



FALL ISSUE
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OF:



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The South Texas
Food Bank

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Food for the Mind

Empty Bowls X Honored the South Texas Outreach Foundation, Kansas Rocked



American Band: Grand Funk Railroad rocked Empty Bowls X to the delight of the over 1,000 attendees at the Laredo Energy Arena on Friday, August 19.

The South Texas Food Bank Empty Bowls X fundraiser took place Aug. 19 at the Laredo Energy Arena.

The event featured a concert by the 1970s-80s rock band Grand Funk Railroad and recognized the South Texas Outreach Foundation for their contribution to the food bank's mission of feeding the hungry in South Texas.

Shirley Sandlin Gonzalez and Bob Gonzalez of the Martinez Foundation Board, joined by their family, humbly received the award.

Shirley Gonzalez noted, "I am so happy that the South Texas Food Bank honors the foundation that my uncle and aunt started."

"We feel honored and blessed to have the opportunity to help our community through the South Texas Food Bank."

"The South Texas Outreach Foundation has been a faithful supporter of the food bank since 2007," said STFB Board of Directors member Erasmo Villarreal. "They have boosted our Adopt-A-Family program and are one of our Kids Café program sponsors."

"The Food Bank programs depend on the support from businesses, local institutions, and organizations like the South Texas Outreach Foundation to keep them going," STFB Executive Director Alma Boubel mentioned. "They keep the mission of feeding the hungry alive."

All Empty Bowl proceeds will help us with the operation costs of buying and transporting food to our eight-county service area that includes: Webb, Zapata, Jim Hogg, Dimmit, Maverick, Val Verde, Kinney and Starr counties.

"Thanks to all our generous sponsors, donors, staff, volunteers and attendees for coming out and supporting our event. Thanks to them Empty Bowls X was a great success," said STFB Board President Erasmo Villarreal.

The event also featured its staple silent artwork auction. Thank you to all the artists and businesses that contributed items to the auction.

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Alma Boubel, New South Texas Food Bank Executive



Laredo I.S.D. administrators along with the Child Nutrition Department and community partners like The South Texas Food Bank announced their Summer Feeding Program.

The South Texas Food Bank has a new executive director. She is native Laredo-an Alma Boubel.

The South Texas Food Bank board, led by president Anna Benavides Galo, and Board of Directors member Erasmo Villarreal made the announcement of Boubel's appointment effective July 1 at a recent employees meeting. She becomes the first female executive of the South Texas Food Bank, which opened in 1989.

A graduate of the University of Texas (Austin) with an accounting degree, Boubel's work experience includes 17 years as manager of accounting and controller at Laredo Medical Center. She also has an MBA degree from Texas A&M International University. She joined the STFB in December of 2014 as an accountant.

Boubel is married to Laredoan Edward Boubel, employed by the oil and gas industry. She attended Our Lady of Gua-

dalupe School and Lamar Middle School before graduating from J.W. Nixon High School in 1977. The couple has a daughter, Brittany, a sophomore at St. Augustine High School. Her parents are Laredo business owners Jesus M. Rodriguez and the former, Ninfa Garza Rodriguez, both in their 80s.

Boubel noted, "I am greatly honored and humbled with this amazing opportunity that has been bestowed upon me. So proud to lead such a wonderful organization that changes so many people's lives in our and surrounding communities."

Board president Galo said, "Our mission of feeding the hungry continues under a new dynamic executive director. She brings great attributes to lead the South Texas Food Bank into the future."

STFB Board of Directors member Villarreal added. "Our new executive director is a strong compassionate leader with a great vision to help alleviate hunger in our area."●

Highlights



The South Texas Food Bank held the official seeding (cropping) of their community garden this past April. Cantaloupe, cucumbers, squash, bell peppers and pumpkins were planted. bank clients.



On May 6, 2015, the local USPS held a press conference to encourage Laredoans to participate in the annual NLCA's Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive that took place on Saturday, May 9.



The "Strike Out Hunger" bowling tournament fundraiser for food bank took place on Tuesday July 21.

Six Elementary School Boys raise money for Adopt-A-Family Program



Ms. Elsa Rodriguez-Garcia poses with her students Sean Villarreal, Brandon Bento-Jackson, Kalin Rodriguez, Alejandro Ventura, Hector Garza and Matthew Morin for a group photo.

By Salo Otero, STFB Marketing Director

Six boys from Elsa Rodriguez Garcia's fourth grade gifted and talented class at Col. Santos Benavides Elementary School have made a difference in the lives of seven families struggling with hunger and on the rolls of the South Texas Food Bank.

Sean Villarreal, Brandon Bento-Jackson, Kalin Rodriguez, Alejandro Ventura, Hector Garza and Matthew Morin took the issue of hunger to the front door of the Wal-Mart on Northeast Bob Bullock Loop 20 and raised \$840 for the South Texas Food Bank Adopt a Family program. Adopt a Family started more than a decade ago. A \$120 annual donation means a needy family receives a box of groceries per month. The program helps 400 families monthly.

The boys, who tagged themselves Hun-

ger Fighters and drew up a logo with a fist and put it on a t-shirt, raised the funds by selling lemonade for \$1 per cup from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on May 4-5. It was part of Ms. Garcia's lesson plan for three groups identifying issues in Laredo. She noted that one group took the cancer issue and another the elderly, visiting them locally.

The boys checked the South Texas Food Bank website at southtexasfoodbank.org to view how they could help. They setup an after-school tour of the food bank, located at 1907 Freight in west Laredo, and learned about adopt a family from STFB staffer Leo de la Garza. "He gave us a tour. It was great. He had a sense of humor," noted one of the boys.

The six echoed, "It's a matter of helping the poor. The hungry is our community. We thought it would be awesome. It's all about being kind."

"I was amazed at what they did," Ms. Garcia lauded. "We were so excited that they surpassed their original goal (of three or four families)."

"What these boys did is an example for all young and old," South Texas Food Bank board member Doug Howland said. "We're hoping more get involved in the mission. Monetary donations are very crucial to our organization and the need continues."

The group used ingenuity and marketing. They made and sold the lemonade and then added donuts to the menu. "The donuts attracted so many people," the boys gleamed.

And, of course, the best marketing and fundraising tool of all, asking for a donation toward a crucial cause. The question, what was the biggest donation you got? "I got a \$20 bill," said one of the boys. "I got a 50," said another. "He asked for change." That's \$49 in change? What did you tell him after that? "I said thank you."

Yes ,every dollar counts. ●



TAMIU's Big Event 2015 was a Big Success

More than 300 TAMIU students and faculty members volunteered at this year's TAMIU Big Event that took place this morning - Sat., March 28- at the South Texas Food Bank facility. The students engaged in various activities, from bagging and sorting to painting the interior of the food bank office. Laredo Paint & Decorating provided the paint for this project.

STFB Board of Directors member Erasmo Villarreal thanked all the TAMIU volunteers for this amazing volunteer effort. In tune with the spirit of camaraderie and goodwill, the students surprised the executive director when in the middle of their work they stopped and sang "Happy Birthday" to him.

"On behalf of the South Texas Food Bank board, staff and clients that we serve, I would like to thank each and every student and faculty member that volunteered



at today's Big Event, "Villarreal said. "The work they have done here today is of great benefit to our operation. We just can't thank them enough."

Thank you to these outstanding young citizens of our community for keeping the less fortunate in mind and for giving back to their community. ●

STFB Recognized Volunteers with Appreciation BBQ



As part of National Appreciation Month and Week, the South Texas Food Bank hosted a BBQ dinner on Wednesday, April 15 to thank their volunteers.

Volunteers from different organizations, members of local media, food bank staff

and board members: Romeo Salinas, Robert Cuelar and Jaime Arizpe attended the event.

STFB Board of Directors member Erasmo Villarreal thanked the volunteers on behalf of the food bank board.

"We appreciate everything you all do for the food bank," said Villarreal. "Volunteers are valuable assets to non-profit organizations and you are very valuable to us."

The South Texas Food Bank board members proceeded to present awards to some outstanding volunteers. Among those recognized were: KTVV's Joe Valdez for producing PSA's for the food bank; Esmey

Preiado who has been giving life to the food bank's mascot Luzy this past year; Graciela Villarreal for her work at Empty Bowls VIII; Joe Dovalina for helping coordinate TAMIU's Big Event; B.B. Lacey for assisting volunteers in the community garden; Ofelia Meza for her work at this year's MLK Day of Service; Luis Palacios for coordinating the local NACL's Stamp Out Hunger Drive; and Charlie Romo was recognized as "Volunteer of the Year".

Raffle prizes were given out as well. Special thanks to the following event sponsors: Cindy's Catering, Nixon H.S. Meat Processing, Pizza Hut, Laredo Pizza Factory, Ruby's Sweet Creations, Jett Bowl North, South Texas Car Wash & Detailing, Sweet Spot Frozen Yogurt and Ed's Trophies & Awards. These sponsors donated food items and/or raffle prizes. ●

Our Volunteers

Volunteers are the heart of The South Texas Food Bank.

Thank you to the individuals and the businesses and organizations that sent their volunteer groups to help the food bank.



MISSION STATEMENT:

To alleviate hunger in South Texas by collecting and distributing food through partner agencies and programs while creating awareness and educating the community on the realities of hunger.

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Our Funding

The South Texas Food bank is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. The food bank's produce donations, resources, income and revenue sources come through diverse partnerships and collaborations. We also apply for and receive foundation grants and pursue diverse community fundraising opportunities.

We would like to extend our thanks to our members, funding partners and donors for their continued support.

For more information on how you can join the fight against hunger, contact STFB Executive Director Alma Boubel at (956) 726-3120 or at: aboubel@southtexasfoodbank.org

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THE SOUTH TEXAS FOOD BANK

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STFB Hosted 2015 Member Agency Conference



The South Texas Food Bank hosted more than 100 people at its annual member agency conference on Tuesday, March 17 at the International Bank of Commerce Annex on Jacaman Road and Loop.

Agency coordinators and assistants attended the event. Representatives from Webb, Zapata, Jim Hogg, Starr, Dimmitt, Maverick, Val Verde and Kinney Counties will attend.

Elia Solis, agency director for the South

Texas Food Bank, was the organizer for the event, which is mandatory in cooperation with USDA and Feeding America.

The South Texas Food Bank relies on more than 80 agencies to distribute supplemental food to the unemployed, under-employed and those living on fixed incomes in an impoverished eight-county area from Rio Grande City to Del Rio that has a 30-plus percent poverty rate.

The STFB receives product from USDA through membership in the Feeding Texas Food Bank Network and national Feeding America.

The Rev. Paul Frye, pastor of Laredo's Christ Church Episcopal delivered the invocation. Christ Church Episcopal is one of the largest agencies in Laredo, serving more than 400 families per

month.

The South Texas Food Bank serves an average of 27,000 families, 7,000 elderly, 7,000 children and 500 veterans and their widows per month. STFB Board of Director member Erasmo Villarreal welcomed the group. Laredo ISD superintendent Dr. A. Marcus Nelson delivered a motivational talk to the attendees.

There was also informational presentations by Laredo Health Department director Dr. Hector Gonzalez on food safety, Feeding Texas disaster awareness coordinator Gaylynn Bailey, Texas A&M International University Agri\Life staffer Cristana Mussett on nutrition and South Texas Food Bank Kids Café director Dr. Jesse Olivarez on civil rights.

Special thanks to IBC Commerce Bank for hosting this event. ●