

For FRIDAY, NOV. 6, 2009

Adults, costumed mascots to kick cans down Main Street

Zany "Kick the Can" competition to kick off 28th Annual Holiday Food Drive

Demand for food assistance up 20 percent

VISUAL: Adults and kids kicking cans around pallets of food in the middle of Main Street while mascots--ranging from a banana and a peanut butter & jelly sandwich to a restaurant chain's Red Robin and the Fort Worth Cats' Dodger--lead the crowd in cheers; 10 costumed mascots (including those just listed) competing in a special contest for the Mascot Challenge trophy.

WHAT: KICK THE CAN relay races kick off Tarrant Area Food Bank's 28th Annual Holiday Food Drive. A court judge and other community leaders judge the relay races while a local radio personality gives a running commentary on the wild, crazy activities of racers and their cheering squads. In addition to awards for fastest times, HUMOROUS AWARDS are presented in categories such as Cutest Costume, Mascot Challenge, Most Spirited and Oops!, which is for near accidents as kickers try to keep wayward cans on the street and out of the crowd. Bribing the judges with donations to the Food Bank is encouraged.

WHEN: Friday, Nov. 6, 2009, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Relay races start at 12 noon.

WHERE: Downtown Fort Worth on Main Street between Third and Fourth Streets.

WHO: Relay teams from, among others, Capital One, Encore Acquisitions, Associated Wholesale Grocers (AWG), Saddle Creek/Del Monte, Fed Ex, Haltom's Jewelry, Monnig Middle School, Pepsi, Regions Bank, Six Flags Over Texas, Southern Union Gas Services, Starbucks, Tarrant County Bar Association, Tarrant County Credit Union, Tarrant County Sheriff's Department, and the Hispanic Organization of Postal Employees (HOPE). The 8.0 Restaurant will offer a special \$10 lunch to spectators and racers as a fundraiser for Tarrant Area Food Bank.

JUDGES: The Honorable Brent Carr, County Criminal Court #9; Jack Miller, owner, Haltom's Jewelers; Steve Kellogg, market manager, Fort Worth Capital One.

WHY: The HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE launched by Kick the Can is CRITICAL TO helping supply the 1.5 million or more pounds of food Tarrant Area Bank distributes each month to 300 hunger-relief charities serving families and individuals. DEMAND FOR FOOD ASSISTANCE has climbed 20 percent over the past year.

Tarrant Area Food Bank's network of partner charities in 13 counties provides emergency groceries to and average of 35,000 households and serves more than 500,000 snacks and prepared meals on their sites. The counties served include Tarrant, Denton, Cooke, Wise, Parker, Johnson, Hood, Somervell, Palo Pinto, Erath, Bosque, Hamilton and Hill.

CHILDREN account for more than one-third (35%) of those receiving food aid, although they represent only 24% of the population in the counties served by Tarrant Area Food Bank. In those counties, more than 224,000 children are enrolled in the National School Breakfast or Lunch Program and are often at risk of not getting enough to eat at home.