

Dear Crosswinds Unit Key 3's,

My wife Kristin and I are the new Crosswinds District Scouting For Food (SFF) co-chairs. We want to bring you up to speed on some exciting changes in the SFF program and to enlist your help in bringing this important community service project to a new level.

It's hard to imagine a more fundamental way of "helping others" than providing food for the less fortunate in our community. Last year, 10 of the 46 units in our district collected a total of 7,577 pounds of food for local food. While that is a great start, we think you'll agree that we can GREATLY improve upon last year's 26% participation! Just think – at last year's collection rate, we could provide almost 35,000 pounds of goods if all of our units participate!

So, what's new with the SFF program?

You have probably heard about some of these changes at recent Crosswinds district roundtables:

- Instead of one single district-wide SFF program that just runs in February, we are moving to a program that runs all year long and is managed more at the unit level. Under the new model, each unit in the district will pick one month out of the year for their SFF drive. Given the number of units in the district, we should have between 2 and 4 units participating per month.
- There are a few different ways that units can run their drive - it's your choice:
 - The traditional "2 weekend" approach where flyers and bags are delivered one weekend and then the food is collected the following weekend
 - A "1 day" approach where you drop off flyers in the morning and pick up in the afternoon
 - A "collection point" approach where you drop off flyers with instructions to drop off goods at a predetermined location and time. Your unit would have to come up with that location and collect the food at the specified time. This approach works well when flyers are distributed at events or gatherings such as religious services.
 - Be creative - if you have other ideas, we'd love to hear them!
- Your unit will choose which food pantry to supply. If you don't have a preference, then we can provide you a list of pantries that need help.
- In order to avoid "double-dipping" in any neighborhoods we will establish SFF "routes" that are loosely based on existing Luminary routes. If your unit does not do a luminary fundraiser, we'll assign you some of the routes from another unit that has a large number of luminary routes. This approach will balance the SFF load across the district.
- We encourage Cub Scout packs to coordinate their SFF drives with their affiliated Boy Scout Troops or Venture Crews.
- Harris-Teeter grocery stores have agreed to supply our grocery bags throughout the year.

What are we asking you to do?

The main thing we're asking you to do is PARTICIPATE!! Given the statistics cited above,

We challenge the Crosswinds District to DOUBLE its Scouting For Food collections from last year -- that's 15,000 pounds of food between September, 2007 and August, 2008.

Given the number of units in our district, we should be able to reach this goal easily as long as you PARTICIPATE! To be clear, we're not asking any individual unit to double their collection output from last year. Rather, we're asking more units to participate in the program.

How do we get there?

We need you to assign an SFF focal point for your unit and select one month out of the year to run your SFF drive. Once you've done that, contact Kristin and me with the following information:

- your unit number
- your chosen SFF month
- your chosen food pantry (beneficiary)
- the name of your unit's SFF focal point.

We are maintaining a month-by-month district SFF calendar to ensure that we have even coverage throughout the year. As such, it's possible that we will ask you to choose a different month if the one you select is already sufficiently covered. The key message here is to CHOOSE EARLY to ensure you get your first pick! (We can already tell you that February is covered).

About a month before your unit's SFF drive, we will contact you to collect information for flyers that will be customized for your unit's drive, to nail down the exact routes you'll be covering and to determine how many flyers/bags you will be distributing. We'll typically deliver the flyers and collection bags to you at the monthly roundtable prior to your drive. You will also need to decide which approach you want to take for your drive (i.e., "2 weekend," "collection point," etc.).

Once your drive is underway, your unit will be responsible for:

- distributing flyers and collection bags
- collecting the food
- weighing the food you've collected
- delivering the food to the selected food pantry
- reporting your totals back to Kristin and me.

We will be maintaining the running total of food collected and tracking our progress toward reaching our goal of doubling our SFF collections at each month's roundtable meeting.

So now it's up to you!! We're looking forward hearing back from you soon with your selected month and beneficiary, and we especially look forward to a successful Scouting For Food campaign! Please let us know if you have any questions, comments or ideas on how to improve this program.

Yours in Scouting,

Chris and Kristin Meyer
Crosswinds District Scouting For Food co-chairs

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