



## Summer Food Drive to Replenish Supplies

**BY TOM EMBREY: STAFF WRITER**

To offset the increased demand for assistance, the Sandhills branch of the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina in Southern Pines is reaching out to the community.

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[Donations can also be made online at the Food Bank's Web site](#)

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To help raise funds and supplies, the Sandhills branch is partnering with First Fridays in Southern Pines for a Sandhills Kids Summer Stock event. Patrons of the First Fridays, which are held on the first Friday during the summer in downtown Southern Pines -- the next one is June 6 -- will be able to donate nonperishable items to the Food Bank.

Residents can also make donations using envelopes in today's edition of The Pilot.

The goal of

Kids Summer Stock is to replenish low supply levels through donations of products or money, as well as increase awareness of the hunger many families face in the Sandhills.

Mary Waters, a fundraising consultant for the Food Bank, said the need can be met if everyone in Southern Pines and Pinehurst just donates a little.

"If everyone would give \$10, we would be able to meet our need," Waters said.

Peter Werbicki, director of the Food Bank, said, "For every dollar we get donated we are able to distribute about \$8 worth of food."

The most-needed items include canned meals -- such as stews, soups, tuna and ravioli -- canned fruits and vegetables, rice, pasta, dried beans, cereals and peanut butter. Pop-top cans are preferred.

Other basic necessity items that are needed include paper products, such as toilet paper and paper towels, personal hygiene items and infant products, such as diapers, baby wipes, formula and cereal. Loose glass and plastic jars of baby food will be discarded because of health regulations.

"Thirty-eight percent of the 35,000 people we serve -- about 14,000 people -- are working folks," Werbicki said. "Two parents are working, but they just cannot make ends meet."

The Sandhills branch of the Food Bank serves about 122 agencies in Moore, Lee, Richmond and Scotland counties. The total population in the service area is 206,371. The number of customers seeking help from the Food Bank has grown from 31,000 in 2000 to 35,000 in 2006.

Those partner agencies operate 74 food pantries, 21 group homes, 11 after-school programs, eight shelters and soup kitchens, six daycare centers and two sheltered workshops. And the local agencies are feeling the strain as well, according to the Food Bank.

For those who can't attend a First Friday but are interested in making a monetary donation, they can do so by calling

692-5959 ext. 2401. Donations can also be made online at [www.foodbankcenc.org](http://www.foodbankcenc.org).

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