

To the Editor of Camera:

We live in an amazing country – a country that is the world’s leader in food production and charity. Because of this, hunger and food insecurity may be the most solvable of our social and economic challenges. But, without the *will* of a society to end hunger, it can never be solved. This year’s 25th annual “Let’s Bag Hunger” food drive, sponsored by the Camera, has clearly shown that our community does have the will to change things for the better. Despite the challenges of the recession that we are all facing, we received 124,000 pounds of food and \$11,400 dollars. While slightly less than the 126,000 pounds donated last year, and less than our goal of 130,000 pounds, it still demonstrates the generosity of our community to reach out to those in need. Because of our size and position as a clearinghouse for large amounts of food, we can distribute four meals for every dollar donated. We estimate that one pound of food equals one meal; therefore this food drive will enable us to distribute over 169,000 meals.

Special thanks and recognition go to the Camera for its longtime sponsorship and excellent coverage of “Let’s Bag Hunger” and to Jill Stravolemos, Vice President of Marketing and Advertising at the Camera, for her many years of dedication to this important food drive. We sincerely thank the over 400 volunteers who served as store greeters, drivers, and sorters, without whom this drive could not have happened, and all the stores that served as drop off sites. Finally our gratitude goes to our generous community which, once again, has demonstrated its confidence in Community Food Share’s ability to make sure no one goes hungry in our community. We also thank our 58 Member Agencies, food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, residential treatment centers, and emergency food box programs, who receive 60% of our food and who, with Community Food Share, form a “safety net” partnership for all those in need of food assistance.

Generosity is a hallmark of the American people. At Community Food Share we see this acted out over and over as our community donates valuable dollars, nutritious food, volunteer time, and in-kind goods and services to help us fulfill our mission of ensuring that everyone has enough to eat. It is only as a community that we can alleviate, and hopefully someday *eliminate*, hunger and food insecurity in the midst of our abundance and that we can help those in need move from just surviving to thriving.

James D. Baldwin
CEO
Community Food Share
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