

Life in LAMORINDA

Boy Scout Food Drive Goes Door to Door

By Jennifer Wake



Boy Scout Troop #249 of Moraga sorts food at last year's "Scouting for Food" drive

Photo provided

According to a local report on hunger prepared for the Contra Costa Food Bank, more and more retired or disabled people on fixed incomes are being forced to choose between food, rent, medical care, or prescription drugs. And families using emergency food programs in Contra Costa and Solano counties say the food they buy just doesn't last, with 41 percent of adults reporting they did not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money to buy food.

In the next two weeks, nearly 300 local Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts and adult leaders will provide Lamorinda residents with an

easy way to help.

As part of a national food drive coordinated by the Boy Scouts of America called "Scouting for Food," approximately 75 troops and packs will distribute door hangers to homes throughout Lafayette, Orinda and Moraga on Saturday, Nov. 10 to advise people of how and what to donate. The following Saturday, (Nov. 17) scouts will return to pick up donations.

"You'll see scouts in uniform peppering Lamorinda placing door hangers on each door," said Scouting for Food District Director Cory Reid, who has helped coordinate this event for

the past three years. "We will be blanketing the neighborhoods, and the following Saturday we'll come back in uniform collecting bags to bring to the drop site. Trucks will slowly follow the scouts as they run along streets picking up the food bags on people's doorsteps. Two semi trailers will be parked in the LDS church parking lot in Moraga to collect all the food."

The Scouts hope to collect 35,000 pounds of non-perishable and non-breakable food this year, which would be an increase of nearly 30 percent from the 25,000 pounds they collected last year. The food will go directly to the Contra Costa Food Bank, which distributes more than 660,000 pounds of emergency food to hundreds of local soup kitchens, food pantries and emergency shelters throughout Contra Costa and Solano counties.

"The primary issue is raising awareness," Reid said.

Anyone who would like to donate, but misses the pick up time or does not receive a door hanger, can drop food from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 17 at the LDS church (3776 Via Granada in Moraga).

Other Ways to Help

- The Saint Mary's College Student-Advisory Committee is sponsoring a canned food drive at all home events this fall season. With the donation of canned food, fans will receive raffle tickets and will be eligible to win prizes throughout the game.

- Through December 31, you can donate nonperishable food items (no glass containers please) in the bright red barrels at all Safeway stores during their Holiday Food Drives.

- Volunteers are needed at the Contra Costa Food Bank to sort food drive donations. Sorting hours in Contra Costa are Tuesday thru Thursday from noon to 8 p.m., and Saturdays by appointment. If you would like more information about volunteering, or would like to schedule a time, please contact Sharon at 925-771-1306 or szeptegno@foodbankccs.org.

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SMC War Memorial—Our Lady of the Oaks

By Andrea A. Firth



SMC War Memorial

On Sunday, November 11th, Veteran's Day will be celebrated at war memorials around the country. Unknown to many Lamorinda residents, Saint Mary's College of California (SMC) in Moraga is the site of a World War II shrine—Our Lady of the Oaks. Tucked away in a grove on the Saint Mary's campus is a memorial to the 1,427 alumni who served in the mili-

tary during World War II. Located a short walk past Saint Mary's Stadium down a tree-lined, gravel path is a painted wood sign for the memorial. Off to the left is a clearing with a statue of the Virgin Mary and a plaque listing the names of 21 alumni who lost their lives during the war.

Originally called Our Lady of the Grove, the memorial's

name evolved to Our Lady of Grace and subsequently Our Lady of the Oaks. In the nineteen-seventies, a fallen tree destroyed the memorial, but the statue and sign were soon replaced. Today, Our Lady of the Oaks is a quiet, shady sanctuary with two stone benches nearby just right for a moment of reflection.

Saint Mary's connection to the veterans of World War II runs deep and dates back to 1941 when the college was selected as one of four pre-flight training facilities for Navy pilots. From 1942 to 1946, the SMC campus was filled with young Navy men including the late president Gerald R. Ford who served as an instructor at the pre-flight school. A Navy Memorial Bench sits just outside the Hearst Gallery on campus to honor the young airmen who attended the flight school. In addition, a plaque honoring the SMC alumni who served in World Wars I and II and the Vietnam Conflict is located in the arcade outside the Chapel near the gallery.

Photo Andrea A. Firth



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