

# Mount Vernon Gazette



MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

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Volunteers for Stuff the Bus at the Shoppers Food Warehouse at Mt. Vernon Plaza along Route 1.



Volunteers for Stuff the Bus with collected food at the Shoppers Food Warehouse at Mt. Vernon Plaza along Route 1.

## Stuffing the Bus in Mount Vernon

About 31 boxes of food and \$200 collected for United Community Ministries.

BY STEVE HIBBARD  
THE GAZETTE

Some 31 boxes of food and \$200 was collected during a Stuff the Bus event held Saturday, Jan. 13, at the Shoppers Food Warehouse in Mount Vernon Plaza Shopping Center along Route 1. The Stuff the Bus initiative will be held for six successive Saturdays and a Monday through Feb. 24 at shopping centers throughout Fairfax County.

Danica Hawkins, United Com-

munity Ministries volunteer and community relations coordinator, said the pantries need to restock their food after the holidays. "Around Christmas, we have a lot of donations coming in; people donating their food — their material goods, money and their time — which is fantastic, but come February, we really see that tapering off and we really see a big drop in donations," she said. "So our goal right now is to make sure that we always have those stocks for the cold winter months."

Al Koroma, transportation plan-

ner with Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS), said the goal is to collect 3,000 pounds of food, which will go to the UCM food pantry here in Mount Vernon. They've been doing this since 2011.

"We're trying to get donations to meet the needs of needy families over here in Alexandria. Shoppers Food Warehouse has been very generous in letting us conduct a food drive over here. We have various volunteers from UCM as well as NCS (Neighborhood and Community Services) and community

members who are here to help us conduct this food drive," said Koroma.

Suzy Coffey, UCM board member, said in addition to restocking the food pantry at UCM, they're advocating for all it does for the community — for all the various

programs and how it relies on the community to be successful and to provide programs to those in need.

"What we're trying to do is spread the word of all the great things that UCM does," she said.

Those other programs include UCM's Stepping Stones, the UCM Early Learning Center, Forward Steps, the Progreso Center, and Healthy Families Fairfax.

### Future Stuff the Bus Events

Join Fairfax County Government, Giant Food, Shoppers Food and Pharmacy, and MV Transportation as they collect food donations to assist the most vulnerable in the community. Each week a Fastran bus staffed by MV Transportation personnel will park at a different location and collect food donations. The hours are 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- ◆ Saturday, Jan. 20 - McLean Giant, Chain Bridge Corner, McLean, Benefiting Share Inc.;
- ◆ Saturday, Jan. 20 - Fox Mill Giant, Herndon, Benefiting Helping Hungry Kids;
- ◆ Saturday, Jan. 27 - Village Center at Dulles Shoppers, Herndon, Benefiting Cornerstones;
- ◆ Saturday, Jan. 27 - Clifton Giant, Colonnade, Clifton, Benefiting WFCM;
- ◆ Saturday, Feb. 3 - Herndon Giant, Elden Street Marketplace, Herndon, Benefiting LINK;
- ◆ Saturday, Feb. 3 - Lorton Giant, Shoppes at Lorton Valley, Lorton, Benefiting Lorton Community Action Center;
- ◆ Saturday, Feb. 10 - Fair City Mall Shoppers, Fairfax, Benefiting Britespaths;
- ◆ Saturday, Feb. 10 - Annandale Giant, Columbia Pike, Annandale, Benefiting Annandale Christian Community for Action;
- ◆ Saturday, Feb. 17 - Falls Church Giant, Falls Church, Benefiting Falls Church Community Service Council;
- ◆ Saturday, Feb. 17 - Kingstowne Giant, Alexandria, Benefiting Koionia Foundation;
- ◆ Monday, Feb. 19 - Fair City Mall Shoppers, Fairfax, Benefiting Food for Others;
- ◆ Monday, Feb. 19 - Cardinal Forest Giant, Springfield, Benefiting Ecumenical Community Helping Others;
- ◆ Saturday, Feb. 24 - Vienna Giant, Vienna, Benefiting Committee for Helping Others.

— STEVE HIBBARD



A mix of volunteers at Shoppers Food Warehouse at Mt. Vernon Plaza from Fairfax County, Neighborhood and Community Services, Office of Public, Private Partnerships, and MV Transportation.

ATTENTION  
FOR MAILING  
DATE MAILING  
MAILING  
REQUIRED IN MONTH  
1/18/18

POST IT  
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