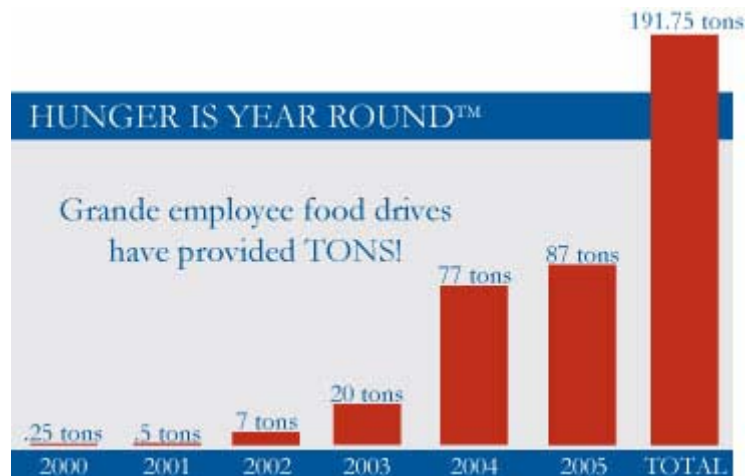


CREATIVE IDEAS THAT WORK

“Grande Communications Passion & Commitment Investment Club’s annual food drive HUNGER IS YEAR ‘ROUND™ has inspired the Hays County Area Food Bank to invite other Hays County employers to consider initiating a similar program in their organizations. Grande shared some of the ways this drive has been so successful for their employees.”

*Pat Tessaro, Executive Director
Hays County Area Food Bank*

Our friends at Grande Communications® began a food drive in 2000 that has grown into a successful annual event collecting over 191 TONS of food!



THE MODEL

A successful food/fundraising drive can be attributed to many factors including:

- pre-planning
- goal setting
- enthusiasm of food drive drivers
- messaging
- follow-up/announce results

Employees **preplan** effective activities to bring attention to the food/fundraising drive effort. Some methods that are helpful:

- **“food” works!** - While the focus of the drive is on **food for others**, eating together helps add to the strength and closeness of the “employee” family.
 - Preparing and selling breakfast tacos for employees at the office (employees may choose NOT to eat but will most likely be happy to contribute; “eating events” help keep them mindful of bringing in food for the drive)
 - Departments may choose to kick in funds to donate to a larger “eating event,” like cooking hamburgers at lunchtime, inviting families to join them for after work hours’ meals, etc.
 - Other food activities can include pizza sales, popcorn sales, bake sales, ice cream/candy breaks, etc. (in 2005, six of our employees pushed an beverage cart throughout our

buildings to sell specialty coffees/hot cider in the mornings and Root Beer Floats in the afternoon)

- **“challenges” make it fun!**
 - Interdepartmental challenges add a lot of energy to a drive of any kind; one group usually challenges another to beat a goal of dollars raised or pounds collected with the “losing” department promising to do something that is always hilarious.
- **kick-off reminders** – small grocery sacks with announcements of where to deliver food and/or funds, soup cans with stickers reminding of efforts, pay-stub attachments/pre-addressed envelopes, etc. give employees physical/visual reminders of their needed commitment
- **silent auctions, drawings and contests** – these can be provide another means of fundraising if prizes can be made available

Let the employees **set the goal** – make it fun! “The Amount of Weight We Wish We Could Lose!!!” or “Ten Times the Age of All Our Cars Put Together” or “Double the Amount We Did Last Year!”

Here is what we know about the **enthusiasm** of food drive leaders:

- volunteers can work together, which is TONS more fun than one person taking on the whole load of driving the spirit of the food/fundraising drive
- working together to get the pre-planning completed and then carrying out the plans is what team work is all about
- employees can also contribute volunteer time during the food drive to the Food Bank

Here is what we know about **messaging**:

- some, but not all, emails are effective
- events carry stronger messages than repeated emails
- flyers posted everywhere help “advertise advertise advertise”
- updated messages (like “campaign thermometers”, etc.) located near the food collections help create and sustain momentum
- company newsletter can be a very helpful tool to carrying the stories and photos before, during, and after the food drive

After all is said and done, **follow-up and announce results** with all the excitement and celebration you can muster. Your employees will feed hundreds and hundreds of our neighbors – most of who are elderly or very young children – and will be shocked to learn about the huge need in Hays County. Good luck!!!

“Grande employees have developed a strong reputation for answering challenges to help the communities we serve. It's rewarding to see our employees give back to the communities where they live and work, and I'm especially moved by the fact that each employee, not the company itself, gave an average of 193 pounds of food in the 2005 HUNGER IS YEAR 'ROUND™ Food Drive.”

*Libby Malone, Director of Community Relations
Grande Communications*



PASSION & COMMITMENT INVESTMENT CLUB COMMUNITY CHEST

For more information, contact Pat Tessaro at 392-8300 or pat.haysfoodbank@grandecom.net.