

# 5th Annual Valley Forge Freedom from Hunger Food Drive shatters record

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Today, the Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board (VFTCB) announced a record setting total for their annual Valley Forge Freedom from Hunger Food Drive, an annual campaign to build awareness around Montgomery County community members in need. The VFTCB surpassed their goal by more than 5,000 pounds, collecting a total of 11,337 pounds, which will go to the MontCo Anti-Hunger Network (MAHN), a coalition of hunger relief organizations working together to make healthy foods available to all communities in Montgomery County.

"The Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board takes tremendous pride in our commitment to the Montgomery County community," said Mike Bowman, VFTCB President & CEO. "We made a promise in 2015 to serve our neighbors in need and I'm incredibly grateful to our members and partners who helped us exceed our goal for contributions this and every year since the drive began."

The Valley Forge Freedom from Hunger Food Drive total is accumulated from food and

monetary donations. At a rate of .23 cents per pound, the \$1,818 dollars donated will be able to purchase 7,904 pounds of food, in addition to the 2,933 pounds collected at VFTCB drop-off locations. Also, 500 pounds of food was purchased to feed guests at the Cecil & Grace Bean's Soup Kitchen in Norristown for a grand total of 11,337 pounds of food.

"Dollars generated from this year's Valley Forge Freedom from Hunger campaign made up the largest donation MAHN has received in its five years of operation," said MAHN Administrator Paula Schafer. "Partnering with VFTCB brings MAHN's hunger awareness message to a much broader audience than we have the means to capture on our own. Big problems like hunger can't be managed by nonprofits alone and we're thankful for the help of businesses and organizations that understand how community wellbeing is good for us all. The donated dollars will pay for the bulk purchase of a high demand food item that some of our member pantries rarely see."

The 5th Annual Valley Forge Freedom from Hunger Food Drive was made possible by a variety of companies and individuals across the county. There were 20 drop-off locations across Montco, Montgomery County officials held internal competitions, and the Pennsylvania Health Care Association conference attendees at the Valley Forge Casino Resort were contributors, to name a few.

Food insecurity in Montgomery County is part of the reason why the VFTCB established the food drive in 2015 as a farewell "gift" to Pope Francis, who stayed in Montco at the St. Charles Borromeo Seminary during the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia. The MontCo Anti-Hunger Network provides resources to food pantries that feed more than 15,000 households a year and serve the more than 80,000 people who are food insecure in Montgomery County. – To date, the Valley Forge Freedom from Hunger Food Drive has collected more than 25,000 pounds of food to feed the hungry in Montgomery County.

To learn more about the Valley Forge Freedom from Hunger Food Drive visit [www.valleyforge.org/hunger](http://www.valleyforge.org/hunger).