

ANNUAL REVIEW 2009



CORA
FOOD PANTRY

DEMOCRACY AND VOLUNTEERISM ARE ALIVE AND WELL IN CHATHAM COUNTY

By Udo Koopmann
President

Let me first explain some of the developments building up to CORA's current fiscal year 2008/09 before commenting on this article's headline.

CORA's annual budget has increased from \$107,000 in FY2005/06 to about \$455,000 in FY2008/09. Budgets have doubled for each of our fiscal years 2007/08 and 2008/09 alone. Both "good" and "bad" are hidden behind this dramatic development.

The "bad" is the escalation in demand for CORA's services. The number of individual clients served has increased from 7,300 in 2005/06 to an estimated 14,500 in 2008/09. Again,

the most noticeable increases came during 2007/08 and 2008/09 with 25% and 40% more clients served compared to respective prior years. This reflects a decidedly human story due to the fact that more and more Chatham County residents became dependant on CORA's (and, for that matter, other Social Services Agency's) services during increasingly difficult economic times. As of this writing, continuing lay-offs and business closings take their toll and send more and more men, women and children to CORA's door steps in need for emergency food.

The "good" is our undiminished ability during these trying times to serve all clients in need for emergency food within our established program guidelines. As a matter of fact, starting early 2008 CORA's board decided to markedly increase both the quantity and quality of food items provided during each client visit. Ever since, we are truly able to provide the right quantity and quality of food items to each client sufficient to feed his/her family for one week up to four times during a twelve months period.

How is this all possible? The answer brings me back to the headline of this article. Someone once said, "**Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in**

democracy. You vote in elections once a year; but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in." CORA's continuing success in gaining much needed increased support in order to continue its mission is clear evidence that democracy and volunteerism are alive and well in Chatham County.

The 2008 Chatham Hunger Walk, CORA's largest fundraising event, was more successful than ever with more than \$40,000 collected. During the second half of 2008 at a time of extreme need, the Chatham County Government injected \$31,500 of emergency funds. Individual donor contributions are estimated to increase by 25% in 2008/09 and funding through numerous grants will increase from \$52,000 in 2007/08 to \$157,000 in 2008/09. CORA's ongoing food drive campaigns and other in-kind food contributions are expected to generate 126,000 pounds of food during 2008/09, a 72% increase over last year and 45% of total food procurements.

Last but not least, the number of dedicated volunteers who enthusiastically give their time on a regular basis has increased as well. We have trained over 60 new volunteers this year alone and our

pool of "regulars" is well above 150 in the meantime. It is they who enable us to keep the pantry open four hours every weekday. It is others who work in the background to bring food to the pantry from the Durham Food Bank, from Lowes Foods and a few other sources; and still others who sort the food and stock our shelves so we can serve our clients. They all do not get paid ... not because they are worthless but because they are PRICELESS.

A big "Thank You" to all of our donors and volunteers for your generous contributions in food, money and time. You clearly make a difference in the kind of community we all want to live in. You continue to make CORA's mission a reality.

Finally, CORA is very fortunate to have a dedicated staff of three part-time employees who are committed to our cause and are true professionals.

Thank you, Marci, Lyndie and Leslie for your tireless help in getting us to where we are today. CORA could not function without you.



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Emergency food requests up 40% over last year.**
- **Food drives bring in 64,000 pounds during the year.**
- **CORA's FY2008/09 operating budget exceeds \$450,000.**
- **Children account for nearly half of CORA's clients.**

HUNGER HITS HARD FOR MANY CHATHAM KIDS

The evolving impact of the difficult economy continues to be very much in evidence in Chatham County. It has translated to an unprecedented number of requests for emergency food support from CORA Food Pantry. And no group is harder hit than children.

Children are hardest hit

Children account for about 45% of the people CORA serves. And more than a third of them are five years old or younger. According to a report recently issued by Feeding America (formerly America's Second Harvest), one in six young children live on the brink of hunger in 26 states in the U.S. North Carolina ranks number two among states with the highest rates of food insecurity with 24.1% of children younger than five years at risk of hunger.

In Chatham County the rates are even more shocking. More than 30% of Chatham County's children live in poverty.* And 45% of them are eligible for free or reduced cost lunches.**

Summer is an especially difficult time for children from low income families. Many of us think of summer as a time of enjoyment for children. But for children who depend on free or reduced school meals, summer can be a perilous time of hunger. *(Please see article on page 6 for more about how CORA is helping.)*

How much food has CORA provided this year?

By the end of June, CORA will have provided about 280,000 pounds (140 tons) of food to nearly 15,000 hungry Chatham County residents. *(See illustration*

below.) This food comes from a variety of sources which include food drives and contributions, the Durham Food Bank, the USDA's Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), Lowes Foods, MR Williams Wholesalers, and day-old produce donations from Food Lion and other local grocers.

Part of the national trend

In the past year food pantries, soup kitchens, and other hunger support organizations and initiatives throughout the nation have been overwhelmed by unprecedented demand. The same holds true at CORA Food Pantry. So far our many generous supporters and volunteers have made it possible for us to provide food for all who seek our support.

* Children 0-17 Living in Poverty, 2004, 2006 American Community Survey
** 2007-08 Free & Reduced Application

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

CORA has received generous support from the following foundations, businesses and private donors this past year. We extend heartfelt thanks to all of them as well as to the many others who supported CORA's mission this year.

GIFTS OF \$1,000 OR MORE

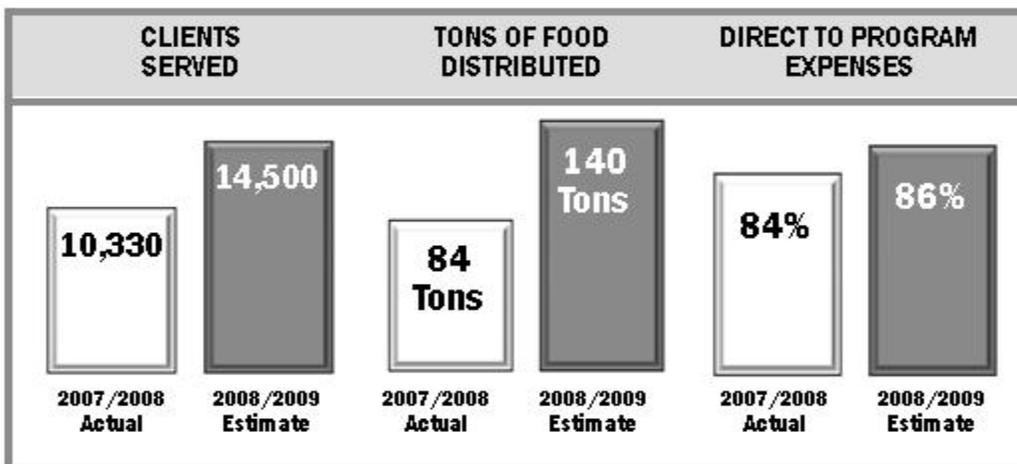
GRANTS

- Arthur Carlsen Charitable Fund of the Triangle Community Foundation
- Carolina Meadows Retirement Community
- Chapel Hill Tire Car Care Center
- Galloway Ridge Foundation
- Hillsdale Fund
- Lowes Food Stores, Inc.
- Rolander Family Foundation
- RTI International
- Scarborough-Hunt Fund of the Triangle Community Foundation
- Women of Fearington

PRIVATE DONORS

- Anonymous
- Kim & Roselyn Batcheller
- Ms. Jo Ann Beal/Chatham Chevrolet Buick, Ind.
- Mr. & Mrs. David Betts
- BB&T
- Mr. & Mrs. Malcolm Cutchin
- Jack & Vicki DeLeon
- Douglas Dorson & Maura Dillon
- Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Duff
- Thomas Harbin & Marian Saffer
- Mr. & Mrs. Ross Johnson
- Mrs. Eleanor Kilgour
- Ms. Marye Kloster
- Dr. & Mrs. Travis Meredith
- William Mitchum, DDS
- Pittsboro Kiwanis Club
- Pittsboro United Methodist Church
- Mr. & Mrs. Edward Schlurter
- Eddie and Pat Williams

A LOOK AT THE NUMBERS



CORA'S SUPPORT COMES FROM MANY SOURCES

In the past year the Chatham County community has been very supportive of CORA. As of May we had received \$434,000 in total revenues. The accompanying graphic illustrates the sources.

Grants, the largest source, totaled \$157,000, which included grants of \$14,000 from United Way and \$19,600 from Chatham County.

Food donations valued at \$100,000 were the next largest source of support. (Food donations include food drives and contributions, TEFAP, and day-old produce and deli items.)

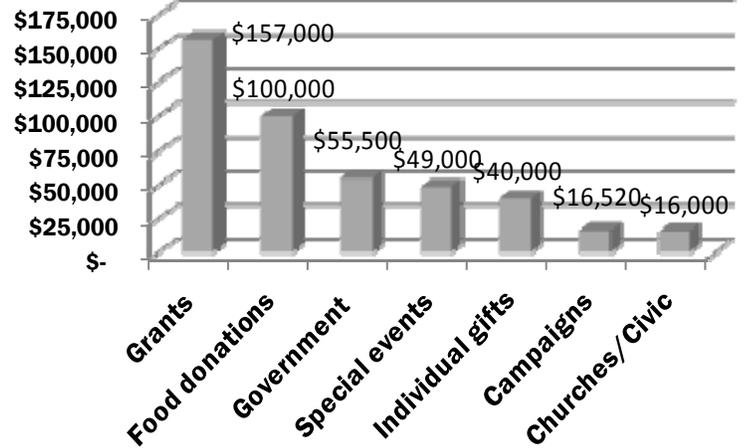
Chatham County government support, totaling \$55,500, included their donated use of our facility and a one-time emergency cash infusion of \$31,500

to help us respond to the hunger crisis created by the closing of Pilgrim's Pride Poultry in June of 2008.

Special events (including the Hunger Walk, Empty Bowls, the Kiwanis benefit dinner, and the Fearington Folk Art show) totaled \$49,000.

Personal contributions from families and individuals provided nearly \$40,000. Our supporters responded to our 2008 holiday mailing with gifts totaling \$16,500. And finally, local churches and civic organizations contributed nearly \$16,000.

The total of all that is \$434,000, which leaves us with a fiscal year end



forecast of about \$455,000. It's quite a remarkable amount considering just three years ago we ended our year at only \$107,000.

This has been a difficult year. We've struggled to provide for a huge number of families needing emergency food and securing

the 280,000 pounds of food required to feed them.

Our wonderful Chatham community has responded generously—with food and monetary donations, more than 4,000 hours of volunteer labor, and with the deep concern that no one in Chatham County goes hungry.

We can't thank you enough!

CLIENT CHOICE EMPOWERS

CORA's client choice system offers clients more than groceries. It also offers them empowerment. Unlike most food pantries which typically provide pre-packed bags of food, CORA is set up to allow clients to make their own food choices. The design is akin to a small grocery store where shoppers can choose the meats, vegetables, fruits, cereals and other items they prefer.

A CORA volunteer accompanies each client

shopper, explaining their choice options and number of items allowed according to their family size. Unless they are physically unable, clients push their own shopping carts and bag their own groceries. This provides another important avenue of participation which serves to convey a sense of involvement with the process, which can be an important element for a family in difficult straits.

Clients are especially pleased to be able to

make choices they know their families will enjoy. With a large number of Hispanic clients, CORA also offers items such as corn flour which are familiar in their culture. And we try to keep low salt and low sugar items in stock for those who have dietary restrictions.

Client choice is not new for CORA. Even when we operated out of two small rooms in our prior quarters, we always offered choices for those who sought our support.

Thirty-one percent of Chatham County's children live in poverty.

Forty-five percent of our kids are eligible for free or reduced cost lunches.

2008 HUNGER WALK RAISES MORE THAN \$40,000



2008 Chatham Hunger Walk

November 2nd, 2008 dawned clear and crisp, setting the stage for CORA's most successful Hunger Walk yet. Against a backdrop of Carolina blue skies and autumn leaves in vibrant glory, hundreds of walkers, some young and some not-so-young, followed the three mile path through and around the town of Pittsboro.

The Pittsboro Merchants Association's First Sunday festival added to the excitement of the day. When all was said and done, the event brought in \$40,000 to provide emergency food to families in need throughout Chatham County.



Walkers included groups from schools, churches, civic organizations, scout troops, county depart-

ments, families, neighborhoods, and lots of other folks. Lively music was provided by the Lonesome Dove band. Roxane Gwyn, CORA's president emeritus, was on hand to emcee the event.

Empty Bowls Project adds awareness

A new event held during the walk this year added to the awareness of hunger in Chatham County. The basic idea for Empty Bowls is simple. Participants purchase a ceramic bowl, and then receive a simple meal of soup and bread in that bowl. Guests choose a bowl to use that day and to keep as a reminder that there are always Empty Bowls in the world. Many thanks to the following area artists who created bowls for this year's project.

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| CCCC Pottery Program | Chana Meeks |
| Heather Albright | Ruth Morgan |
| Anne Bogerd | Cathy Nut |
| Michele Bonds | Linda Person |
| Lisa Brown | Musin Rie |
| Joyce Bryan | Janice Rieves |
| Carolyn Doyle | Alan Russo |
| Ginna Earl | Patricia Saling |
| Carmen Elliot | Jill Steed |
| Leslie Fesperman | Ronnie Theeman |
| Mark Hewitt | Sue Ulrick |
| Barbara Higgins | Carolyn Waterson |
| Susan Jones | Trish Welsh |
| Julia Kennedy | Mariah Wheeler |
| Genevieve Kimmick | Barb Woods |

2008 WALK SPONSORS

GROCERY STORE LEVEL

- BB&T
- Chatham Chevrolet Buick Pontiac
- Gordon & Lois Duff (Ormsbee Robinson award)
- Travis and Karen Meredith

GROCERY CART LEVEL

- Bob & Shari Ligett
- Briar Chapel/Newland Communities
- Ferrington Village
- Panera Bread (Diane/Joe Bastian)
- Straight Up Realty

GROCERY BAG LEVEL

- Brookwood Farms
- Chatham Marketplace Coop.
- Delonda Alexander
- Goldston United Methodist Men
- Governors' Club Realty
- Greenscape, Inc.
- Linda and Gene Harris
- Krombach Dunn & Co.
- Lowe's Foods Stores, Inc.
- Metametrics, Inc.
- Miller Heating & Air Conditioning
- SunTrust Bank

PATRONS

- Chapel Hill Tire Car Care Center
- Dina Porter
- Heartwood Realty
- Reynolds & Asso. Physical Therapy
- The Abundance Foundation
- McGill Environmental Systems
- Rufus' Restaurant
- Willow Creek Nursery



CLIENT PROFILE

Many Chatham County seniors live on the edge of poverty. CORA provides one of the lifelines that helps to keep them going, especially in the winter months when utility bills are high. Among the many elderly who depend on CORA are Willie Mae Tyson and Ben Womble, both

from Goldston, one of the county's more impoverished areas. Willie Mae was widowed two years ago and now must depend on her neighbor Ben for transportation. Both with limited personal resources, their families look to CORA for continuing food support.

CORA was able to give both families Thanksgiving turkeys this year. Upon receiving her family's turkey, Willie Mae hugged Lyndie and said over and over, "I'm not gonna cry; I'm not gonna cry." Ben was equally grateful - as his smile indicates.



Willie Mae Tyson (left) and Ben Womble (right) happily receive Thanksgiving turkeys from Pantry Manager Lyndie Bracey.

2008-2009 FOOD DRIVES

Food contributions to CORA by the people of Chatham County during the 2008-2009 fiscal year will total more than 64,000 pounds, the greatest 12-month amount in pantry history.

Lyndie Bracey, pantry manager, said food contributions came in all sizes. A number of large, organized food drives produced well over 1,000 pounds. Ongoing collections by churches and other organizations added significant amounts on a regular basis throughout the year.

The largest drive, however, came from Lowes Foods Chatham Crossing Store with their annual *Friends Feeding Friends* campaign. This year's event collected nearly five tons of food for CORA.

Just as important were the efforts of many individuals who, acting entirely on their own, brought in a few bags of groceries at a time, often every week.

"The support came from people of all ages," Bracey said. "Scout troops, schools, businesses, retirement communities, churches, you name it. Even employees at some companies hard hit by the recession continued to give with a passion.

"It is humbling," she

added, "to see this kind of concern for those in need. And in response, we can't say thank you often enough."

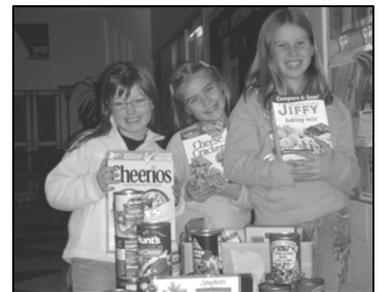
Bracey said that food drives and donations account for about 22 percent of the total amount distributed to the needy this year.

Food drives and collections
July 2008 thru May 2009

Arbor at Galloway Ridge
Asbury United Methodist Church
Back Solutions
Bagwell Holt Smith Tillman & Jones
Bethany Baptist Church
Boy Scout Troop 93
Bynum United Methodist Church
Carnivore Preservation Trust
Carolina Meadows
Carolina Outreach
Cedar Grove United Methodist Church
Central Carolina Community College
Chatham Central High School
Chatham County Democratic Women
Chatham Co. Health Department
Chatham Marketplace
Chatham United Methodist Church
Christ United Methodist Church
Coldwell Banker
Community Independent School
Curves of Chatham Downs
Curves of Pittsboro
Duke Center for Living
Ebenezer United Methodist Church
Edward Jones Investments
Faith United Pentecostal Church
Farrington Folk Art Show
Farrington Village Residents (multiple groups)
Galloway Ridge
Girl Scout Troop 1200
Girl Scout Troop 1686
Goldston Baptist Church
Governors Club
gracepoint Church
Green Dreams Farm
Harris Teeter
Horton Middle School
Kids First Learning Center
Lowes Foods
McIntyre's Books
Moncure School
North Chatham Elementary
Orange Chapel United Methodist Church
Pittsboro Baptist Pre-School
Pittsboro Church of God
Pittsboro Church of Latter Day Saints
Pittsboro Police
Pittsboro Presbyterian Church
Pittsboro YMCA
Robyn's Nest
Roberts Chapel Baptist Church
Rock Springs Baptist Church
St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
The Preserve
Toddler Tales
Townsend's Poultry
UNC Alumni Club
UNC CSTEP
UNC School of Social Work
United Church of Chapel Hill
Unity Book Store
Valleycrest Landscaping
Virginia Cross Elementary
Williams Chiropractic Clinic
Woods Charter School
Young Life



Woods Charter School



North Chatham Elementary



Moncure School



Robyn's Nest



Virginia Cross Elementary

CORA LAUNCHES CHILDREN'S SUMMER NUTRITION PROGRAM

This year CORA will conduct a pilot nutrition program that will provide pre-packaged breakfasts and lunches for 120 needy Chatham County children during this year's summer break.

Chapel Hill Tire Car Care Center provided a lead gift of \$3,000 to get the Summer Nutrition Assistance for Chatham Kids (SNACK) program started. Additional gifts from The Rolander Family Foundation, Women of Farrington, Kiwanis of Pittsboro and RTI International have provided the rest of the funding for the \$10,500 project.

The organizing committee of the project includes: Michelle Morehouse of Take 'n Eat Food Pantry, Mel Spencer of the LDS Church, Cindy Snipes of DSS, and Cindy Bowen and Lyndie Bracey of CORA.

The pilot project is designed to evaluate methods of packaging, distribution, storage requirements, and transportation issues. CORA expects to use the knowledge gained from the pilot program to expand the SNACK program in future years.

The selection pool comprises children, aged 5 to 17, who qualify for free or reduced school breakfasts

and lunches during the school year. The selection process will be administered through the Chatham County Department of Social Services.

The program runs through summer vacation. CORA will be the primary food distribution point with additional pick-up points at the Evergreen Methodist Church Take 'n Eat Food Pantry and West Chatham Food Pantry. Assembly of the food packages will be handled by the Youth of



Marc Pons, president of Chapel Hill Tire Car Care Center (second from left), presents \$3,000 check for the SNACK program to Marci Whittaker, CORA's Executive Director. Left to right, Cindy Bowen, CORA board member and project co-leader, Marc Pons, Marci Whittaker, and Udo Koopmann, CORA president.

Pittsboro Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

All foods will be in shelf-stable packaging and include cereal, fruit, milk, peanut butter, crackers, lunch items, and juice each week.

VOLUNTEER HUB

A new on-line volunteer scheduling program, just added at CORA, is quickly proving to be a great asset. VolunteerHub is a time-saving program which provides a quick and convenient way for volunteers to schedule their work shifts. It also allows volunteers to change their scheduled shift time if necessary.

VolunteerHub makes it a lot easier for our staff and coordinators to be sure all

of our work shifts are covered. Did you know that in a typical week at least 40 people volunteer for CORA? That's quite a bit to keep up with.

Dozens of volunteers have tested the system, and most are impressed with the program's ease of use. A user can sign on, look for available openings, sign up for a shift, and log off. The volunteer will then receive an immediate email acknowledgment of the appointment and then an email reminder a few days before the scheduled time.

Client Service Volunteers started to use the system beginning in early June. Provisioners and Stockers will be able to begin scheduling their shifts starting July.

The Web site for VolunteerHub is "corafoodpantry.volunteerhub.com". (Be sure not to put a "www" before the URL.) For those without Internet access... volunteers can still call the CORA office between 10a.m. and 2p.m. and ask Lyndie to schedule a shift.

"I think Volunteer Hub is great! It's very convenient. And I really like the reminders it sends."

*- Esther Bovarnick,
Carolina Meadows*

"It's so simple and easy."

*- Linda Hansell,
Governors Club*



For more information contact Lyndie Bracey at cfplyndie@embarqmail.com or call her at 542-5020.

CORA HONORS VOLUNTEERS AT RECEPTION

CORA's corps of volunteers represent one of the most valuable components of its operation. This vibrant group of dedicated people now numbers close to 200. Without them, the food pantry could not operate. Volunteers take care of nearly every aspect of pantry operations including bringing food to the pantry, stocking shelves and providing it to clients.

To honor these dozens of wonderful women and men who give selflessly of

their time and energy, CORA hosted an afternoon tea on April 17. The event, held at the Governor's Club clubhouse, was attended by about 85 people. The program included a blessing by Leighton Loraine, presentations by Udo Koopmann, CORA's president, and Marci Whittaker, executive director, a brief slide show, and presentation of several awards and recognitions. The event wrapped up with drawings for an array of door prizes

donated by these local businesses: French Connection, Lowes Building Supply, Chatham Marketplace Coop, General Store Cafe, Lowes Foods, and Harris Teeter. Many thanks to them for their support.

Jim and Marigold Abrahamson honored with the 2008 Above & Beyond award for outstanding volunteer service.



CORA NOW HAS ONLINE GIVING

Online giving provides a new way to give money to CORA. "*firstgiving*" is quick, easy and secure. A donor simply charges the donation to a credit card. A receipt for the gift amount is immediately emailed. Just go to the

following Web site: www.firstgiving.com/CORA

Once there simply click on the "DONATE" button. The rest is self explanatory. So far *firstgiving* donations have contributed \$6,000 to CORA.

CORA Web site updated

If you haven't seen our Web site lately, please go online and take a look at that as well. We've updated it with our graphic theme and current information. The link to *firstgiving* is there as well.

REMEMBERING A FRIEND

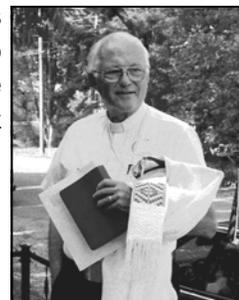
Rev. John Simons began volunteering with CORA in 1998 following his retirement. An active provisioner, he made frequent trips to Durham Food Bank. He also served on CORA's board of directors.

John served as head chaplain for the Ohio National Guard and in that role was instrumental in ministering to those in-

involved with the tragic shootings at Kent State.

He served as Interim Rector at St. Bart's - one of CORA's founding churches. A provocative, speaker, John's sermons often inspired his congregations to social action. Always an advocate for the hungry, he had a special gift for getting to the heart of a problem quickly.

He believed from his heart the command to "feed my sheep" and would do all in his power to make that happen.



Rev. John W. Simons
June 2, 1931 - Dec. 30, 2008

Our Mission

Chatham OutReach Alliance (CORA) is dedicated to acquiring and distributing emergency food to Chatham County residents who need temporary community support to keep themselves and their families fed.

CORA was founded in 1989 and is recognized as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Gifts to CORA are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

Board of Directors

Udo Koopmann
President

Ken Garris
Vice President

Howard Willett
Treasurer

Cindy Bowen
Recording Secretary

Sherry Beck

Michele Berger

Leighton Loraine

Bill Russell

Marci Whittaker

Staff

Marci Whittaker
Executive Director

Lyndie Bracey
Pantry Manager

Leslie Guier
Database Manager

Chatham OutReach Alliance, Inc.

Mailing address:
P.O. Box 1326
Pittsboro, NC 27312

Physical address:
40 Camp Drive, Pittsboro

Phone: 919/542-5020
www.corafoodpantry.org



CORA is a United Way of
Chatham County agency



**FEEDING PEOPLE IN NEED
SINCE 1989**

P.O. Box 1326
Pittsboro, NC 27312

Phone: 919-542-5020

E-mail: corafoodpantry@embarqmail.com

www.corafoodpantry.org

Located at 40 Camp Drive, Pittsboro

Get involved!

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- Volunteer
- Donate money or food
- Donate S&H Greenpoints from Lowes Foods or link your MVP points at Food Lion.
- For details visit our Web site

**DON'T FORGET THE 2009 CHATHAM HUNGER WALK
— NOVEMBER 2ND IN PITTSBORO —**

NEWS FROM CORA FOOD PANTRY ENCLOSED

- **CORA Food Pantry meets skyrocketing demand for emergency food support in past year. 40% increase in requests for help!** (See page 2)
- **Community support flows in to help provide for hungry families.** (See page 3)
- **Annual Chatham Hunger Walk raises \$40,000.** (Page 4)
- **Record food drives bring in 64,000 pounds of food.** (Page 5)
- **Nearly 200 people now volunteer for CORA.** (Page 7)