

Dentists' food drive brought a bounty for Napa Food Bank

Friday, November 26, 2004 Napa Register

By DAVID ALESSIO
Register Correspondent

A Napa dental group was busy the last 30 days collecting 850 pounds of food donations from their patients.

Dentists Adrian Fenderson, Jayma Claus, Amine Khoury and Gayne Thorne were looking for a way to support the Napa Valley Food Bank. So the doctors enlisted their patient base, both by mail and phone, notifying them that on Oct. 11 they would launch a food drive, running for 30 days at their offices.

"We heard the Food Bank had empty shelves," Fenderson said. "We thought about how we could get our patient base involved."

The charity-minded dentists wanted to provide more than just thanks to donating patients, so they offered incentive prizes.

"We called it 'Harvest of Hope,'" said Jeannie Fenderson, the event coordinator. "For every item that (patients) brought in we put their name on a little ticket and put the ticket into a drawing. We gave away turkeys, gift certificates and a Thanksgiving dinner. That was the incentive for them to bring things."

The staff set up a small sign on a reception table with a basket to hold the donations. The sign and table were quickly buried and 30 days later, bulging 55 gallon drums littered the dentists' offices.

"We expected to get a big pile of food on a table and now we're going to fill a fifth 55 gallon drum," Adrian Fenderson said.

"The response was absolutely wonderful," Jeannie Fenderson added. "People have come in with literally grocery bags full of food. People feel good about being able to give at this time of the year. It's been very rewarding for everybody to see."



The doctors haven't yet discussed whether "Harvest of Hope" will become a recurring tradition on Valle Verde Drive, but when asked, Adrian Fenderson indicated that it could.

"I think so," he said. "It's been so successful."

The patient donations were collected through Nov. 12, but more is needed, according to Diane Anderson of the Napa Valley Food Bank.

"We have gotten some food relief but we need to bring in a lot more. Extra food is needed for the holidays," Anderson said. "The food we collect during the holiday time has to last us until May. It's very important to bring in food during the holidays."