

ROADRUNNER ROUNDUP



Roadrunner
Food Bank is
dedicated to
ending hunger
in New Mexico.

Summer not a picnic for many in New Mexico

The excitement about the upcoming summer break starts weeks before the school year ends. Already anticipating the last days of school, school age children excitedly talk about their vacation plans.

For thousands of children and families in our state however, the end of the school year is filled with worry and fear. Summer is not filled with picnics and barbecues but empty plates and hunger.

Arlene and her three children are among the families worrying about how to take care of their children this summer. Currently unemployed, she gets a weekly food box from the *Church of God New Mexico* but is concerned about how to make it stretch. "They get breakfast and lunch at school so the food I get from the *Church of God* feeds us for dinners and the weekends. How am I going to make it stretch for the additional meals this summer?"

Low income households spend approximately 25% of their income on food. The loss of school meals puts stress on an already tight budget. Over 50% of New Mexico's children receive free and reduced meals during the school year, yet only one out of three of those children participate in the Summer feeding program. That means that 110,000 children go without their regular meals during the summer months.

And, families that were already struggling must also pay for childcare. The additional expenses leave no spare money for any of the picnics, trips or special events that other children and families enjoy.

Summer is a difficult time for the food bank as well. Financial and food donations to Roadrunner Food Bank dry up as demand for emergency food increases. Our warehouse shelves offer less of the basic foods needed by so many people.

This year with your help, we can make summer brighter. Help us keep our shelves full by donating to Roadrunner Food Bank. Help us get more children to the free food programs by spreading the word -- **1-800-EAT-COOL** has locations and times.

* name changed to protect identities



Hunger on the rise

Tired of the increase at the gas pump? Imagine if your family barely had enough money to pay their bills and had to fork out an additional \$20 per week for gas to get to work or to the supermarket. An interview with Ed Costanza from the *Church of God New Mexico* says that the gas increases are having an impact.

How is the gas increase affecting your clients?

"The high gas prices and increases in heating and food are definitely putting a crimp in their income and ability to feed their families. We're seeing a lot more people than before."

What types of families are being impacted by the increase?

"We see all types who need more food -- there's a grandmother who's taking care of her very young grandchild, there are families with both adults working full time but not making ends meet. We have single moms who don't make enough to feed their children."

How many families are you feeding each week?

"We feed approximately 40 families or almost 200 people, each week. Clients are also welcome to our cooked dinner on Wednesday nights."

MAY 2007

Summer - No picnic for many in New Mexico
Comments from Executive Director

Ethics Award & Women of Influence Award

In times of crisis - Emergency Family Food Boxes

National Letter Carriers' Day

Hunger Awareness Day & Food Boxing Olympics

Full Plate Society & Upcoming Events

Comments from Roadrunner Food Bank's Executive Director, Melody Wattenbarger

I have the most wonderful, magical memories of summertime when I was a child. Certainly they were simpler times when you could wander the neighborhoods in the long summer evenings. You could leave the doors unlocked on your car and on your home. Our favorite pastimes were reading and swimming and walking to the drugstore with friends.

Food was an important part of those memorable summers. I remember homemade ice cream and cake on my June birthday. I remember hamburgers after a long day of swimming. I remember milk shakes at the drug store in my home town and on trips to visit relatives. I remember my father cooking family meals on the grill. I remember fresh apricots that I ate until my skin literally turned yellow.

The summertime memories from my childhood are entirely positive. Even though I loved school, I never dreaded the beginning of summer, which was always a carefree, happy time. Nothing about summer ever caused me worry or distress.

Unfortunately, thousands of children in our state have an entirely different experience in the summer. For them, summer is a hungrier time, a time fraught with worry and anxiety, a time that will create very different memories from the magical ones I have. **Please read more about how hunger affects children in the summer in this newsletter and then look into your heart and find a way to be part of the solution.** Thank you!

Roadrunner Food Bank Honored with Awards Ethics Award & Women of Influence Award



Roadrunner Food Bank of New Mexico is pleased to announce that it has received two major awards: For the organization, **The New Mexico Ethics in Business Award**, non-profit category, and, Executive Director, Melody Wattenbarger, has been named one of the 10 **Women of Influence in New Mexico** by the *New Mexico Business Weekly*.

The **New Mexico Ethics in Business Award** is sponsored by the *Samaritan Counseling Center*. The awards honor businesses, nonprofit organizations and individuals who work in New Mexico and that demonstrate the highest ethical conduct and social responsibility. In Samaritan's announcement it was noted that "even though it is a large organization with thousands of volunteers and (a small) paid staff, Roadrunner makes sure that its ethical standards are at the core of its being, and, are met and maintained."

Named one of the 10 **Women of Influence in New Mexico** by the *New Mexico Weekly*, Melody Wattenbarger has been Executive Director of Roadrunner Food Bank for over 11 years. In that time, the organization has grown to one of the largest non-profits in New Mexico, distributing over 14 million pounds of food with a retail value of over \$25 million.

In times of Crisis – Emergency Family Food Boxes

A fire; utilities turned off; fleeing domestic violence -- these are only some of the crises experienced by recipients of our newest program- **Emergency Family Food Boxes**. For a family in crisis, having to find food only adds to their emergency. Many may not have the resources to purchase or transportation to get food from a pantry. Every week, Roadrunner receives phone calls from families and individuals like these who need our immediate help. Many times in the past, the need was so immediate that Roadrunner Food Bank staff made house visits.

Thanks to our **Emergency Family Food Box** program, these people now get the food when they need it. Roadrunner Food Bank has sought out distribution partners who come in contact with these people during or right after the crisis. They include area elementary schools, UNM hospital and the Bernalillo Fire Department.

Our **Emergency Family Food Boxes** are designed to feed a family of four for 24-48 hours. Included in the box are easy open meals that require no refrigeration or preparation, canned fruits and soups, snacks, and drinks. Since the program started in the fall, Roadrunner Food Bank has distributed over 200 emergency food boxes.

Charles is one of those who received a box. He is a veteran with severe health issues and no transportation. After a hospital stay, he received an emergency box from the Bernalillo County Fire Department. Without it, he would have gone hungry. He has since been set up to receive food deliveries at his home through one of our partner agencies.



"STAMP OUT HUNGER" this Summer!



**LETTER CARRIERS
FOOD DRIVE
Saturday, May 12, 2007**

You can help *Stamp Out Hunger* this summer. On **Saturday, May 12th**, Postal Carriers across the nation will again pick up food that has been left at mailboxes.

The following items are needed: Peanut Butter, Cereal Bars, Canned Meat, Pasta Sauce, Canned Vegetables, Pasta, Macaroni and Cheese, Canned Fruit, Rice, and Dry Boxed Foods.

You can leave these items in the special food drive bag which is in the *Albuquerque Journal* on Wednesday, May 9th.

You may also drop off food at area *Smith's Food and Drug* locations from May 7 through the 16th. Watch *KOB-Channel 4* or listen to *KRST 92.3FM* or *KOB-FM 93.3* for more information on how you can help.

Thanks to the following businesses and organizations for helping at the local post offices with collection and sorting the food! *Sandia Labs, Department of Energy, Paradise Hills United Methodist Church, Hoffmantown Church, Children's Choice, Rio Grande BNI, Bank of America Merchant Services, and 898 MUNS (Air Force).*

Thanks to these sponsors:

Smith's
FOOD & DRUG STORES
www.smithsfoodanddrug.com



ALBUQUERQUE JOURNAL



Calling all Teams 2007 Food Boxing Olympics

In recognition of *National Hunger Awareness Day, June 5, 2007*, Roadrunner Food Bank invites teams to compete in our *Food Boxing Olympics 2007*, a hands-on competition to fill Senior Helpings boxes. The *Senior Helpings Program* is Roadrunner's initiative to provide medically frail, low-income seniors with home-delivered supplemental nutrition food boxes. Each food box contains 20 food items approved by nutritionists and provides 30 meals.

Leading community businesses, groups and organizations are invited to form teams of six individuals to compete in the *Food Boxing Olympics*. A total of 35 teams will compete to see which team can pack the most Senior Helpings food boxes within 10 minutes. A team from Albertson's set the record last year at 51 boxes.

The true winners of the *Food Boxing Olympics 2007* are the more than 1,200 seniors each month whose health and independence are enhanced by Senior Helpings!

There is an entry fee of \$144 per team. The fee from each competing team provides the funds for one senior to receive a year's supply of food boxes. **Register your team by May 11th.**

Contact Stephanie Silver, Fundraising Officer, at 247-2052 ext. 127, fax 242-6471, mail 2645 Baylor Dr. SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106 or email stephanie@rrfb.org.



Hunger Awareness Day June.05.07

On Tuesday **June 5th**, thousands of people will be commemorating *National Hunger Awareness Day*. Hunger is a significant problem in the United States with 35 million people nationwide seeking help from one of the *America Second Harvest Food Banks*. Over 9 million of those needing help are children.

Here in New Mexico, we will host a number of activities including a *Hunger Tour* for the Media and Public Officials; and our *Food Boxing Olympics*; and a *Dine Out Help Out* event on June 5th where the sale proceeds will be donated from restaurants statewide.

For information about activities in the weeks leading up to *Hunger Awareness Day* and a complete list of participating restaurants, visit our website at www.rrfb.org. If you'd like us to email information to you, contact: jasmn@rrfb.org.

ROADRUNNER FOOD BANK

OF NEW MEXICO



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Nonprofit
Organization
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Permit No. 1629



United Way of
Central New Mexico



Upcoming Events

Check inside this newsletter
for more information on:

Stamp Out Hunger Postal Carrier Food Drive -- May 12
Food Boxing Olympics -- June 5
Hunger Awareness Day -- June 5
Rotary Club Duck Pluck -- see the enclosed form

The Rotary Club of Albuquerque Annual Duck Pluck!

Roadrunner Food Bank is the 2007 charity of choice for the Albuquerque Rotary Club's *Annual Duck Pluck*. You can win great prizes while supporting Roadrunner Food Bank.



Look inside for your duck adoption papers. For more information on purchasing your lucky duck, contact the Rotary Office at 242-2651 or visit the Rotary Club of Albuquerque web site at: www.rotaryabq.org.

Full Plate Society Members Help Roadrunner Food Bank Plan for the Future

If you would like to help ensure that Roadrunner Food Bank will be able to feed hungry New Mexicans now, and during the years to come, please consider joining the *Full Plate Society*. *Full Plate Society* members pledge to contribute a minimum of \$1,000 per year for five years. (That's a monthly contribution of just \$83.33.) By making a multi-year pledge, you can help Roadrunner Food Bank more effectively plan for programs and services over the long term.

To learn more about the *Full Plate Society*, or to join, please contact Stephanie Silver, Fundraising Officer, at 247-2052 ext. 127 or stephanie@rrfb.org.