



Food Drive 2013



Acton C.R.A.F.T. 4-H Club

4-H year — 2013-2014

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Missing out on Food Drive Fun

Every year, throughout the months of October and November, Massachusetts 4-H clubs across the state participate in the annual 4-H Food Drive. 4-H members, parents, and volunteers collect food and cash donations to support local food pantries. Last year, 4-H clubs in Massachusetts collected nearly 44,000 pounds of food and \$373 in cash.*

The 4-H Food Drive benefits the food pantries where the food is contributed, and also benefits 4-H. Last year, our club set up collection areas at 3 local supermarkets, and we were able to tell the public about the activities our club is

involved in, including the 4-H Fair, the Big E, and many of the community service projects we do.

This year, our club was split into 3 even groups (by age and experience) and went to Donelan's and Stop & Shop in Acton, and Shaw's in Stow. The donations at each site went to a different food pantry. We had lists of items that the food pantry needed to help people know what to purchase and donate. I was scheduled to work at Donelan's, but I was unable to go because I was sick that week.

I was disappointed to miss the Food Drive because it gives me a chance to meet

people and share about 4-H. I also have been at the 4-H Food Drive for several years and I can coach the younger 4-Hers how to approach people and ask them to contribute, not to my club, activity, or for my benefit, but for the benefit of others in our community.

— Victoria Richardson



*<http://mass4h.org/news/food-drive-results>



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Tori and Carolyn working a 4-H Food Drive in 2011

Reflections on Working at Shaw's in Stow

340 pounds of food
in 30 bags, \$13.71

The Joys of the Food Drive

Two weeks ago Noah, Andrew and I collected food for the 4-H Food Drive at the Shaw's in Stow. I think my group did a pretty good job approaching the public. We told them who we were, what we were doing, what we were looking for, and where to deliver the items they purchased. We were very polite, and I would say most of the people we asked were, too. My mother, Debbie Seale, and Elaine bagged the items, while Noah weighed the donations.

I think collecting the food is important, not only to supply the needy with food, but also that they know that someone cares and is willing to give up time, and sometimes money, to help them out. We constantly ran out of lists, but luckily Elaine was asking for them back on the other side. I like the idea of using a list; I felt like we weren't pressuring them to buy something, and yet we gave them options on what to buy, if they chose to. People with children gave more than

the people without children. I think this could have been because they wanted to make good examples for their children. We did not ask for money but we had a jar to collect monetary donations, so we also received money from generous people. I enjoyed working at the food drive.

— Timmy Seale



What Public Service Looks Like to Me

My role during the 4-H Food Drive was to greet people at the door of Shaw's supermarket. I thanked everyone who came even if they did not listen to us. Timmy, Andrew, and I worked hard to complete the tasks that Elaine assigned us: passing out flyers, encouraging donations, bagging and weighing food, and being chipper and happy with the public. I also worked to weigh some bags to help calculate the amount of pounds of food we collected. It worked well.

Timmy, Andrew and I worked hard to complete our tasks that were assigned. Elaine and Debbie, Timmy's mother, worked to measure and calculate the amount of pounds of food that we had collected at the exit. It was an interesting experience because I have never done an act of public service. It was also fun because I was working with my friends and I was doing it for a good cause of feeding the hungry.

— Noah Richardson



Tired, but Fulfilled

One afternoon, we stood outside of the entrance to Shaw's. We tried to get people to donate food for the Stow Food Pantry. We asked them, "Could you please get at least one of these things from the list and donate it on your way out?" Well, that's what I said. I don't remember what the other club members said. Sometimes people walked by, but most of the time, people took the list and donated. We got more food than I thought we'd get, and some people even donat-

ed money. Our group stood outside for a really long time. Sometimes I helped weigh the bags. I got tired and very cold, but it was still fun because I got to help others by collecting food.

— Andrew Zeng



Stephen Shirron
4-H Leader's Husband

Reflections on Working at Stop & Shop in Acton

345 pounds of food
in 25 bags, \$109.85

Stop & Remember

On the evening of November 8th, three 4-H'ers stood outside Stop & Shop. Those three people were Vernon, my sister Grace, and I. We were collecting food for the Maynard Food Pantry by asking customers to donate food and toiletries. We'd come up to each person and say with a smile, "We're collecting food for the Maynard Food Pantry. Can you get one or more of the items on this list and drop it off in that cart as you exit? Thank you!" In any case, that's

what we tried to say. Some of the time, the person would just walk through the doors without even looking at us. But a good portion of the time they'd take the list of most needed items and tell us that they'd try.

A lot of people donated, mostly older people or parents with their kids, but there were lots more people going in than food going out. So by the end, we had almost run out of lists entirely. We were asking people who donat-

ed if they still had the lists and whether we could have them back. Even with the list shortage, we still managed to get plenty of groceries for whoever needed them. It was truly worth it - despite the cold night.



— Olivia Blaufuss

An Uplifting Experience

Hello, my name is Vernon Gibbs, a newcomer to 4-H. When I first arrived at the place to set up the food drive, I was both skeptical of its success, and had a feeling the next few hours would be the most boring hours of my life. However, my thoughts quickly changed as the evening went on, chatting away and joking with the other 4-H members.

Of course, we also worked. By the tenth person I ambushed with lists of what to get as donations, I quickly went into saying the same thing over

and over. The number of lists we had quickly dwindled, and after recycling returned lists over and over, we ran out with a half hour left of our food drive. Mr. Blaufuss, Olivia and Grace's dad, helped out bagging and loading the bounty of food into his car. This eased the load off my mother's car, which was mostly full. Of course, said bounty couldn't be taken lightly - many people rely on food pantries for food, so I knew I couldn't just advance in the opposite direction and leave them to starve

just because I was tired of working. But the pantries don't want just food to feed the poor - they also need money to keep their establishment running. So, our group spent the remaining half-hour asking people to donate money, although my theatrics were outclassed by Grace's adorable face. Her pure cuteness and engaging smile made people stop and take notice. All in all, the evening exceeded my expectations and left a smile on my face.

— Vernon Gibbs

Help for the Hungry

Brrr! It was cold. My 4-H club was holding a food drive at Stop & Shop. We gave lists of the Maynard Food Pantry's most needed items to the people entering the store (we would deliver the food we collected later). We asked the shoppers if they could buy one or more items on the list and drop them off on their way out. Towards the end of the 2-hour timeslot that we worked, we ran out of lists and ended up asking for monetary



donations. Parents were there, too. They helped us by bagging and weighing the groceries. I was glad to work at the food drive, because I got to help people who really need food. That makes me feel good.

— Grace Blaufuss



Reflections on Working at Donelan's in Acton

362 pounds of food
in 30 bags, \$159.14

Sanctuary for the Hungry

When Carolyn, Nate, and I got to Donelan's, we put "4-H Food Drive" signs in carts by the entrance and the exit. Nate and I passed out papers with the top 10 most needed items. We were giving the papers to shoppers coming into the store to collect food for the Acton Food Drive. My hands quickly got cold! The manager of the store invited us into the store so we could get warmer and being inside let us talk to the shoppers more. We were in the store for both collecting the food and passing out the papers. The manager set up a display

of the food that Acton needed the most. It made it easier for shoppers to know what to get. It also made it easy for me so I didn't have to talk as much.

We were running out of grocery lists to pass out, so we had to collect them (along with the food!) from the shoppers leaving. When we collected a couple of lists at the exit, my mom said I should go run them to Nate and Rachel to use at the entrance. We collected the food and put them in a cart. Mom weighed them and put them in bags. After we had several

full bags we put the bags in another cart. We had five FULL carts in the end! Some people handed in money instead of food.

When people asked me which item they should buy, I said "Anything on the list is good." One person asked me "but which one do you want me to buy?" and I replied "if I am hungry I would want any of them!" I was surprised by how much food we got.

When we were putting the full bags into the carts and then later into the car, I couldn't even lift them!

— Matthew Overman



Regeneration of Faith

I actually found the food drive at Donelan's very fun. I felt so happy when people were generous; some even gave whole bags of food! The manager himself donated over \$100 worth of food! We did not have to stay outside in the cold for very long. We were able to go inside to get donations within 15 minutes of us being

there. It was very nice seeing the bags of food pile row by row near the cash registers right by the exit. It was even more renewing delivering the 300 pounds to the Acton Food Pantry. The walls were not full, but they were a lot better than Maynard's Food Pantry. It was almost bare. They were so happy when

we brought in the bags and bags of food. No other food drive I've done before has been this successful. This was very rejuvenating to my faith in humanity when I saw how much people care.

— Carolyn Kautz



Brotherly Love

Our 4-H club did a food drive in front of Donelan's in Acton. I was there with Carolyn and my brother Matthew. My mom and Rachel were also with us. When we first arrived at the store we set up a table and chairs for the adults. I was outside passing out lists of the 10 most needed things at the pantry. It was very cold outside and I was freezing! As people were coming closer to the entrance from the parking lot, we asked them to donate to the food pantry. Some people paid attention and some didn't. People were putting the items to donate into the bin inside as well as into our cart.

The manager let us move inside for both passing out the lists and collecting the food.

Most of the time, I handed out lists and told the people what we were doing. There was a display of the most needed items. We put the "4-H Food Drive" sign on the table in the top of the display. We ran out of lists a lot of times. That's when it got a little harder. I had to talk to people more than I did before. I had to explain what we were doing, what they should buy, and where the display was.

I was surprised to see how much

food we got. We filled five carts of food. The food was packed in bags in the cart. It was really dark when we left. I thought it was a good experience because it helped me learn how to communicate with people I wouldn't normally talk to. It helped me see how many different personalities people have. I thought that mostly young people donated food to our food drive. At first I thought I would never want to do it again, but now I feel that I would be able to do a really good job when we have another one!

— Nate Overman



A Snap Shot of the Food Drive



Grace persuades a generous donor to give her handfuls of coins

Stop & Shop



Grace, Vernon and Olivia stand outside the door



Vernon, Olivia and Grace are ready to hand out grocery lists to whoever passes by

Donelan's



Carolyn, Matthew and Nate showing the bountiful display Donelan's put together for the food drive



Carolyn, Nate, and Matthew passing out grocery lists and collecting food

Shaw's



Timmy, Noah and Andrew next to the donations of food they collected



Delivering

Andrew and Carolyn delivering food to the Maynard Food Pantry



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Creative Rowdy And Fun Team



Rachel, Tori, Carolyn, Timmy, Olivia, Elaine
Emily, Andrew, Grace
Big E 2013

The Ghost of Food Drives Past

In previous years, my 4-H club's food drive has been a very rewarding experience. Standing outside of grocery stores asking people for donations is not an activity one would typically jump up to join. However, I have always enjoyed the experience because of the unity it brings to my club and those who donate. Club members approach shoppers with lists of items that the store's local food pantry needs. Those interested can buy items inside the store and donate them on

the way out. After the food drive is over, my club weighs the food and takes it to the food pantries. This has been an excellent opportunity for members to fulfill their civic duties and become involved in their communities.

— Emma Steele



Emma loading the car after a
4-H Food Drive, 2011

A Simple Task

I helped take food to the Stow Food Pantry. Olivia, Elaine, and I helped unload groceries. These groceries were collected at Shaw's in Stow on November 8th; our first food drive of the current 4-H year. I was surprised by how bare the shelves looked, but soon they would be full of food for the needy. I really enjoyed this experience, not only because I love to help people, but also because it makes me feel

good inside knowing I did something to make a person's day. The lady who opened the pantry for us, Amanda Bennett, came out of her way on Veteran's Day just so we could unload a few groceries. Well, more like 340 pounds of groceries in roughly 30 bags. I would like to thank Elaine for driving me and Olivia so that we could complete this task.

— Emily Deyst

