

# Local ‘Drive Out Hunger’ Campaign Begins Sunday

The Hardee Help Center will kick off its second annual Drive Out Hunger campaign this weekend in conjunction with its upcoming Empty Bowls Event & Open House on Saturday, Nov. 7.

The effort will begin this Sunday and continue through the month, ending on Monday, Nov. 30. The campaign will focus on educating the community on hunger and on raising funds to help support the effort to drive out hunger in Hardee County.

The term “food insecurity” is the most accurate term to use when describing many of the families who visit the Hardee Help Center. Food insecurity refers to U.S. Department of Agriculture’s measure of lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active healthy life for all household members, and limited or uncertain availability of nutri-

tionally adequate foods. Food insecure households are not necessarily food insecure all the time. Food insecurity may reflect a household’s need to make trade-offs between important basic needs, such as housing or medical bills, and purchasing nutritionally adequate foods.

According to Feeding America, nearly 3,960 people in Hardee County are food insecure.

The Hardee Help Center has compiled an Activities Calendar for the month of November to encourage local residents to stay active in fighting hunger.

Activities include eating at Pizza Hut on Wednesday, Nov. 4, and mentioning the Hardee Help Center so that a portion of your total bill to be donated to the Hardee Help Center; volunteering at the HHC Drive Out Hunger Food Pantry located at 713 E. Bay St. in Wauchula; or-

ganizing a “Casual Day” at your place of employment, where employees donate in order to wear jeans; spending an evening with your family to talk about hunger; or hosting a food drive at your school or workplace.

Be sure to read next week’s article on the Drive Out Hunger campaign, the second of five to learn about several upcoming events that you can be involved in right here in Hardee County to help Drive Out Hunger.

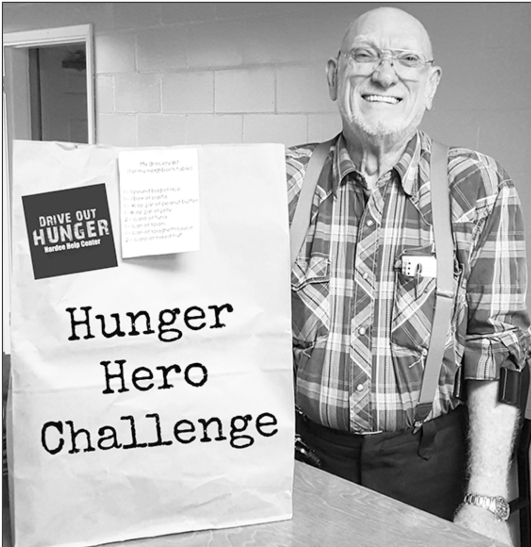
For more information about the Hardee Help Center, the Drive Out Hunger campaign, or to download a full copy of the November Activities Calendar, visit [hardeehelpcenter.org](http://hardeehelpcenter.org).

*This is the first in a series of five articles on the local month-long efforts to Drive Out Hunger. Each week, a calendar will accompany the story to show activities for the upcoming week.*



COURTESY PHOTOS

Mosaic’s South Pasture employees accepted the “Hunger Hero Challenge” to fill a brown bag with food items needed for the Hardee Help Center’s Drive Out Hunger Food Pantry during their United Way Campaign.



Local pastors at the October meeting of the Hardee County Ministerial Association were challenged to be “Hunger Heroes” and fill up a brown bag with needed food items. Pictured is Pastor J. Harold Davis, Immanuel Baptist Church, who chose to not wait until November to complete the challenge.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL KELLY

Hardee Help Center Director Jamie Samuels asks the County Commission to adopt a proclamation to Drive Out Hunger. Here, Commissioner Mike Thompson holds the signed document.

November 2015						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <b>Share</b> Share this calendar with a friend. Help spread the word about the issue of hunger locally and throughout the nation.	2 <b>Attend Empty Bowls Event</b> Buy a ticket and enjoy a delicious bowl of soup on 11/7.	3 <b>Food Drive</b> Host a food drive at your school, work or faith community. Visit our website for a manual to help with planning your food drive.	4 <b>Eat</b> Participate in the HHC Pizza Hut Fundraiser today – upto 20% of your purchase will go to Hardee Help Center!	5 <b>Spread the Word!</b> “Like” Hardee Help Center on Facebook.	6 <b>Fill-It</b> Do the Hunger Hero Challenge; fill a brown bag from the Empty Bowls event on 11/7. Each bag provides basic food items for a family.	7 <b>Visit</b> Attend HHC’s First Annual Empty Bowls event between 4pm – 7pm. Drop-off your Hunger Hero Challenge bag.

## IDA Public Records Lawsuit Continues

By MICHAEL KELLY  
Of The Herald-Advocate

Circuit Judge Marcus Ezelle addressed several minor motions Friday in the ongoing public records lawsuit involving the Industrial Development Authority and its grant with Continuum Labs.

The hearing lasted more than three hours. The next proceeding in the case is scheduled for December.

Defendants Hank Kuhlman and Donald Samuels filed a motion to have the case continued and suspended while the matter was referred to the U.S. Attorney’s Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Ezelle denied their request and said there was no legal reason not to proceed and determine if the records in question are public or not.

Samuels and Kuhlman made requests for information regarding the financial review of Continuum Labs conducted by the accounting firm CliftonLarsonAllen. Continuum Labs and

CliftonLarsonAllen are also defendants in the case.

Bert Harris, representing the IDA, motioned to have IDA Executive Director Bill Lambert dismissed as a plaintiff in the lawsuit since he was not the public records custodian for the IDA. It was granted.

Harris then called Samuels, an IDA member, as a witness.

Harris asked Samuels to review several exhibits filed in the case and what was his involvement in drafting and filing them with the court.

Samuels said he consulted with Kuhlman regarding the case via email and phone conversations and Kuhlman prepared and filed all the documents on his behalf.

Harris then called Kuhlman as a witness.

He questioned him over his involvement in filing documents on behalf of Samuels, which Kuhlman admitted to doing.

Harris later accused Kuhlman of committing up to 15 felonies

of unauthorized practice of law by representing Samuels.

Harris also noted that several of the pleadings and filings in the case were not properly done and motioned for them to be struck from the records.

Ezelle granted the motion but held it in abeyance until a final order is reached.

He said it was clear Kuhlman and Samuels intended to make responses in the case even if they did not follow proper procedure and gave them 10 days to do so.

He also asked them to please read any order he issues in the case and told them they could talk about the case with each other but could not file documents on the other’s behalf.

Kuhlman filed a motion to have citizen Bob Cole, and Florida Hospital and its employees Denise Grimsley and Eric Stevens added as defendants.

Ezelle said there was no legal basis to do so and did not grant the motion.



COURTESY PHOTO

Defendants Hank Kuhlman, left, and Donald Samuels listen to Circuit Judge Marcus Ezelle Friday.

## Transportation Needs Are Topic Of Workshop

Future transportation plans for this region will be the topic of a public workshop next week.

Held at the Sebring Civic Center on Thursday evening, Nov. 5, it will focus on transportation in the Heartland Region of Hardee, DeSoto, Glades, Hendry, Highlands and Okeechobee counties.

The plan will provide local and regional guidance through the year 2040, and will include long- and short-range strategies for solving transportation needs in the region.

The workshop will provide interactive stations for citizens to share ideas on improving community transportation, learn about the Heartland Regional Transportation Plan-ning Organization, have one-on-one or small group conversations with staff, and share their transportation needs.

“Attendees will be encouraged to visit the different interactive stations throughout the evening, and may go at their

own pace,” stated Director Pat Steed. “We want feedback on the work that has been done so far on the plan, and to hear how we should move forward.”

The historically rural counties of the region have collectively experienced double-digit growth in the past two decades: a 45-percent increase from 1990 to 2010. As a result of this growth, the Sebring-Avon Park area of Highlands County was designated as an urbanized area based on the 2010 U.S. Census. This designation triggered the formation of the Transportation Planning Organization and the requirement to create a long-range transportation plan for the region.

The workshop will be open from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The Civic Center is at 355 W. Center Ave. in Sebring.

Citizens who cannot attend the event are encouraged to share their ideas through the website at [heartlandregion-altpo.org](http://heartlandregion-altpo.org) or by calling (863) 534-7130.

## Motorists Pumping Savings Into Tank

The national average price for regular unleaded gasoline has fallen for 16 consecutive days, reaching \$2.21 per gallon on Sunday, the lowest average since February.

It represents a savings of 59 cents per gallon compared to the 2015 peak price of \$2.80 on June 15.

The current average in Florida is \$2.12, six cents lower than last week and 93 cents lower than this time last year.

“Gas prices keep falling because oil prices are low and gasoline supply continues to outpace demand,” said Mark Jenkins of AAA/The Auto Club Group. “Barring any unanticipated disruptions in supply, or spikes in the price of crude oil, the national average could fall below the \$2 per gallon threshold for the first time since 2009 before the end of year.”

Nationwide, 21 percent of gas

stations are selling gasoline below \$2 a gallon. Drivers are saving five cents per gallon week-over-week and eight cents per gallon month-over-month. Significant yearly savings persist, and the national average is discounted by 85 cents per gallon from this same date last year.

The price of oil sunk even lower last week, signaling more discounts at the pump. West Texas Intermediate averaged \$45.32 a barrel, \$1.32 lower than the week before. Oil settled as high as \$45.89 last Monday, but finished the week at \$44.60.

The price of oil is responsible for about two-thirds of the cost of a gallon of gasoline. For every \$1 change in the price of a barrel, gas prices shift about 2.4 cents per gallon. Still, gas prices have plenty of room to fall before catching up with these low oil prices.

### ABOUT ... Letters To The Editor

The Herald-Advocate welcomes letters to the editor on matters of public interest. Letters should be brief, and must be written in good taste and include the writer’s full name, address and daytime telephone number for verification.

Letters must be received by 5 p.m. on Monday to be considered for that week’s edition. Submissions should be typed or legibly written. Send letters to: Letters to the Editor, The Herald-Advocate, P.O. Box 338, Wauchula, FL 33873. Fax letters to (863) 773-0657.



Pictured from left are Vanessa Hernandez, chairwoman of the Industrial Development Authority, with attorneys Danielle Smith and Bert Harris representing the IDA.