



Anne Kelligrew St.Clair, PR Chair, 917-560-6441 - annestclair@optonline.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

This November, members of the Junior League of Summit (JLS) organized, assembled and donated Thanksgiving meals to four charities that support needy families of our community. After collecting food from 21 area schools, and securing a generous donation of bags from Kings, the League created 385 bags of non-perishable food to distribute. The 21 area schools from Chatham, Summit, New Providence and Berkeley Heights that served as collection sites were from Summit: Kent Place School, Summit Middle School, Summit High School, Jefferson, Primary Center at Wilson, Brayton Elementary, Washington Elementary, and Franklin Elementary; from Chatham: Chatham Day School, Chatham High School, Milton Avenue School, Southern Boulevard, and Lafayette Elementary; from New Providence: Allen W. Roberts, Salt Brook Elementary, New Providence Middle School and New Providence High School; from Berkeley Heights: Governor Livingston, Columbia Junior High, William Woodruff, Thomas P Hughes and Mountain Park Elementary. Kent Place School was a valuable and significant contributor of 30 complete Thanksgiving meals.

In addition to the bags, League members donated \$2,575 of Shop Rite gift cards to purchase turkeys or fresh produce. Shop Rite was very generous in providing the JLS a 5% discount to increase. Agencies receiving the bounty included Homefirst, the AIDS Resource Foundation for Children, Summit Helping Its People "SHIP", Bridges and Overlook's Health Start Program. Given the current economy, food banks are in great need of donations to serve a record number of residents in need.

The Thanks for Giving Project Committee this year was chaired by two Summit residents Avelyn Haggard and Monica Fickell. The project is an annual one which is part of the Mission Accomplished Committee headed by Tori Bolger and Jenn Moore, also from Summit. This group targets and addresses the critical needs in the community through service projects that can be completed in a short period of time.

The Junior League of Summit is a nonprofit, charitable and educational organization of women who are committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. For more information about the Junior League of Summit, call the League office at 908-273-7349 or visit www.jlsummit.org.

HOMEFIRST – Interfaith Housing & Family Services

Homefirst, originally Interfaith Council for the Homeless of Union County, began in 1986 when a group of Union County religious leaders and lay people, responding to the crisis of family homelessness, created an emergency shelter called the Interfaith Hospitality Network. What began as a commitment of 11 caring congregations to shelter 14 single women and families on a rotating basis has grown within Union County and across the country.

Today, under the Homefirst umbrella, more than 70 congregations help to run the Interfaith Hospitality Network in Union County either by hosting the shelter in their congregation or supporting a host congregation. In 1995, Homefirst purchased its first house, expanding its services to include transitional housing for families leaving the shelter. Homefirst also provides education and advocacy to ensure each individual and family the opportunity to grow and develop as healthy and self-sufficient residents of the Union County community.

ARFC – Aids Resource Foundation for Children

The AIDS Resource Foundation for Children (ARFC), founded in 1985, is a community-based non-profit organization committed to providing cost-effective, family-centered services to children coping with the impact of HIV/AIDS. Its comprehensive offering of programs assists children in choosing the paths towards leading productive lives.

ARFC is grounded in the belief that all individuals are of infinite value and should be treated with dignity and respect. All of its programs and services strive to maintain and nurture the integrity and preservation of the family.

BRIDGES Outreach, Inc.

BRIDGES began in 1988 with just one suburban couple. Today, BRIDGES' outreach includes over 1,500 kind and caring volunteers delivering over 75,000 bagged brown lunches, literally tons of clothing and toiletries and other necessities each year. Since 1988, BRIDGES has not missed a weekly run into Manhattan. Recognizing the need closer to home, BRIDGES expanded its operations in 1996 to Newark and in 2002 to Irvington.

SHIP Summit Helping Its People

The Summit Interfaith Clergy Fellowship formed a task force of clergy, public officials, and concerned citizens whose goal was to assist homeless and at-risk homeless not served by other programs. SHIP has served breakfast and provided a sack lunch every weekday using Calvary's facilities since October 1991. In 2000, SHIP provided over 12,000 meals.

Photo: Lisa Parkes and Tori Bolger of Summit sort Food for the Junior League's Thanks for Giving basket program to feed those in need.

