



Current Outlook

How has the recent economic slowdown affected the Food Bank of the State College Area? Pat Coble, Food Bank Executive Director, gives a significant set of statistics: From January to September of 2001, the Food Bank provided emergency groceries 1,084 times compared to 1,325 times during the same time period in 2002.

This 22 percent increase in the number of emergency food orders at the Food Bank undercuts the reassurance provided by the current 3.2 percent unemployment rate in

Centre County. More than 1,000 workers were laid off county-wide in 2001, and most of the unfilled jobs now available are low-paying service jobs. The amount of help people need from social service agencies (including the Food Bank) has gone up. Pat explains that the low unemployment numbers don't account for the underemployed, that is people who work two or even three part-time jobs without benefits, many of whom are not guaranteed their hours. As hours are cut, families that once got by are increasingly turning to the Food Bank and other social service agencies in Centre County (*Centre Daily Times*, October 7, 2002).

Keep in mind that in the US today:

- 25 percent of the workforce is classified as working poor;
- 64 percent of the working poor work full time;
- a full-time worker paid the minimum wage earns \$10,700 a year; and at any given moment,
- 23.3 million Americans need emergency food.

The 2000 federal census found that nearly eleven percent of Pennsylvanians live below the "problematic" federal poverty line, an annual income of \$18,000 for a family of four (*Centre Daily Times*, October 5, 2002).

How are these statistics reflected in Centre County? The Woman's Association for Women's Alternatives has determined that a single mother with one child needs an annual income of \$19,100 in order to be self-sufficient here. If that woman lives

in State College, she needs an annual income of \$22,836 (equivalent to an hourly rate of about \$11.00). Service jobs typically pay close to the minimum wage (\$5.15 per hour) (*Centre Daily Times*, October 5, 2002).

We should not be surprised that in November and

December of 2001, the county's seven food banks saw a 32 percent increase in applications overall, and the expectation is that applications will increase again this year as winter begins. The Food Bank of the State

College Area has already experienced several minor shortages and has had to increase both the amount and frequency of food purchases in order to keep up with the demand.

As the holidays approach we once again look to you for your continued support. Please be generous in your contributions of money, food, and time. Your generosity supports our neighbors in need and helps keep our community strong. Visit our Web site <http://HSCouncil.centreconnect.org/Foodbank/> to keep up with our news and learn more about how you can help out. Thank you and enjoy the holiday season!

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Les Urbanski is one of the volunteers who picks up donated bread for our shelves.

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Our New Logo

In this issue, we are pleased to introduce a new logo for the Food Bank. Finding an image which would reflect our mission and commemorate the Food Bank's twenty years of service to the community proved to be surprisingly difficult. A local graphic artist offered to donate his time and considerable talent to the task. Our new logo was born after some thoughtful discussion with him.



New Food Bank Logo

The symbolic nature of the hands should require no explanation. We believe they beautifully convey the concept of food sharing we had been seeking. The artist used wheat rather than bread because, in his words "it's a cross cultural staple and it implies that the food bank assists, but can't do everything." We agree! While the artist expressed his desire to make this donation anonymously and we certainly respect this request, we did want to publicly acknowledge this wonderful gift and share with you some of the story behind the image. We hope that you like it as much as we do.

The Food Bank telephone number is

234-2310

**Please call now to sign
up to volunteer during
our busy holiday
season!**



The Centre Sorting Center

Last spring, in response to a pressing need to sort and store non-perishable food, the Food Bank acquired our new Centre Sorting Center. The pressing need was to find storage for a large donation from Wegmans, who had cheerfully announced that they had loaded 900 boxes of food, paper products, drinks and more on 22 pallets for us as they prepared their new State College store for opening. Our facilities at that time did not have the space to sort and store such a large donation.

When the Nittany Mall offered to rent the Food Bank a 1600 square foot space at a very reasonable rate, we rejoiced. The site at the Nittany Mall is a collaborative effort, reflecting what can be done when we all work together to solve a problem. Funds to rent this space come from Central Pennsylvania Community Action, as well as the Food Bank. Bob Ott, administrator of the County Food Bank network, contributed funds to purchase tables for sorting, pallet lifts for moving food and a scale to record food weights. Shelving, donated over time by local Boy Scouts as their Eagle Scout projects, was available and moved into the space for food storage.

So when the Wegmans' donation arrived in late May in an 18 wheeler accompanied by Wegmans' staff, the Food Bank was prepared. At the Nittany Mall facility

where the media, Nittany Mall management and Food Bank volunteers awaited the shipment, a rented forklift was ready to download the pallets. With the help of volunteers, in particular from the Second Mile program, we have now sorted and distributed most of the Wegmans' donation.

The Centre Sorting Center also provides a convenient space for our regional food pantries, enabling us to handle large shipments for them to distribute to their clients. When Cindy Rebo-Peters, who oversees orders of food for our pantries from the State Food

Purchase Program, found a very good price on pasta, she was able to order 500 cases for our pantry networks.

Please note that we do not serve clients directly from the Centre Sorting Center: the mall space is only for sorting and storage of nonperishables.

We are all delighted with our new space! Thanks to everyone who has made the Centre Sorting Center a needed addition to our efforts to provide food security to the residents of Centre County.

The site...is a collaborative effort, reflecting what can be done when we all work together to solve a problem.



Volunteers sort the donations from Wegmans.

At the Food Bank Open Houses



Many visitors perused our scrapbooks to learn about our 20-year history serving State College.

The 20th Anniversary Open House brought people

together. Long-time volunteers who work on different service days were able to meet one another. Staff from other service agencies and members of the community had an opportunity to learn about our Food Bank.

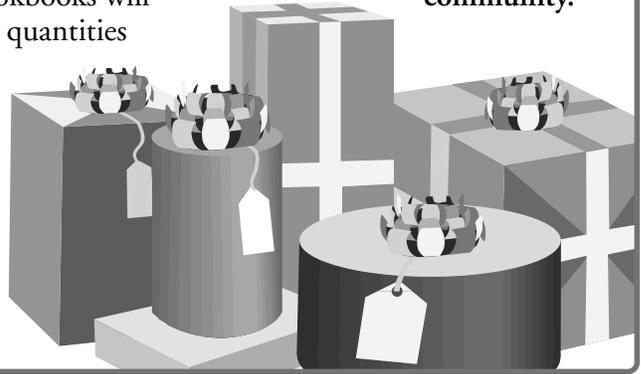


New Way to Support the Food Bank

The Bon-Ton has produced a "Home town Cooking" Cookbook filled with recipes from local chefs, as well as favorites from non-profit organizations and Bon-Ton associates. It is now on sale at the Bon-Ton store at the Nittany Mall for \$7.50 - and the store will donate \$5.00 from each sale to

the Food Bank of the State College Area. Cookbooks will be available while quantities last, and will make perfect hostess or holiday gifts, so buy now and help support the Food Bank in the process.

Your purchase will support your community.



A Member Agency of the Centre County United Way

Happy Holidays

<http://hscouncil.centreconnect.org/Foodbank/>
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The State College Area Food Bank
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