



MIDDLESEX COUNTY IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local Rivalry Pressing the Plight of the Hungry

MIDDLESEX COUNTY – There was more than just a point spread riding on the Jan. 13 St. Joseph-North Brunswick Township high schools' basketball game.

Administrators from these Central Jersey rivals challenged their communities to “stamp out hunger” at both home-and-away games this season by hosting food drives to benefit the Middlesex County food bank.

In an added twist, the top collecting school would earn the right to “pie” their principal in the face at a subsequent game, North Brunswick Township High School Principal Joseph Clark confirmed. “What we’re really talking about here is just being connected with the community, whether it’s through MCFOODS (Middlesex County Food Organization and Outreach Distribution Services) or our own food pantry,” Clark said.

The final tallies for the 48-to-45-point game played in St. Joseph’s favor, as did the collection. The Metuchen-based parochial school led this secondary competition too, filling 15 bins with nonperishables versus North Brunswick’s 11 bins.

“We figured if the kids see the administrators getting along for a good cause, they might too,” said St. Joseph Principal John Anderson. “We had been talking and a lot of the food banks in the winter time aren’t getting the supplies they need.”

To make sure all students felt included, Clark had his school’s special needs classes participate in their own way.

“We try to give the students from our Possibilities Program real-life scenarios,” Clark said. “In total, they counted 1,003 cans Friday.”

Collectively, spectators’ efforts amounted to roughly 1,300 pounds of food items, according to MCFOODS staff, who made their rounds for pick-up Tuesday morning.

At an upcoming Feb. 5 rematch, scheduled for 7 p.m. on St. Joseph’s territory at 145 Plainfield Road, the donation drive will continue, according to school officials.

“It’s a pivotal time for food drives everywhere,” said Jennifer Apostol, Project Manager for MCFOODS, an operation overseen by the Middlesex County Improvement Authority. “During the holidays our collections swell and our shelves are brimming. But that surplus is nearly all but gone, and there’s a year-round need. It’s drives like these that keep us going.”

In the past few years, approximately 80 social service programs, agencies, churches and soup kitchens have come to rely on MCFOODS’ distributions, a weekly allotment in which 15,000 pounds of food are doled out to registered representatives to be further extended to the County’s underprivileged.

To learn more about sponsoring a MCFOODS food drive, log onto the Middlesex County Improvement Authority’s website at www.mciauth.com, call 609-655-5141 or email ja@mciauth.com.

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