

CAA HOLDS 2ND ANNUAL FOOD DRIVE

The Calgary Apartment Association hosted its 2nd Annual Food Drive in support of the Calgary Inter-Faith Food Bank during May. CAA members and their tenants really pitched in to make a difference in the lives of many Calgarians. What a great way to give something back to the community. Thoughtful, considerate, generous and extremely helpful, are the words I use to describe those people who helped make this year's Food Drive such a success.

The Food Drive collected 17,396 pounds of food and \$5,787.58 in cash. The food collected is valued at \$2.00 a pound, so the total value of this year's food drive is \$40,579.58.

The team effort began with our volunteer planning committee, and this year we hosted a rally for our members to explain how simple and easy it is for everyone to get involved, and to provide them with their Food Drive information packages. We are very grateful to the Calgary Stampeders Football Club and to Sandro DeAngelis, Special Teams Kicker, who joined us as our guest and made a terrific motivational presentation.

The actual Food Drive involved landlords, their tenants, and volunteers, many of whom were children, who helped collect the food that was left in the hallways and drop-off points in various buildings throughout the city. There were 65 buildings and over 10,000 rental units participating in this year's drive.

A number of our Service members donated trucks and drivers to help collect food at various buildings throughout the city and then take it to one of the 5 quadrant drop-off buildings where the food was picked up by large Food Bank trucks.

Our very good friends at the Food Bank told us there has been a very significant increase in the number of people, especially families with children, using their services this year. In fact the month of April saw a 70% client increase over 2008. If this doesn't make people want to help out, I don't know what will.

This year's Food Drive more than doubles the results that were achieved last year when we held our first Annual Drive. At that time we collected 6753 pounds of food and cash in the amount of 4,955.41, for a total value of \$18,461.41

I am very proud of our members and their tenants for stepping forward in such a generous and caring way to help those Calgarians who find themselves in need at this time.

I want to extend a huge THANK YOU to all of our volunteers who helped make this year's Food Drive such a big success. This includes:

- our organizing committee
- CAA office staff
- our major sponsors - Realstar Management and Renfrew Insurance
- service members and their staff who collected food and cash in their offices and those who provided drivers and vehicles to make food pickups throughout the city
- all of the owners and managers who made the tremendous effort to get involved, and who mobilized their tenants and volunteers to collect food and cash
- Boardwalk Rental Communities for making five buildings available to be used as quadrant drop-off locations for collected food
- Food Bank staff for working with us to ensure we had the bags and boxes, coordinated pickups, arranged for the Calgary Stampede's participation at our Rally, and helping to ensure we got great media coverage

The increase in the amount of food and money collected, combined with the energetic response from our members and their tenants, tells me there will most likely be a 3rd Annual Food Drive in 2010.



Left to right are: Sydney Beres; Jack Hall; Cole Beres; Kyle Hall

These young volunteers enthusiastically helped pick up the more than 1,100 pounds of donated food at their apartment building. Here they are helping to load the van so the food can be taken to the Food Bank.



CAA Staff members Charmaine Noseworthy (L) and Sarah Harrison (R) helped plan and coordinate the CAA Food Drive, and they volunteered their time to help collect food at apartment buildings.



Food left in the hallway by a tenant, ready for pickup by volunteers