



NEWS RELEASE

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November 2, 2007

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LOCAL STUDENTS, COUNTY COMMISSIONER KICK OFF LOWES FOODS EVENT

RALEIGH – Once **General Foods** representative **Marty Bell-Knell** cut the ribbon indicating it was time to start, shelves holding **4200 pounds** of food were quickly emptied. Lines formed at the cash registers. The food was boxed, not bagged, and carried by the pallet to a **22-foot truck** waiting outside the **Lowes Foods** store on Strickland Road in Raleigh. This was all accomplished by students from local schools. About 30 young citizens filled carts with food as they “shopped” for, scanned and boxed food donated by General Mills to kickoff the **13th Annual Friends Feeding Friends Food Drive** on Thursday, November 1st. **The food drive runs until December 31st at all Lowes Foods stores.** Locally, the food drive benefits food pantries supported by the **Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina.**

In the opening comments, Lowes Food store manager **Paul Urban** celebrated the 675,000 pounds collected during last year’s food drive and announced the goal this year is to raise 700,000.

Commissioner Ken Gardner was on hand to proclaim November to be Friends Feeding Friends month in recognition of the positive impact the food drive has in the community.

Peter Werbicki, President & CEO, Food Bank of Central & Eastern NC informed the in-store crowd that the pantries receiving the food “are truly appreciative of the food because demand for services increases during this time of year.” Werbicki went on to add that the food drive will help offset the impact of a 1 million pound reduction in local produce donations due to the drought.

Since Friends Feeding Friends began in 1995, 4 million pounds of food have been collected through the annual event and distributed to organizations that feed the hungry. The food drive is a significant source of food for all of the Second Harvest Food Banks in North Carolina. Those who would like to donate food may place it in the barrels located at the front of each Lowes Foods store.

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About the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina

The Food Bank of Eastern & Central North Carolina is a nonprofit organization that provides food for people at risk of hunger in 34 counties in central and eastern North Carolina. The Food Bank serves a network of 870 partner agencies offering soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, and programs for children and adults. In fiscal year 2006-2007, the Food Bank distributed more than 32.6 million pounds of food and non-food essentials through these agencies. Sadly, hunger remains a serious problem in central and eastern North Carolina. In these counties, more than 400,000 struggle each day to provide enough food for their families. www.foodbankcenc.org.