

The Times Herald

Valley Forge Tourism and Convention Board hosts 3rd annual Freedom from Hunger Food Drive

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The Montgomery County Commissioners helped the Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board (VFTCB) officially launch its Freedom from Hunger Food Drive during National Hunger Action Month. From left to right: Commissioner Joe Gale, Monty the Fox, VFTCB President & CEO Mike Bowman, Commissioner Val Arkoosh and Commissioner Ken Lawrence

UPPER MERION >> The Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board (VFTCB) will be collecting food for the third annual Valley Forge Freedom from Hunger Food Drive from Sept. 16 to 30. The VFTCB Freedom from Hunger Food Drive was created in 2015 when Pope Francis stayed in Montgomery County at the St. Charles Borromeo Seminary during the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia. The VFTCB established the food drive as the county's farewell "gift" to the Pontiff. Now in its third year, the drive continues to support the community that the tourism board diligently promotes to visitors across the nation and around the world.

Last year, the VFTCB more than doubled its goal of collecting 1,776 pounds of food — collecting 3,600 pounds of food and feeding an estimated 6,000 residents facing food insecurity in Montgomery County. This year, the VFTCB has set an ambitious goal of collecting 4,500 pounds of food.

Collection boxes will be in the VFTCB offices in King of Prussia and at locations across the county, making it as easy as possible for the public to swing by and drop off nonperishable items.

The VFTCB is again partnering with the HealthSpark Foundation — a private, independent foundation providing support to organizations that serve the unmet health and human service needs of residents living in and organizations serving Montgomery County — and the MontCo Anti-Hunger Network — a coalition of

hunger relief organizations working together to make healthy foods available to all communities in Montgomery County.

“It is important to the Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board that we support all of our residents in Montgomery County, especially those who are in times of need,” said Mike Bowman, VFTCB President and CEO. “Through our annual Freedom from Hunger Food Drive, we continue to emulate the Pope’s giving spirit in an effort to give back, work together, and create a vibrant and supportive Montgomery County community where we live, work, and play.”

Since 2015, the Valley Forge Freedom from Hunger Food Drive has been held during the last two weeks of September, which is also National Hunger Action Month. Donations benefit the MontCo Anti-Hunger Network (MAHN).

Community members are asked to donate non-perishable foods at participating drop-off locations throughout the county. New this year, individuals and companies can make monetary donations which will allow MAHN to purchase the most imperative items to replenish the food pantries they serve.

To learn more about the Valley Forge Freedom from Hunger Food Drive, view a list of drop-off locations, or to make a monetary donation, please visit www.valleyforge.org/hunger.

About the Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board

The Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board (VFTCB) is a nonprofit, membership-based sales and marketing organization that actively promotes Valley Forge and Montgomery County, PA as a convention site and leisure visitor destination by encouraging patronage of its 500+ member hotels, restaurants, attractions, and services. The award-winning website links visitors, meeting planners, tour operators, and residents to a diverse portfolio of brands focused on reasons to visit the region. The website also hosts The Montco Explorer, a nationally-recognized blog.