



OCEAN COUNTY LIBRARY

Connecting People ... Building Community...Transforming Lives

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PRESS RELEASE

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Ocean County Library's Food for Fines Produces 9,000 Meals

TOMS RIVER, NJ – The Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders has issued congratulations to the Ocean County Library on the successful completion of its Food for Fines program, recognizing its staff, patrons and the Ocean County Health Department for coordinating this outstanding effort. The program took place as part of the library's 90th anniversary celebration.

Ocean County Library has collected 10,790 pounds or nearly 5.4 tons of food for the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties through its Food for Fines program. That's about 9,000 meals for the Food Bank to provide to people in need, 100 meals for each decade of the library's existence, and the most successful year it has ever had with the program.

"The Food for Fines program is yet another example of the many creative ways the Ocean County Library system reaches out to the community," said Freeholder Joseph H. Vicari, who serves as liaison to the Ocean County Library system. "Our library staff, across all of our branches, takes a real interest in the communities they serve and they show it in the programs and services that are in place."

The program allowed people to pay off up to \$20 of outstanding fines on each library card. For each can or package of non-perishable food donated, the library deducted 50 cents from a person's fine. "We are grateful for our wonderful Ocean County Library patrons and residents whose support of Food for Fines made the raising of food for the Food Bank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties possible," said Susan Quinn, Director of Ocean County Library.

"This program has been a long time partnership with the Ocean County Health Department," said Freeholder Gerry P. Little, who serves as liaison to the Health Department. "It's an innovative way to help clear up fines from overdue library materials while helping many families and individuals. This type of outreach by the Ocean County Library and Ocean County Health Department makes a special difference for many of our citizens. The Board of Freeholders is proud of these efforts."

The amount of food that the library has raised from this year's Food for Fines drive far exceeds the 2.5 tons of food from the library's last drive in July 2012, which was also for the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties. The library's donation program brought in over 30% of the total pounds of food donated to the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties in the month of September.

With the donated food, the FoodBank will be able to continue to support the 1 in 8 Ocean County residents who receive supplemental food and services from the Food Bank and their member feeding programs in the County. The program comes as part of Ocean County Library's strong commitment to its mission of "Connecting People, Building Community, Transforming Lives."