

FHS students wage a war against hunger

Classrooms collect canned food items for families in need

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FRASER — Students at Fraser High School collected a total of more than 15,000 canned food items over the past month and a half to donate to families in need in the city.

Piles upon piles of canned vegetables, fruits and soups filled up an entire classroom at the high school before students got together to pack care packages to be distributed through the Fraser Goodfellows this Christmas. The amount collected is three times the amount usually collected by the can war.

Students rounded up more than 1,600 canned food items in city neighborhoods this past weekend, adding to the 13,399 collected in

school.

Activities Director Nancy Skopas made a game out of it, challenging each classroom of students to outdo their peers and bring in the most items. Some teachers offered incentives to try to get students to participate, and all of them offered encouragement and support of the program, Skopas said.

"It was a war against hunger," she said. "It brought out the competitive spirit in our teachers, and that's what we needed."

On one day alone, students brought in more than 9,000 items to add to the grand total. Teacher John Murray's classroom led the pack by collecting 2,800 items total, and will be rewarded with a special activity.

For the final push, student council representatives walked through neighborhoods in the community to collect more cans.

"I am more than pleased," Skopas said. "It's wonderful, especially

considering the economic times."

Students were also asked to bring in personal items and toiletries.

Now that everything has been collected, students will start packing the boxes. Each family gets an assortment of canned vegetables, fruits, meats and extras — which can be anything from granola bars to cake mixes or bottled water.

"A lot of kids brought in ramen noodle (packages), so after we fill the boxes, we'll top them off with a layer of ramen noodles," Skopas said.

After that, the boxes are off to the

Goodfellows, and Skopas has already warned them to expect a delivery three times the size of most years.

The boxes fill the organization's food pantry, which is used to distribute food to families in Fraser before Christmas.

"We were really low on food last year," said Fraser Goodfellow

Michelle Soltman. "Usually we have several boxes (of food) per family, but last year we had only one box (per family). I hope we can give out more than that, because it's a tough year."

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