

# Spirit of the day: SV food bank distributes hundreds of holiday meals

**By Dana Cole**

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**St. Vincent de Paul Community Food Bank volunteer Rachelle Brown helps by handing out turkeys to Sierra Vistans who are receiving a Thanksgiving food box.**

- **MARK LEVY HERALD/REVIEW**



**Buena High School sophomore Richard Graeme helps to load a St. Vincent de Paul Community Food Bank provided food box for Thanksgiving into the car of a community member Tuesday morning.**

- **MARK LEVY HERALD/REVIEW**

**Sierra Vistan Antoinette Martinez moves down the line as St. Vincent de Paul volunteer Kevin Peterson helps load her food box for Thanksgiving Tuesday.**

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SIERRA VISTA — Folks started lining up at the St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank in Sierra Vista early Tuesday for the annual Thanksgiving turkey box distribution.

“Our first customer arrived at 4 a.m., and there were five people here waiting



when I got here at 5:30 this morning,” said Stan Garner, food bank director.

“Everything is going well so far. We expect to give out more than 450 food boxes today.”

Longtime volunteer Tom Schier said they experienced a “big rush” between 8 and 9 a.m., followed by a steady number of people after that.

“We distributed well over 200 boxes in that hour, and expect to see a steady stream of people here through the morning,” he said. “I think we have between 450 and 475 people signed up for food boxes, so we’re not even halfway through the distribution.”

Tuesday’s distribution marked the first time Darlene Barrowclough requested a Thanksgiving food box for her family.

“I’m very, very impressed and completely overwhelmed by this,” she said. “I think it’s awesome. All the volunteers are very helpful and wonderful.”

Last year, the food bank experienced a shortage in donations and was forced to spend \$6,000 on turkeys to meet its distribution needs. That was not the case this year.

“We had 871 turkeys donated,” Garner said. “So, we did not have to buy a single turkey, which saved us more than \$6,000, unlike last year when we faced shortages.”

Garner said he is grateful for the way the community comes together to help

charitable organizations like the food bank, and wanted to send a special shout out to Safeway for donating 471 complete Thanksgiving dinners, representing a total value of \$29,000.

“These are full dinners, complete with a turkey, stuffing, potatoes, gravy, cranberries and just about everything else you need for a Thanksgiving meal with all the fixings,” he said. “These dinners feed between three and five people, and the food is completely precooked, so all you need to do is warm the dinners up.”

Garner also extended a special thank you to Sierra Vista resident Acacia Barnett, who donated 350 turkeys.

“We appreciate all donations,” he said. “I want to send a big thank you to the whole community for the wonderful support we receive.”