



SUBURBAN CHICAGO NEWS METRO/STATE

South suburban ‘food desert’ gifted \$65,000 in healthy snacks for Friday food giveaway: ‘There’s a lot of poor people we can help’

The donations are the result of a collaboration between Bremen Township, fruit and yogurt pouch company GoGo squeeZ and nonprofit organization Move For Hunger.

By Mohammad Samra | Updated Feb 8, 2024, 7:21pm CST

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Truck drivers, Benjamin Herrera, and Eustolio Castanon helps move pallets of GoGo squeeZ as they are unloaded at the Bremen Township offices at 16361 Kedzie Pkwy in Markham on Thursday. | Anthony Vazquez/Sun-Times

The engine of a Bobcat forklift roared as it dropped the final pallet of healthy snacks of blended apples, bananas and other treats into the garage Thursday morning at the Bremen Township building in south suburban Markham.

The morning delivery of the goodies, valued at roughly \$65,000, came just in time as staff at the township offices, 16361 Kedzie Parkway, prepared for their monthly drive-thru food giveaway Friday, which helps feed hundreds of south suburban area residents.

The donations are the result of a collaboration between the township, fruit and yogurt pouch company GoGo squeeZ and nonprofit organization Move For Hunger.

“You’d be so surprised,” Rondal Jones, an administrator with Bremen Township, told the Sun-Times. “This area is what I’d consider a food desert. We have 200 to 300 cars wrapped around the building looking for food like this, so it’s definitely essential.”





Rondal Jones helps unload pallets of GoGo squeeZ at the Bremen Township Offices Thursday in Markham. | Anthony Vazquez/Sun-Times

About 25 volunteers also help distribute carrots, bananas, oranges, watermelons and a variety of other foods at the popular event, in its 14th year, on the second Friday of each month at the Kedzie Parkway address. Some arrive hours before its 10 a.m. start.

“The residents that come here, come here faithfully every month,” Shari Dore, director of general assistance at the township, told the Sun-Times. “The need for food in the south suburbs is quite large at the moment.”

“We understand that setting children up for healthy futures starts with ensuring they have proper food to eat, and that fuels [GoGo squeeZ] to continue giving back through initiatives like this one,” Jorie DiCocco, field marketing specialist with the company, told the Sun-Times.

Additionally, GoGo squeeZ and Move For Hunger delivered several additional pallets of the snacks to Catholic Charities in Chicago’s Humboldt Park neighborhood later Thursday. In total, nearly 30,000 pounds of food were donated between the two locations Thursday. Annually, GoGo squeeZ donates over 400 tons of products, Dicocco said.

For Eustolio Castañón, a trucker driver delivering the food Thursday, the heavy lifting is an act of pure devotion.

“There’s a lot of poor people that we can help.”





Pallets of GoGo squeeZ unloaded at the Bremen Township Offices Thursday in Markham will be distributed Friday. | Anthony Vazquez/Sun-Times

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