



Left ~ Bank of America Foursome at Food Bank's 7th Annual Golf Tournament held in May at Juniper Hill in Northborough.



Right ~ Tony Giunta, Store Manager for Hannaford Bros. Supermarket in Milford presents the Food Bank with a check for \$2,516 from its Have a Heart Campaign on National Hunger Awareness Day, June 6.



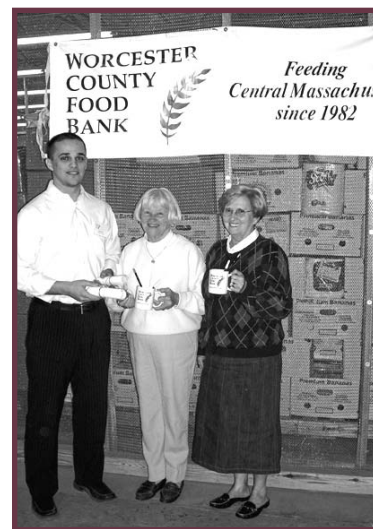
Worcester Vocational High School Students in the DECA Club receive their 2005 Harvester Award at the Food Bank's 23rd Annual Meeting.



Jean McMurray, Food Bank Executive Director, presents Wanda Davis, Executive Director of the Fitchburg-Leominster Community Action Center, with the 2006 Partners in a Vision Award.



Board President Joe Gardner and Jean McMurray with Glen Mair, former board member and recipient of the 2005 George McCarthy Award in recognition of his years of volunteer service.



Mike Johnson, Food Bank staff member, thanks Genna McMurray and Aline Knapik for their volunteer efforts on Appreciation Day.



Mt. Kilimanjaro and the full moon. See story on page 3: *Climb for Hunger.*

## Shrewsbury Day

On Thursday, January 26th the WCFB opened its doors to the Shrewsbury community in an effort to engage, educate and lead



**Representative Karyn Polito addresses over 100 Shrewsbury residents who came to the Food Bank to hear about hunger in their community.**

the town in creating a hunger-free Shrewsbury. Over 100 town residents, from toddlers to seniors, responded to an invitation to become involved in the food bank's mission and enjoyed tours, displays, and fabulous food from the Community Kitchen. Residents were joined by Congressman Jim McGovern, Senator Ed Augustus, Representative Karyn Polito and Board of Selectman Chair John Lebeaux who each spoke to the issue on the national, state and local levels. Many were struck by statistics stating that Shrewsbury has almost 400 children and over 300 seniors living below the poverty level.

Congressman McGovern who serves as the Co-Chair of the Congressional Hunger Center stated that, "Hunger is an issue we can solve, but we need the political will to make it happen." He praised the work of Jean McMurray and the Food Bank and urged all in attendance to get involve in the fight to end hunger.

Joined by partner agencies St. Anne's Human Services and the First Congregational Church, visitors learned more about the work these dedicated volunteers do on a daily basis. First grade teacher Jean Lalone shared details and information on the curriculum and food drive the students and teachers at Beal School participate in every year, teaching the students math and language arts skills

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## Hunger in Worcester County Increases by 40 Percent

Hunger in America 2006 is the largest, most comprehensive study of domestic hunger ever conducted. It was commissioned by America's Second Harvest – The Nation's Food Bank Network, of which the Worcester County Food Bank is a member. As a participant in this important study, the Food Bank conducted 300 face-to-face interviews with people seeking emergency food assistance and surveyed all of its partner agencies, including food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters.

The results of the study are disheartening: 71,000 different Worcester County residents – including 27,690 children – receive emergency food assistance each year from the Worcester County Food Bank Network of partner agencies. This figure represents a 40 percent increase since 2001 indicating that the hunger problem has grown dramatically throughout the region. Approximately 12,100 different people receive food assistance in any given week from the Food Bank Network.

Whether people experience long-term unemployment or are faced with sudden hard times such as an illness or an unexpected expense, they are forced to turn to the Food Bank for help with feeding their families. In Worcester County, 68 percent of households served by the Food Bank have incomes below the official federal poverty level of \$15,670 a year for a family of three, and 31 percent of households have at least one adult working.

Eighty-one percent of households are food insecure, which is defined as not always having enough money to access food to meet basic needs of family members. Of those, 38 percent are food insecure with hunger, which is defined as households that have to decrease the quality and quantity of food they consume to the point where family members go without eating. The high level of food insecurity in Worcester County reflects the high cost of living in Massachusetts and the widening gap between income and expenses for basic needs.



Dan Jones of Ruth's Harvest Pantry, Leominster, MA, discusses Hunger in America 2006 at the 7th Annual Partner Agency Conference on June 6th at Holy Cross.

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## Food Facts

### DID YOU KNOW?

Community Harvest Project (CHP) in North Grafton, MA donates all of its fresh produce to the Worcester County Food Bank, which is then distributed throughout Central Massachusetts to children, senior citizens, individuals and families in need of nutritious food. Since 2003, CHP has donated 98,000 pounds!



Please visit [www.community-harvest.org](http://www.community-harvest.org) to learn more and for ways you can volunteer.

## Food Bank Community Tours

Please join us for one of our "Behind the Scenes" tours of the Food Bank so you can see your support at work in the community. Everyone is welcome. Please call Mike Johnson at 508-842-3663 for more information or to let us know you're coming. Light refreshments served. Tours are currently scheduled for the following dates:

July 27, August 24, September 28, October 26.

## A New Food Bank Truck



**The purchase of the Food Bank's new 18-foot refrigerated truck was made possible through the very generous support of the following Worcester area foundations: Fletcher Foundation, Albert J. Gifford Charitable Trust, George F. and Sybil H. Fuller Foundation, Stoddard Charitable Trust and Wyman-Gordon Foundation. The truck replaces the Food Bank's 1995 truck which was purchased used in 1997. Thank you to everyone who helped!**

## Director's Message

Dear Friends,

As the lead story in our newsletter explains, hunger is a growing problem in Worcester County. Public awareness of the problem is also growing. According to a recent opinion poll based on bipartisan research conducted for the Alliance to End Hunger, hunger and poverty are increasingly important as political issues in the minds of American voters.

Here are a few of the interesting poll results described in [Rising Concern: A Report on American Voter Attitudes on Hunger and Poverty in 2006:](#)

- ◆ *The number of Americans citing hunger and poverty as the single most important issue in deciding their vote for Congress or U.S. Senate more than doubled from 4% to 10% between July 2002 and March 2006.*

- ◆ *Poverty and hunger rank just behind defense and terrorism in respondents' stated priorities.*

- ◆ *Concern about hunger transcends political party lines as both Republicans (76%) and Democrats (90%) said they would support candidates who make hunger a priority.*

- ◆ *94% of Americans agree that "people who work should be able to feed their families."*

- ◆ *76% of voters believe we could "dramatically reduce the hunger problem if we really made it a national priority."*

There's a link to the 10-page report on our web-site [www.foodbank.org](http://www.foodbank.org). I encourage you to read this report, which I found to be thought provoking. I also hope you will use it as a discussion piece in which to engage and educate members of your business, civic, education and faith communities.

As always, I thank you for your continued support of the Food Bank's important mission. Best wishes for a wonderful Summer!

Jean G. McMurray  
Executive Director

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## Hunger Increases

Many of the people who receive food assistance report having to make difficult choices between food and everyday necessities. Fifty-six percent report having to choose between paying for food and utilities or heating fuel; 52 percent choose between paying for food and rent or mortgage; and 31 percent choose between paying for food and medical care.

*The Year-round Hunger-Relief Efforts of the Worcester County Food Bank*

During fiscal year 2005, the Worcester County Food Bank distributed 4,808,880 pounds of donated food and grocery product to its network of 260 partner agencies that have programs for feeding people. Between 2001 and 2005, the Food Bank increased its distribution of donated food by 27 percent. With the dramatic increase in the number of people seeking food assistance the Food Bank is compelled to collect and distribute as much donated food as possible so that people won't have to choose between adequate nutrition and other basic needs.

As the largest hunger-relief organization in Worcester County, we are the primary source of donated food for our partner agencies. Food donors include retailers, manufacturers, local farms, restaurants, food drives and the state and federal governments. Every day the Food Bank distributes over 19,000 pounds of food; enough food for over 15,000 meals. Given the high volume of daily distribution the Food Bank needs to constantly replenish its food supply.

Food is a basic human need and right. No one should go to bed hungry or have to choose between buying groceries and paying for other basic necessities. Research from our recent hunger study will be used by the Food Bank for planning its programs and services in the coming year. The results will also help to inform public policy at the local, state and federal levels. Ultimately the study provides a better understanding of the issue of hunger and the thousands of people it affects. Hopefully it will bring us one step closer to creating a hunger-free Worcester County.

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## Shrewsbury Day

while at the same time helping those in need. High School students from the DREAM Team who ran a food drive at Thanksgiving, Cub Scouts clutching bags of donated



grocery items, and ten-year veteran volunteer Jim McKiernan were in attendance as well.

Shrewsbury Day is the second in a series of events the Food Bank plans that focus on specific communities within Worcester County, the statistics related to hunger in their own backyards, and a push from local leaders to become involved in the fight to end hunger. Grafton Day was held in 2005. Next up will be Auburn Day which we hope to hold later in 2006.

## Climb for Hunger

Dave Carpenter, a WCFB Board Member, has been involved with the Food Bank for over 10 years. When he decided to celebrate his 50th birthday with a climb up Mt. Kilimanjaro, Dave wanted to "link this experience of a lifetime with an organization that is very close to my heart."

Dave invited friends and family to donate to the Food Bank on behalf of "Dave's Climb to End Hunger" and promised to match those donations. On 14 December last year, Dave was camped at 18,500 feet, at the base of a glacier in the Kilimanjaro crater, looking at the conjunction of the full moon with the planet Mars. At the same time he was celebrating good health and a memorable adventure, Dave was remembering that, "In this, the richest nation in the world, over 36.3 million people -- including 13 million children -- live in households that experience hunger or the risk of hunger." Little did he know that his call to help did not go unheeded. When Dave returned from his voyage, he had raised a total of \$10,627 for the Food Bank.

**...standing alone on the moutaintop it is easy to realize that whatever special nests we make...we all dwell in a house of one room -- the world with the firmament for its roof....John Muir, John of the Mountains, 1938**

