

Washington County Harvest of Hope Reaches One Million Pounds of Food Rescued

Washington County Harvest of Hope (HoH) celebrated a significant achievement in August when it reached the milestone of one million pounds of food rescued and distributed to numerous area agencies serving the hunger needs of our community.

Each week, the HoH refrigerated truck travels throughout the valley picking up food at grocery stores, farm markets, and businesses. In general, the food is nearing its sell by date or is excess food that may have been produced by or delivered to the pick-up locations. That same day, the truck delivers the food to a food pantry, community meal site, or local agency to be distributed to those in need or served as part of a community meal. HoH works with the United Way and other community agencies and donors to achieve the vision of a hunger-free community.

Harvest of Hope carefully tracks the pounds of food donated and distributed. One million pounds was reached with a delivery to the O'Neill Senior Nutrition Program on August 9. Volunteers Steve Porter and Gary Dodez, regulars on the monthly truck schedule, made the delivery of a variety of foods donated through Witten Farm Market and Giant Eagle. Vesta Kidd Hall, Senior Nutrition Coordinator at the O'Neill Center, said that the HoH deliveries help to lower the expense of operating the senior nutrition program. The variety of foods delivered helps as well. "Our seniors always enjoy the meat, breads, and cookies that are part of the Harvest of Hope delivery."

Established in 2005, originally as an outreach activity of the Christ United Methodist Church in Marietta, HoH has grown in size and scope with more than 100 volunteers now serving 30 agencies in the Mid-Ohio Valley. The HoH mission has also broadened to include community gardens and nutrition education. Today, the organization holds 501(c)(3) status; is governed by a diverse Board of Directors from business, education, and service organizations; and conducts fundraising efforts to keep the food distribution service free for the agencies served.



O'Neill Senior Nutrition workers Cathy Ryan and Vesta Kidd Hall receive a food delivery from Harvest of Hope volunteer Gary Dodez on August 9. The delivery marked 1 million pounds of food rescued by Harvest of Hope.