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News from the South Plains Food Bank

www.spfb.org

Working on our farm gives me a good focus...
and sometimes I feel like I'm the plant!

"If I'm going to be successful, I need to take care of myself just like I care for our plants!" —ZACK

Read about Zack on page 2



encouraging

Words from David



David Weaver, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer

It's something I would not have expected. Each day I look forward to seeing seniors and families come to the Food Bank to receive their boxes of nourishing food. And each day it's somewhat of a mini reunion. They tell us how much they appreciate the Food Bank...and we tell them how happy we are to be of help. But this day was different. I saw an old school friend standing in line, waiting for his food. He still flashed that great smile he had when I knew him as a football player in high school. But he apparently had made some wrong life choices and was now trying to get his life back on track.

As we talked I was again reminded how connected we all are on the South Plains. We're neighbors and we're friends. One in five people in our area is being touched by the Food Bank and our partner agencies—and my old high school buddy is one of them. Because of your friendship and support, we're able to reach out to him and to thousands of others each month who need to have food on their tables.

Thank you for being a friend to your neighbors

Thank you for your calls and your letters. You encourage me and you energize our staff when you tell us you're standing with us regardless of the state of the economy. One donor recently told us, "I support the South Plains Food Bank because I know what it's like to go hungry. I just want to do what I can to help those who need food."

Right now the Food Bank is facing major challenges. The good news is we continue to say yes to thousands who are hungry. But because of limited food and monetary resources, we are unable to serve many who need our assistance the most. So whatever you can do to help us meet this growing need will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for caring about the same people we care about. You are making an immense difference in people's lives...and they thank you from the bottom of their hearts.

Thank you for being one who cares,

David Weaver, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer



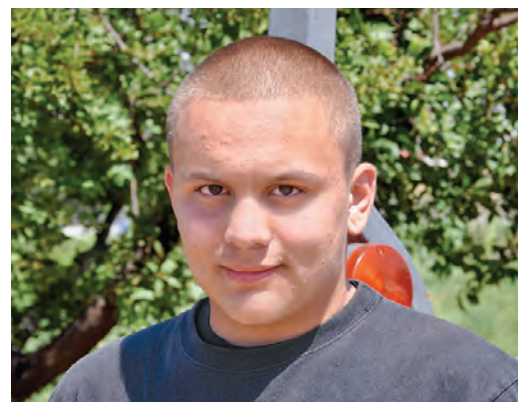
Food-banking solves two problems...hunger and waste.

Food banks collect food donated by individuals through food drives; unsaleable food from manufacturers, wholesalers and grocery stores; unmarketable or surplus produce from farmers; and prepared but unserved food from restaurants. At the warehouse the food is cleaned, sorted, packaged and distributed to individuals and families in need through partnership with local non-profit social service agencies and churches.

South Plains Food Bank, Inc. was founded in 1983 to provide food and hope for families in need in a 25-county area of West Texas. Through a network of more than 220 non-profit agencies and churches, food is made available to those in need.



Our GRUB program changes lives like Zack's



Thank you for giving me this opportunity to succeed.

Zack, continued from page 1

My name is Zack, and I'm a GRUB kid. GRUB is a program of the South Plains Food Bank that stands for Growing Recruits for Urban Business. I'm glad I'm in a program that's designed to teach young people like me life and job skills using the Food Bank's farm as a backdrop. Being here also gives me a good focus. When I was 15, I was driving a car too fast and I hit a tree at 110 mph. Fortunately, I came away with only a few scratches, but I knew I was heading the wrong way in life. I needed to change my ways. Being a GRUB kid helped me do just that.

Here I pull weeds, plant seeds, water and fertilize our plants and vegetables, and learn the kind of discipline it takes to manage a garden and a farm. Sometimes I feel like I'm the plant. If I'm going to be successful, I need to take care of myself just like I care for our plants.

It's kinda hard at home right now. I'm taking care of my mom and little brother. I never knew my father. So I'm the man of the house... and I need to be the right kind of man.

Turning my life around

When I arrived at our farm I had a bad attitude. I'd fight with just about anyone. I remember being asked where I thought I'd be in five years. I answered, "Behind bars." Now I can hardly believe I said that. My answer to that question today is that I plan on becoming a pediatrician. This program has been a big influence, and has made a positive impact on my life.

I owe so much to the South Plains Food Bank and to you who donate your money and time to help us grow and succeed. So many of our friends and neighbors rely on the food you provide, and I know they are really grateful. I think the sky is the limit for me in the days ahead. I'm the happiest I've ever been. Thank you for the part you keep playing in my life.

Without your donations, I'm afraid we would have starved

My name is Teri. I'll tell you straight from my heart. Without the South Plains Food Bank and your donations, there have been times when my kids and I could have starved to death. It's terrible to have to tell your kids there's no food in the house. Sometimes I feel so alone and without hope. But I don't dare feel that for too long. The kids need me too much—especially my 16-year-old son, who is autistic. My other son is 14 and does what he can to make us some money by picking up trash. But no young person should be stressing about a job at that age. However, we're in this together and we will make it... thanks to the Food Bank.

I deal with my hurt by reaching out to others

I want to say it again: you mean so much to us. Because of you, my kids don't have to go to bed hungry. When there isn't enough food in the house, I don't mind not eating. I'll never put food in my mouth when my boys are hungry and need that food to grow and be strong.

We aren't victims; we just have some struggles we're trying to get through. But if you don't have food on the table, there's not much strength to engage in the struggle. And I know we're not alone in our pain. There are so many others who have it worse than we do. My heart goes out to them, and I do all I can to help. In fact, the best way to deal with my hurt is to reach out to others.

Thank you for helping us stay in survival mode...my two boys thank you as well. What you give is keeping us alive.

Your donations save lives. Thank you.



"I'll never put food in my mouth when my boys are hungry..."

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Lilly and Charlie—Two decades of feeding the hungry



"We couldn't feed all these people if it wasn't for the Food Bank!"

Charlie and Lilly Bonner have been preparing food since the beginning of the Second Helpings program at the First United Methodist Church. For 20 years, they've been faithfully preparing food for anyone in need.

"As long as the good Lord blesses me with the health to do this," Lilly says as she scoots rolls of white plastic tablecloths down each table. "I guess that's how long I'll be doing it."

This community service project began in 1992, when only about 30 people were coming to eat. The program has now grown into one that often feeds over 200 people every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

The Second Helpings soup kitchen is a place where anyone

who is hungry can get a hot, nutritious meal in a safe, comfortable environment. Often you will see families with small children and the elderly going through the line. People are treated with dignity and respect, and every person working there has a passion for ensuring no one goes hungry.

Charlie and Lilly arrive at 4:30 a.m. to start preparing the food to be served at noon. Taking the food that has been donated by the South Plains Food Bank, they put together a delicious meal that always includes fresh salad and fruit. "We love what we do here," says Charlie, who oversees the small army of volunteers in the kitchen. "But we couldn't feed all these people if it wasn't for the Food Bank. There wouldn't be much for me to cook without those folks."

Help Stamp Out Hunger May 12



On Saturday, May 12, you can help Lubbock's letter carriers Stamp Out Hunger

On Saturday, May 12, all you need to do is leave donations of non-perishable food items, like Campbell's soup, canned meats and fish, canned vegetables and fruit, as well as pasta and rice, in a sturdy bag next to your mailbox before the time of your regular mail delivery. Lubbock letter carriers will do the rest, collecting the donations and delivering them to the South Plains Food Bank.

How serious a problem is hunger in America?

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's annual study measuring food security in the United States, the number of Americans living in food-insecure homes topped 50 million in 2009. Perhaps most alarming, approximately one in three is a child (17.2 million). Food banks need to be replenished constantly, especially in the summer months when supplies are often low. The *Stamp Out Hunger* effort comes at a perfect time to make sure that food banks are continually stocked.

What prompted the letter carriers to start this program?

Most of the nation's letter carriers see how hunger affects the communities they live and work in every day. The members of the National Association of Letter Carriers felt that the *Stamp Out Hunger* program was a way for them to have an impact on the fight against hunger.

Where can I find out more?

Just ask your letter carrier, contact your local post office, or visit the following websites to learn more:

- www.helpstampouthunger.com
- www.facebook.com/StampOutHunger
- www.twitter.com/StampOutHunger



MY SPRINGTIME GIFT

YES, David. It's a privilege to help provide nourishing food for our South Plains neighbors in need.

Here is my gift of: \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 Other \$_____

I commit to a monthly gift of \$_____. My first gift is enclosed.

Please charge my gift on my credit card: VISA MC AMEX

NAME _____

CARD NUMBER _____ SECURITY # _____

ADDRESS _____

SIGNATURE _____ EXPIRATION DATE _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

My e-mail address is: _____ @ _____

Please make your check payable to:

South Plains Food Bank

4612 Locust Avenue, Lubbock, TX 79404-3840

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To charge your gift by phone, please call (806) 763-3003.

It's easy! Give online at www.spfb.org



YOUR GIFTS CHANGE LIVES!

Your donation is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. We will send a receipt for your records.