

NEWS

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LIBERTY BANK/ROTARY CLUB THANKSGIVING DINNER DRIVE RAISES RECORD AMOUNT FOR FOOD

MIDDLETOWN, CT — In its tenth year, the Liberty Bank/Rotary Club Thanksgiving Dinner Drive—an annual partnership between Liberty Bank and 29 local Rotary Clubs to raise money for Thanksgiving food—has raised a record total of \$182,026. All funds will be used to provide Thanksgiving feasts to local families who cannot afford to buy them.

Rotary Clubs in 29 towns partnered with the 49 Liberty Bank offices to raise \$145,605 during the weeks since Columbus Day. At the end of the drive, the Liberty Bank Foundation added 25 cents for each dollar raised, totaling \$36,421. Rotarians either use the funds to purchase and deliver Thanksgiving food to needy families, or donate the money to a local nonprofit organization that provides Thanksgiving baskets. All donations are used to provide in the communities where they were given.

Rotarians adopted a wide variety of fundraising strategies. In East Hampton, the annual “Turkey Plunge” into Lake Pocotapaug is a major event, and bringing in over \$21,000 this year. Wallingford Rotary Club holds an annual wine tasting, and this year engaged local IGA markets to sell paper “turkey legs” to raise money. In Windham, Colchester, and Stonington, Rotarians appeared in turkey suits outside local supermarkets to solicit donations from shoppers. Other tactics included raffles, pie sales, and dedication of “happy dollars” donated at Rotary meetings.

Liberty Bank branches participated in the fundraising by selling paper “turkey legs” to customers, and raised \$13,779 of the total. The bank provided an incentive of free lunches to the staffs of the three branches that raised the most money through turkey leg sales.

Since it began in 2004, the Liberty Bank/Rotary Club Thanksgiving Dinner Drive has raised over \$938,000 to supply holiday meals to residents of the towns served by the bank. “We keep hearing about the economic recovery, but our food pantries are seeing more people than ever turning to them for help,” said Sue Murphy, executive director of the Liberty Bank Foundation and a member of the Middletown Rotary Club. “The partnership between Liberty Bank, our foundation, and the 29 Rotary Clubs is a powerful demonstration of the great things that can be accomplished when people come together for the benefit of their communities. It shows that people who care really can make a difference.”

The following Rotary Clubs participated in the 2013 Liberty Bank/Rotary Club Thanksgiving Dinner Drive: Bristol, Cheshire, Chester, Clinton, Colchester, Deep River, East Haddam, East Hampton, Glastonbury, Groton/Ledyard, Kensington/Berlin, Madison, Meriden, Middletown, Mystic, New Britain, New London, Newington, Niantic, North Haven, Norwich, Old Saybrook, Plainville, Stonington, Wallingford, Waterford, West Hartford, Wethersfield/Rocky Hill, and Willimantic. Each Liberty Bank office collected contributions for its local Rotary, so the funds remain in the communities where they were donated. Some Rotaries collected and distributed funds for nearby towns as well as their own, so that every town with a Liberty Bank office was included. (Visit www.liberty-bank.com/locations for a list of Liberty Bank offices.)

The Liberty Bank/Rotary Club Thanksgiving Dinner Drive was first conceived by the Middletown Rotary Club, which for several years conducted its own fundraising drive to provide food for needy families on Thanksgiving. In 2004, the club approached Liberty to see if the bank would be interested in a partnership to enlarge the drive. The bank responded that it would support the drive if it could be expanded throughout its entire service area. Members of the Middletown Rotary reached out to fellow Rotarians in other towns, with the result that 29 clubs are now involved, covering every town where Liberty has an office.

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. There are 34,000 Rotary clubs in more than 200 countries and geographical areas. Clubs are nonpolitical, nonreligious, and open to all cultures, races, and creeds. Their work impacts lives at both the local and international levels, from helping families in need in their own communities to working toward a polio-free world. As signified by the motto "Service Above Self," Rotary's main objective is service — in the community, in the workplace, and throughout the world.

Since its inception in 1997, the Liberty Bank Foundation has awarded almost \$8 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 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 mutual bank, with more than \$3.5 billion in assets and 49 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. Rated outstanding by federal regulators on its community reinvestment efforts, Liberty maintains a longstanding commitment to superior personal service and unparalleled community involvement.

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