

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Contact Olivia Stern
Food For The Hungry Marketing Director
(330) 260-4059
oligreenich@gmail.com**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**HEADLINE: Donations to Food For The Hungry total over $300,000 and still growing!**

MOUNT VERNON, Ohio — The 41st anniversary of the Food For The Hungry drive brought Knox County residents, businesses, schools, and organizations together to help fight food insecurity. These collective efforts resulted in donations totaling $321,697.64 and 20 truckloads of food, and the total is still climbing!

Community members came together again this year to support food assistance projects and provide emergency client services through Interchurch Social Services, The Salvation Army, and other food assistance organizations of Knox County.

Volunteers staffed 11 different collection points around the county on Friday, Dec. 9, to collect food and money, while local media combined to produce an eight-hour live broadcast on radio and the internet.

Food For The Hungry announced the awarding of 23 grants, totaling **$38,000** to county projects involving food assistance.

*Grants of $2,000 went to:*

* Byron Saunders Foundation, Knox County Chapter
* Central Christian Church Food Pantry
* First Congregational Church of Christ Hot Meals Program
* Fredericktown United Methodist Church, Peace Meals Program
* Gay Street United Methodist Church Hot Meals Program
* Knox County Career Center Food Pantry
* Knox County Task Force for Older Adults
* Millwood Church of Christ Sharing Shed
* North Bend Church of the Brethren Food Pantry
* Say a Prayer Ministries/In Joy Food Pantry
* The Church on the Rise Food Pantry

*Grants of $1,500 went to:*

* CHOMP – Mulberry Street United Methodist Church
* Covenant Church Food Pantry
* First Naz Mount Vernon Hot Meals and Father’s Table Food Pantry
* Lazarus Life Ministries
* Mount Vernon 7th Day Adventist Hot Meals Program
* The Winter Sanctuary

*Grants of $1,000 went to:*

* Escape Zone
* The Freedom Center
* Mount Vernon Municipal Court
* New Directions
* TouchPointe Marriage & Family Resources Knox Works Program

Food For The Hungry also announced three major grants totaling $30,000.

* The Knox Learning Center received a Major Grant of $12,500 to purchase a refrigerated cabinet and for purchasing food items to store in it that they use to supplement the daily food deliveries. This additional nutrition will help students be more attentive and better retain what is being taught.
* Lifepoint Church, Backpacks of Hope received a Major Grant of $12,500 to help provide healthy weekend meals to the Mount Vernon Elementary Schools of Columbia, Dan Emmett, East, Pleasant Street, Twin Oak, Wiggin Street as well as the Knox County Career Center, the Career Center preschool and the Learning Center.
* Central Christian Church Food Pantry received a Major Grant of $5,000 to help them procure food supplies from the Mid Ohio Food Collective and help purchase a fifth-wheel trailer to help transport the food back to Knox County from Mid Ohio.

**The distribution of grants is made possible by the various collections within Knox County. Keep reading for exciting information on the collections!**

***The Knox County Elementary school collection*** was hosted by ***Psi Iota Xi Sorority***. The students collected $11,936.15 and 6,778 food items! That is 5.43 truckloads of food!

School Totals:

* Centerburg: 848 food items and $1,759.31
* Danville: 531 food items and $805.89
* East Knox: 418 food items and $850.00
* Fredericktown: 436 food items and $1,779.00
* Columbia: 614 food items and $767.25
* Dan Emmett: 436 food items and $351.50
* East: 565 food items and $1,052.86
* Pleasant Street: 404 food items and $441.00
* Mount Vernon Middle School: 212 food items and $617.23
* St. Vincent de Paul: 458 food items and $392.50
* Twin Oak: 652 food items and $1,693.61
* Wiggin Street: 699 food items and $1,364.00
* The Learning Center: 505 food items and $62.00

***The Knox County High Schools collection was a huge success.*** Local High Schools collected a total of $20,311.08 and 2,741 food items! That is 2.20 trucks!
Volunteer Shawn Dugan served as our High School Collection and Competition Coordinator.

School Totals:

* Centerburg Middle & High School: 105 food items and $577.78
* Danville Middle & High School: 36 food items and $1000.00
* Fredericktown High School: $883.21
* The Knox County Career Center: 2,500 food items and $17,250.09
	+ The lab that brought in the most items overall—Auto Tech Lab
	+ The lab that brought in the most food items (no cash)—Landscape Design and Management Lab
	+ Penny Battle Winner—Landscape Design and Management Lab
* Mount Vernon High School: 100 food items and $600.00

The top collecting schools in both the Central Knox County and Greater Knox County competitions are recognized and awarded with multi-year traveling plaques to acknowledge their achievement and contribution to Food For The Hungry.

The 2022 Central Knox County Award goes to the Knox County Career Center.
The 2022 Greater Knox County Award goes to Danville.

***The Knox County Career Center*** ***Online Silent Auction of themed gift baskets*** brought in a total of $5,160.00

***The themed basket totals for 2022:***Care Basket 1 - $110.00
Car Care Basket 2 - $180.00
Downtown Date Night Basket - $330.00
Family Fun Basket - $400.00
Foodies Basket - $650.00
For Her Basket - $250.00
For Him Basket - $225.00
Getaway Date Night Basket - $390.00
Graduation Party Basket - $600.00
K9 Christmas Basket - $60.00
OSU Basket - $225.00
Motorcycle - $835.00
Stacking Chairs - $130.00
Wedding Reception Venue - $310.00
Four Crown China Lot - $40.00
One Ton of Wood Stove Pellets Lot- $155.00
Cherished Teddies Lot - $15.00
YMCA Family Membership #1 - $150.00
YMCA Family Membership #2 - $105.00

***The Kenyon Snowflake Gala continues to be a significant contributor to FFTH.*** After two years of hiatus, the Snowflake Gala took place in person this year. The gala fundraising totaled $118,000! Kenyon presented this year's ***William A. Stroud Jr. Award for community service*** to former Mount Vernon Mayor, Richard Mavis.

***Mount Vernon Nazarene University*** presented the ***Stephen W. Zelkowitz Memorial Award*** to Joe and Marcy Rinehart. Joe and Marcy were honored for their constant selfless dedication to the community, their students, and everyone around them. Their job sometimes comes without thanks, yet their heart to bless everyone around them stays true. We honor their incredible commitment and passion for the annual Food For The Hungry Drive and the countless hours they put in to make this annual drive possible.

The Third Annual Food For The Hungry ***Service Club Competition*** was a huge success! Carol Grubaugh, Executive Director of the Knox County Chamber of Commerce, coordinated this collection.

* + Rotary Club of Mount Vernon - $521
	+ Kiwanis Club of Mount Vernon - $725
	+ Soroptomist Club of Mount Vernon- $2,900

The Soroptomist Club of Mount Vernon received recognition on the live broadcast for being the highest contributing club in the challenge.

The VFW Post 4027 in Mount Vernon unexpectedly brought in a check for $5,000 during the broadcast! The surprise donation raised the Service Club collection total to $9,146. The VFW Post 4027 received special recognition on Food For The Hungry social media for its contribution.

***Other notable donations:***

* The Fredericktown Christmas Walk—$11,780.00
* Fire & Ice—$1,100.00 and 537 food items
* Mount Vernon Dental & SuperQ 93.7 WQIO—$4,843.00
* Knox Community Hospital—$6,025.00
* Mount Vernon Nazarene University—$5,513.28
* Kenyon College President’s Holiday Reception—$1,477.00
* Turkey Trot—$1,710 and 548 food items
* McDonald’s Donation—$2,500.00
* Jon’s Plumbing and Heating—$1,430.00
* Foreign Exchange Students’ Christmas Gift Tag Fundraiser—$157.00
* North Maine Cafe Collection—$250.00
* The Blonde Robin Collection—$200.00
* Elvis’ Lost Brother (Eric Bressi)—$213.00 and 262 food items
* Centerburg Wreath Auction—$270.00.
* Danville Wreath Auction—$125.00.
* Krooners’ Karaoke is continuing its collection until December 31.

***Collection Point Totals:***

CENTERBURG:

* Interchurch Branch – 46 food items and $108.00

DANVILLE:

* Interchurch Branch – 99 food items and $850.00

FREDERICKTOWN:

* Interchurch Branch – 863 food items and $1,076.57

GAMBIER:

* The Village Market – 561 food items and $1,416.00

MOUNT VERNON:

* Aldi – 561 food items and $349.00
* Lanning’s Foods – 543 food items and $272.00
* Baker’s IGA – 432 food items and $345.00
* Lowes – 112 food items and $486.00
* Wal-Mart Supercenter – 575 food items and $240.00
* Ohio Eastern Star/Gallagher Center – $140.00
* The Knox Memorial – 3,283 food items and $10,936.00

Thanks to Megan Evans and her team with the Mount Vernon Arts Consortium for their use of the Knox Memorial and their amazing support!

You can stay updated on photos, radio interviews, videos, and more at FoodForTheHungryCares.org. The video archive of Saturday’s broadcast is also available at MVNU.tv in the on-demand tab and will be available for a full year.

Thank you for doing your part to fight hunger in our community!

Food For The Hungry, celebrating 41 Years of ***working together to care for our neighbors.***

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