

Grants High School holds food collection contest

Written by By Dominic Aragon Sun Correspondent
Thursday, 31 December 2020 07:24



Gathers over 1,100 pounds of food in one day

GRANTS — The competition: To determine which Grants High School class could collect the most non-perishable foods in a two-hour period on Dec. 16.

The four classes at Grants High — freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors — competed for the top honors and a cash prize for their class.

The beneficiary: Grants Community Pantry.

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GHS staff, students and parents were encouraged to bring donations to the school's east side entrance. GHS staff helped get donations from the cars and placed the donations on and near tables that separated the four classes for the school.

The event was spurred by the Grants High Anchors Club, a volunteer, community-service driven organization open to all grades at the school.

GHS English teacher Sally Ann Gallegos has sponsored the group for seven years, helping coordinate fall and spring blood drives, and food drives for the community over the years.

"It was definitely a group effort. We threw the idea around of a food drive and a lot [the staff] felt blessed to still have our jobs," Gallegos told the *Gallup Sun*.

"We thought we could donate ourselves, and then Mr. Widner (principal) thought we could make this a class competition."

GHS principal Lane Widner sent an email to the school's staff on Dec. 15, detailing the friendly competition. For two hours on Dec. 16 (1-3 pm), the GHS staff collected donations.

Additionally, the GHS staffers handed out Pizza 9 coupons, compliments of the Grants business and a dental goody bag donated from the Acoma Health Center to all students who dropped off non-perishables.

"It was amazing to see our families drive up [and donate]," Widner said. "It was neat to give the kids something as they were giving, and neat to see them."

"Kids were so happy to be able to come back to their school. Even though they didn't get to come in, it was neat to have that rapport between the staff and kids."

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At the end of the instructional day on Dec. 16, the Grants High freshman class collected the most donations, although some of their competitors from the close-second sophomore class, half-seriously questioned the overall results.

“I think it was good, healthy, clean fun, where everybody benefited,” freshman class co-sponsor Mark Lowther said. “There were gigantic bags of beans and rice, people brought truckloads of stuff. I think this event, in the circumstances especially, was a great success.”

Lowther was thankful for his students and their parents for helping the Class of 2024 win the competition, but also, for the support everyone showed for the good of the community.

“I think there’s much more positive coming out of this than negative. You don’t have to look very far to find out what we’ve got to be grateful for,” Lowther said.

“I’ve got great kids, great students, great people I work with, and we’ve just got to pray for the ones that are unemployed and pray for the people who are hungry, and try to help them the best we can.”

The next day, Gallegos and her three kids — Roman, J.J., and Sadie — helped load up the donations in their family van to take to the Grants Community Pantry. Gallegos said there were so many donations, it took three trips from the school to the pantry.

Overall, the pantry recorded 1,194 pounds of food donated from the Dec. 16 efforts.

Exact figures were not available from years’ past, but Widner said the food drive was the most successful in recent memory.

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