

# NEWS

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## **LIBERTY BANK, ROTARY CLUBS RAISE RECORD \$565,000 TO HELP FILL THANKSGIVING FOOD BASKETS**

MERIDEN, CT – The American Farm Bureau Federation estimates that the cost of a Thanksgiving dinner remains at about \$5.00 per person. Despite this relatively modest price tag, Feeding America tells us that over 400,000 Connecticut residents are food insecure, and will have difficulty paying for the traditional holiday feast.

Now in its 16th year, the Liberty Bank / Rotary Thanksgiving Dinner Drive seeks to offset this food deficit, this year raising a record-breaking \$565,000 to ensure there's enough food on local shelves for the holiday and beyond. Seven Rotary Clubs in central Connecticut raised \$ of the total, including two of the top ten fundraisers among the 44 participating clubs.

**Southington Rotary Club** was the number one fundraiser of the drive, working with Liberty's Southington office to raise \$131,540—breaking the club's own 2018 record for the most ever raised by a single club in the 16-year history of the drive. This was matched with \$32,885, for a total of \$164,425. Key partners in the fundraising included Living in Safe Alternatives Inc., Bread for Life, Southington Community Services – Salvation Army, Friends of Southington Community Services, the Margaret Griffin Child Care Center, the Lions Club of Southington, the UNICO Club of Southington, the Italian Festival Committee, the Calvanese Foundation, and Smokin' with Chris. The funds were donated to the Southington Community Services/Salvation Army Food Pantry, LISA Inc., the Margaret Griffin Day Care Center, and Bread for Life.

The **Meriden Rotary Club** ranked seventh among the 44 clubs in the drive, raising \$19,417. The club received matching funds of \$4,854, for a total of \$24,271. The money was donated to the Meriden/Berlin/New Britain YMCA.

**Wallingford Rotary Club** took the number eleven ranking, with \$10,162 and \$2,541 in matching funds. The total of \$12,703 was distributed among the Wallingford Community Thanksgiving Dinner Day, Wallingford Community Day Care, United Way of Meriden and

Wallingford, Columbus House Wallingford Emergency Shelter, Meriden- Wallingford Chrysalis, Holiday for Giving, Master's Manna, Lions Club Holiday Giving Program, and Wallingford Youth and Social Services.

The **Cheshire Rotary Club** raised \$1,165 and received \$291 in matching funds, and donated the total of \$1,457 to Cheshire Human Services.

The **Kensington-Berlin Rotary Club** partnered with Liberty's Berlin office to raise \$1,035. With matching funds of \$259, the club had \$1,294 to donate to Berlin Human Services.

**Plainville Rotary Club** and the Plainville Liberty branch raised \$2,691 and received matching funds of 673, for a total of \$3,364 that went to the Plainville Community Food Pantry.

The **Rotary Club of North Haven** teamed up with its local Liberty branch to raise \$2,735. Matching funds of \$684 provided a total of \$3,418 to North Haven Community Services.

"It's expensive to live in Connecticut," says Sue Murphy, executive director, Liberty Bank Foundation. "Big ticket items, like the cost of housing or child care, mean that at the end of the month many families around the state can't afford to put a Thanksgiving feast on the table. Our partnership with the Rotary Club helps make that possible."

This year, 43 Rotary Clubs and the East Haddam Community Lions Club teamed up with the 60 Liberty Bank offices to raise funds. Since the drive began in 2004, it has raised over \$3 million, including the Liberty Bank Foundation match. All donations are used to provide food in the communities where they were given.

The following Rotary Clubs participated in the 2019 Liberty Bank/Rotary Club Thanksgiving Drive: Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Branford, Bristol, Cheshire, Chester, Clinton, Colchester, Deep River, Derby/Shelton, East Hampton, East Hartford,\* Groton, Hamden, Kensington/Berlin, Ledyard,\* Madison, Meriden, Middletown, Montville, Mystic, Naugatuck, New Britain/Berlin, New Haven, New London, Newington, Niantic, North Branford, North Haven, Norwich, Old Saybrook, Plainville, Seymour/Oxford, Simsbury/Granby,\* Southington, the Stoningtons, Wallingford, Waterbury, Waterford, West Hartford, Wethersfield/Rocky Hill, Willimantic, and Woodbridge.\* The East Haddam Community Lions Club also participated.

Rotary is a global network of more than 1.2 million volunteer leaders who dedicate their time and talent to tackle the world's most pressing humanitarian challenges. Clubs are nonpolitical, nonreligious, and open to all cultures, races, and creeds. Their work impacts families in need in their own communities to working toward a polio-free world.

Since its inception in 1997, the Liberty Bank Foundation has awarded over \$12.7 million in grants to nonprofit organizations within Liberty Bank's market area. The foundation seeks to improve the quality of life for people of low or moderate income by investing in three areas:

education to promote economic success for children and families; affordable housing and ending homelessness; and nonprofit capacity building. Along with its grantmaking, the foundation strives to foster the convening and collaboration of nonprofits, funders, business, and government to address community issues.

Established in 1825, Liberty Bank is Connecticut's oldest bank, with over \$5.7 billion in assets and 60 banking offices throughout the central, eastern, and shoreline areas of the state. As a full-service financial institution, Liberty offers consumer and commercial banking, home mortgages, insurance, and investment services. Named as a "Top Workplace" by the Hartford Courant for eight consecutive years, Liberty maintains a longstanding commitment to superior personal service and unparalleled community involvement.

*\*Asterisks indicate Rotary Clubs new to the drive this year.*

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