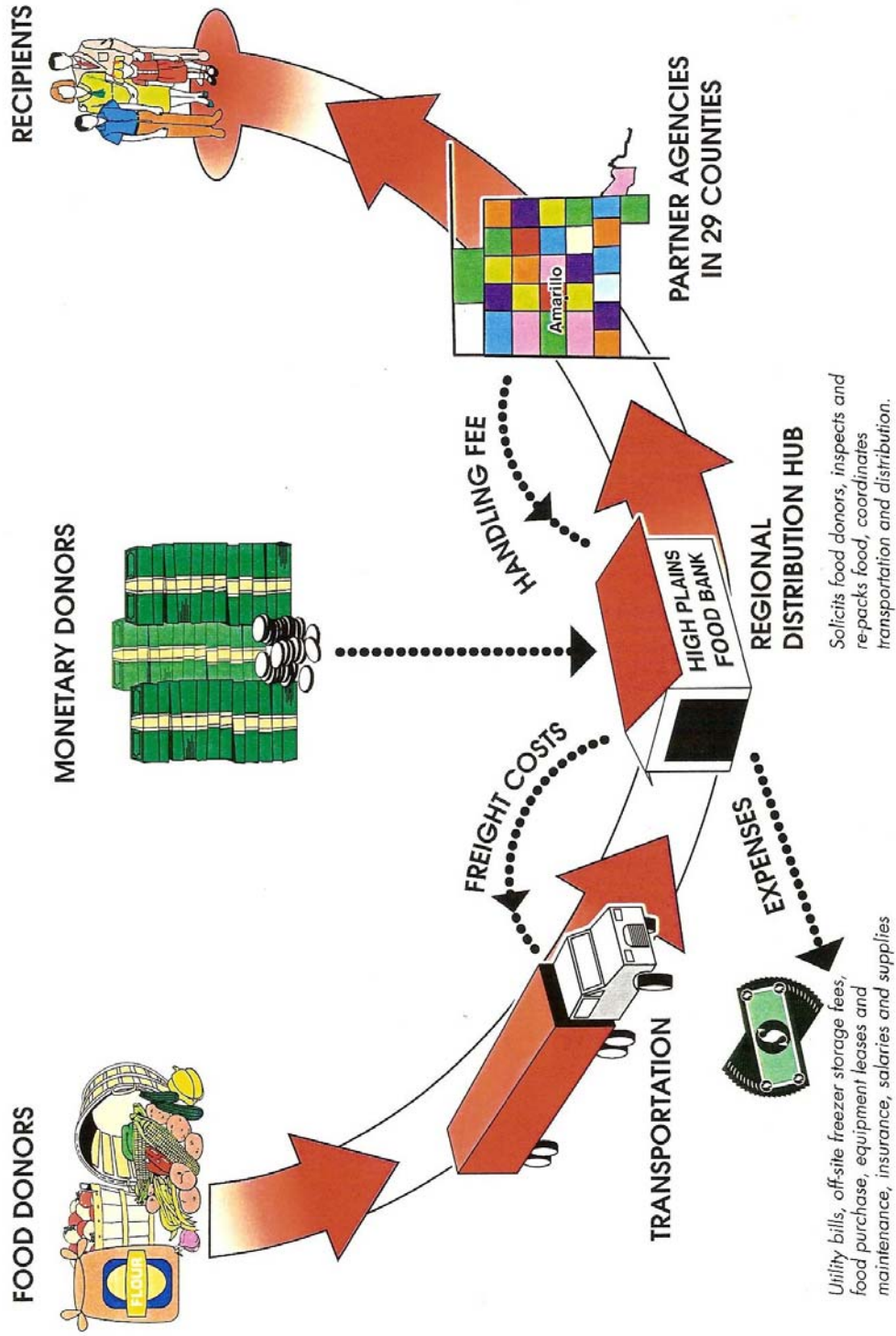
Please also review the enclosed “Cycle of Hunger” flow chart with your Pack/Troop/Crew – this is how the High Plains Food Bank works

Review the programs that the High Plains Food Bank to show how they are helping the community in many different ways.

The High Plains Food Bank's coverage area:



BREAKING THE CYCLE OF HUNGER



Programs of the High Plains Food Bank

Please review with your Pack/Troop/Crew

Kids Cafe

The Kids Cafe program confronts childhood hunger by financially supporting direct feeding partnerships between the Food Bank and participating member agencies. Through the Kids Cafe program, the Food Bank provides over 1,000 meals each weeknight to over 800 children throughout the Texas Panhandle. Currently, the Food Bank has eight total Kids Cafe locations in Amarillo, Pampa and Wellington. In Amarillo, the Kids Cafe is located at Hamlet Elementary, Humphrey's Highland Elementary, Lee Elementary and San Jacinto Elementary.

Rural Delivery Service

This program allows the High Plains Food Bank to deliver product to agencies in nineteen area communities throughout the Texas Panhandle at no delivery charge.

The Food Connection

Through this program, the Food Bank picks up surplus, unserved prepared food from restaurants and caterers. The food is distributed through soup kitchens and shelters to those in need.

Meat the Need / Hunters for the Hungry

This program enables farmers, ranchers, feed lots and hunters to help the High Plains Food Bank supply much needed high protein meat products. Contact us for a list of area processors.

Produce for the Panhandle

This program distributes over 1.3 million pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the Texas Panhandle annually. Produce is donated by local grocers, statewide wholesalers, farmers and the Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice's garden. The Food Bank also receives grants to help bring produce in from the Valley.

Texas Second Chance Program

This program is a collaborative effort with the TDCJ. Inmates assist with our salvage program and receive valuable training and skills to assist them with jobs once they are released.

Social Services Outreach

Many families who are struggling to make ends meet could qualify for government assistance programs. However, many do not have the resources to make appointments to sign up for the programs. The Food Bank is excited to announce the addition of a Social Services Outreach Coordinator to our staff. Our outreach coordinator goes throughout the Panhandle to educate and enroll those who qualify for programs such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – formerly named food stamps – Medicaid, TANF, CHIP and others.

Scouting for Food – Unit Collection Report

District _____

Pack _____ Troop _____ Team _____ Post _____

We are proud to report that we have collected and turned in _____
of pounds for the hungry.

Signed _____
Unit Coordinator

Signed _____
Unit Leader

Comments:

Please turn this form no later than April 15, 2011 to:

Golden Spread Council
Attn: Scouting for Food
401 Tascosa Rd.
Amarillo, TX 79124

Scouting for Food Evaluation Form

On March 26, 2011, our unit took part in the greatest event a Scout can experience, helping feed the hungry in our community! The following information is provided to you from our unit discussions after this event.

1. Do you feel that you learned anything about hunger in the Texas Panhandle through this event and how?

2. How do you feel about participating in this event to help stop hunger in the Texas Panhandle?

3. What things did you like about this event?

4. How would you make this event better next year?

5. How many Scouts and leaders/parents participated in this event?

Please mail the form to (or drop it by) by April 15, 2011:
Golden Spread Council, BSA
401 Tascosa Rd
Amarillo, TX 79124