



Thursday, November 14, 2013

## **Synagogues aim to raise money for Bay Area food banks**

Twenty-two Bay Area synagogues — including Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and Renewal congregations — have teamed up to raise funds for this year's Holiday Dinner Drive, an annual effort to support food banks in seven counties.

The drive, which raised \$105,000 last year, will direct funds to the Alameda County Community Food Bank, the San Francisco and Marin Food Banks, the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano, and the Second Harvest Food Bank (of Santa Clara and San Mateo counties).

Each congregation runs its own fundraising program, with guidance and materials from Holiday Dinner Drive volunteers.

Demand at food banks is often highest in November and December, according to the drive's co-chair, Temple Sinai of Oakland member Richard Hart, but congregations often hold their main food-drive efforts around Passover and the High Holy Days. This drive began 14 years ago with that in mind, when Dan McClosky, another Temple Sinai member, set out to get Thanksgiving dinners to East Bay families in need.

Since then, the drive has expanded throughout the Bay Area and raised more than \$850,000.

Congregations participating this year: Beth Chaim (Danville); Sinai, Beth Abraham and Beth Jacob (Oakland); Beth El, Netivot Shalom and Beth Israel (Berkeley); Beth Emek (Pleasanton); Ner Tamid, Beth Israel Judea, Emanu-El and B'nai Emunah (San Francisco); Beth Jacob (Redwood City); B'nai Shalom and B'nai Tikvah (Walnut Creek); Etz Chayim (Palo Alto); Kehilla (Piedmont); Beth Sholom (San Leandro); Beth Torah (Fremont); Isaiah (Lafayette); Temple Israel (Alameda); and Tri-Valley Cultural Jews (Pleasanton).

To donate, check with a synagogue about procedures, or visit your county's food bank website: <http://www.accfb.org> for Alameda; <http://www.sffoodbank.org> for San Francisco and Marin; <http://www.foodbank>

[ccs.org](http://www.ccs.org) for Contra Costa and Solano; and <http://www.shfb.org> for Santa Clara and San Mateo. Search for 2013 Holiday Dinner Drive or an individual congregation.

The website for the Alameda County Food Bank notes that every \$1 donation allows for the distribution of \$4 worth of food, and that the agency services 49,000 people every week, of which two-thirds are children and seniors. Its goal through this drive is to provide 15,000 holiday meals.

For information on how to participate in the program, contact [richard\\_p\\_hart@yahoo.com](mailto:richard_p_hart@yahoo.com).