

## Take time to donate to your local food bank

In this season of giving, we at the Kendall County Democratic Party (KCDP) encourage you to make a donation of food, funds, or volunteer time to one of our local food banks.

According to Feeding America, a charity working to end hunger in the U.S., Kendall County has nearly 1,000 children who live with food insecurity. (Defined as “the lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life,” per the USDA.)

Food insecurity can result from unemployment, poverty, or income shocks (such as a sudden and unexpected repair to one’s home or car, or an exorbitant medical bill). In Texas, over 450,000 seniors (age 60-plus) are food insecure, 8.5% of that population.

According to the USDA’s annual “Household Food Insecurity in the United States” report, millions of Americans don’t have enough food to eat or don’t have access to healthy food.

In the midst of a multitude of intractable, seemingly insolvable problems in our country, this is one problem we know we can solve and how to do so. Food assistance programs, such as food banks, are key solutions to the problem of food insecurity.

We want to highlight two food banks in particular, the first being Hill Country Family Services.

HCFS “operates at the intersection of urgent need and lasting change,” per their website. They offer food and financial assistance, counseling, financial literacy education, the Kendall County Blue Santa program, and many other services.

They also operate the Random



Hangers Thrift Shop and Warehouse, open Tuesday-Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. They’re located at 114 W. Advogt in Boerne.

They need donations of money, food, and diapers; volunteer time; and limited amounts of clothing and household items. HCFS also maintains an Amazon Wish List for specific needs; a link appears on the HCFS website.

Recently, HCFS participated in the 2023 Greater Boerne Chamber of Commerce-Kendall County Nonprofit Economic Impact Study funded by the Kronkosky Charitable Foundation. The study “highlighted areas of gaps in local nonprofit services. The major gap identified was access to affordable mental and behavioral health services in Kendall County.”

HCFS has recently added a senior director of behavioral health services to its staff to increase its service offerings in this critical area. In 2023, HCFS provided 800 free counseling hours for residents of Boerne and Kendall County.

We encourage you to drop off a bag of nonperishable groceries or a monetary donation (or both) at their offices on Advogt. The Patrick Heath Public Library also accepts donations of food on behalf of HCFS.

HCFS is also always looking for

volunteers to help them provide their many services. Give them a call at 830-249-8643 to find out more about specific needs and volunteer opportunities.

The second agency we want to highlight is the San Antonio Food Bank, which serves more than 100,000 people weekly in 29 counties, including Kendall. You have probably seen their red collection barrels at H-E-B. Next time you’re shopping, pick up an extra can of peanut butter or a six-pack of tuna and drop it in their barrel.

They offer assistance in organizing local food and fund drives, including loaning their distinctive red barrels to the effort.

They also encourage collecting monetary donations at any local drive you organize. For every \$1 they receive in donations, they can provide seven meals to those in need. You can find out more by calling their office at 210-337-3663 or emailing them at [info@safoodbank.org](mailto:info@safoodbank.org).

On the morning of January 27, they’re offering a volunteer opportunity at the “Mission San Juan Community Farm Harvest” event. Volunteers will harvest broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and more, for distribution to those in need. To find out more, call/email their office.

Please help us solve the issue of food insecurity in our community. KCDP wishes you and yours the very happiest of holiday seasons.

For more information on our activities, call our office at 830-331-1243 or visit [www.kcdems.us](http://www.kcdems.us).

*Laura Bray is Chair of the Kendall County Democratic Party.*