



Fighting Hunger Feeding Hope

Writers Harvest

Tuesday, November 1,
2011

Sponsored by FSU
Creative Writing
Department

Featured Guest:

Award winning author
Pam Houston

Admission: \$10

Location:

Grand Ballroom of the
Alumni Center at FSU

Poverty Grows—Food Supply Falls

“If not for Second Harvest, my children would go to bed hungry most nights, just as my husband and I have gone to bed hungry so that our children can have something in their tummy.” In August we embarked on a mission to collect the stories of the people we are serving, and what we heard was a common theme. Seniors on fixed incomes barely able to keep a roof over their head, families with one income or unemployed parents, people trying to support their families making minimum wage and those with medical issues that lack the coverage and are forced to pay out of pocket.

The stories confirm the facts: more and more people are living on the edge of poverty. 44 million American’s live in poverty (1 in 7), this is the largest number since the U.S. Census began keeping track more than 50 years ago, and 4 million more joined the ranks last year. In the Big Bend of Florida that translates to 101,188 or 1 in 6. 51 million

Americans are without health insurance; 4.4 million more than 2010. For most of these families, they do not qualify for government benefits such as SNAP (food stamps). For a family of four, the threshold for poverty is \$22,000 a year; for an individual it’s \$10,830 or less. If we look at a person making minimum wage working a full week that’s only \$15,500 a year (\$7.25/hr x 2,000).

decreasing. This summer, we saw a drastic cut in USDA Commodities; government surplus food provided by the Florida Department of Agriculture. This program accounted for 2 million pounds (36%) of our annual distribution last year with an average of 173,000 distributed each month. In July and August of 2011, we distributed an average of 96,000 pounds a month of Commodities, a decrease of 55 percent. The decline of Commodities will continue and all indications are that the Commodity program will see cuts in federal funding in 2012, further reducing the amount of food received through this program.

We are asking the community to help in the fight against hunger this holiday and feed hope to the thousands of our neighbors struggling. This season, conduct your own food drive, donate to an existing food drive, or make a monetary donation to Second Harvest.



Imagine trying to pay your rent, utilities, health-care and put food on the table every month on such a small amount with no assistance.

The result is more and more of our neighbors in the Big Bend are facing this struggle and turning to the food bank for assistance just as donations are

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MOTORCYCLE TURKEY DRIVE

The holiday's are a time for family and friends to gather and reflect on the year; a time to give thanks for all we have. For 1 in 6 people throughout the Big Bend region this holiday season there is less to be thankful for. These families face a daily struggle to pay their fixed expenses such as rent/mortgage and utilities, and have little or no money for putting meals on their table. We want to take away this worry for one day. We want to provide these families with hope this season and give them something to be thankful for; a traditional holiday meal.

That's why on Sunday, November 6, 2011 from 1p.m.-4p.m., we will hosting our first annual Motorcycle Turkey Drive to collect turkey's and traditional holiday fixings for our neighbors in need. Drop off locations for turkeys and food donations will be at Walmart locations at Mahan, North Monroe, West Tennessee and Publix stores at 3521 Thomasville Rd (by Books-A-Million) and Publix at Crawfordville and Capitol Circle SW. If you can't join the fun on November 6, donations will be accepted at our warehouse 110 Four Points Way, Tallahassee, FL during normal business hours Monday-Friday 8a.m.-5p.m. starting now. Donations of \$25 to provide a holiday meal for a family can also be made online or mailed to our warehouse. For more info visit FightingHunger.org.

MESSAGE FROM CHERYL PHOENIX, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As the holidays approach, so do the plans from the community to help feed our neighbors who may otherwise go without. We are always so thankful for the generous outpouring of donations and volunteer time, and this year it is needed more than ever. As mentioned in the first article, the need continues to grow, yet one of our main food sources (USDA Commodities) has declined substantially.

Our partner agencies are – once again – saying new people are

coming to their pantries every month. People they have never seen before, who have never visited a food pantry before. People who are used to helping instead of being helped.

Because hunger is a hidden epidemic, too often we do not know who is experiencing hunger on a regular basis, or is "food insecure." Yet the reality is that one in six people in the Big Bend – and one in four children – are food insecure. So the people you meet at the store, or even work with, may be hungry but not telling anyone.

As a community, we must continue to combat this epidemic. People have already come forward to help with food drives and other events this fall, as you can read elsewhere in this newsletter. Thank you in advance for whatever you choose to do, as any time, food, or funds that are donated will be most appreciated. Not only by all of us at Second Harvest, but – more importantly – by the people we never see or hear from, but who receive the food we helped get into their hands.

If you would prefer to receive this publication in an electronic format, please email [Molly Pyle at mpyle@fightinghunger.org](mailto:Molly.Pyle@fightinghunger.org)

BEFORE RECYCLING THIS PUBLICATION, PLEASE PASS IT ON TO A FRIEND.

SENIOR HUNGER

"I'm a grandmother of 9 kids and I have 1 great-grandson. I'm raising 5 of my grand kids. There is never a lot of food. I receive aid from churches but can't afford to feed them sometimes." – Anonymous recipient of food from Second Harvest.

Unfortunately, this story is increasingly common. Just as hard times have fallen on more families in the Big Bend area, local seniors have been asked to bare a greater burden – largely on fixed incomes. According to "Food Insecurity Among Older Adults," a recent study commissioned by AARP shows that nearly 9 million Americans 50 and older face the risk of hunger. Of these numbers, 4.9 million are 50- to 59-year-olds representing a staggering 38 percent increase over 2007. This population is hit hardest because they are typically too young for social security and Medicare and too old to qualify for programs designed for families with children.

Second Harvest has gone from feeding about 7,000 persons aged 55 and above, to almost 10,000 a month in only one year's time. That's an incredible 44% increase.

That's why initiatives like Brown Bags for Seniors are so important. We currently serve over 400 seniors a month through this targeted program, but of course the need is rising and we rely on your continued support to keep feeding hungry neighbors of all ages in our community!



RECORD YEAR AGAIN!



June 30, 2011 marked the end of our fiscal year and with it came dramatic new records. We distributed a record breaking 5.5 million pounds of food; a 2 million pound increase over the prior fiscal year.

Of this amount, more than 708,000 pounds of product was fresh produce. To distribute this product as quickly as possible and other perishable items, we launched our Mobile Pantry Program in February 2011. This program distributes truckloads of fresh food directly to the hands of people struggling with hunger.

This fiscal year welcomed new donors and volunteers and marked our first full year in a our new warehouse. We thank our donors, partner agencies, volunteers, staff and board for their commitment to fighting hunger and feeding hope during this fiscal year.

New Local Food Donors

Welcome and thank you to our newest, local food industry donors who recently joined us in the fight against hunger: Costco Wholesale, Earth Fare, Florida A&M University—Center for Viticulture and Small Fruit Research, Gamboa Brothers, Inc., Ice River Springs Water Company, Inc., Leon County Extension Office—Master Gardner Program, Thrifty Shopper and TomatoLand.

In just the past six months, these donors generously donated the equivalent of 18,113 meals! Our drivers picked up these amazing gifts and quickly distributed them to our partner agencies to help feed those most in need in our community.

We could not continue to feed the thousands of individuals who rely on us without the generous support of our donors. We say thank you to all of our donors from national and regional, to local retailers and restaurants and food drive sponsors, financial donors and volunteers for Fighting Hunger and Feeding Hope!

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We're on the Web!
www.FightingHunger.org

Bowls of Hope

Mark your calendars to join us on Wednesday, January 25, 2012 from 11a.m.-2p.m. at Waller Park located on the West side of the Capitol building (by the dolphin fountain) for our sixth annual Bowls of Hope.

Sample signature soups from restaurants throughout the greater Tallahassee area and browse an amazing collection of hand crafted ceramic bowls created by local school children, college students and artist.

Stay tuned to our website and Facebook for more information!

**The Capitol Waller Park
706 West Gaines
Street
Wednesday, January
25, 2012 from 11a.m.-
2p.m..**

IMPORTANT DATES

November 1	FSU's Writers Harvest
November 4-17	New Leaf Donation Drive for Second Harvest
November 5	Fine Wine & Gourmet Food Tasting--New Leaf
November 6	Motorcycle Turkey Drive

Be sure to follow us on Facebook for the latest happenings at America's Second Harvest of the Big Bend! You can also find out more information on our website at www.fightinghunger.org.

Fine Wine & Gourmet Food Tasting

Saturday, November 5 · 7:00-9:00 pm

\$22 advance, \$25 day of

Treat yourself to an evening of fine wine and gourmet appetizers. Over 20 different wines will be sampled along with complimentary appetizers. Ticket price includes a New Leaf Market wine glass and \$5 off your purchase of the night. This unique event is a festive way to discover new wines sure to please holiday party guests. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Second Harvest of the Big Bend.