

# Peas and Carrots

Operation Hungry Child, Inc.

## OHC Teams with Kids Café

Spring 2009  
Volume 1, Issue 1

Operation Hungry Child was very pleased with the response from our initial donors. For this first donation, we decided to team up with America's Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia (ASHCG) in Savannah. Mary Jane Crouch, the Executive Director, has been very involved and enthusiastic about SpenserNation. In fact, our third book, *Spenser's Savannah* will benefit ASHCG.

We wanted to find a specific need when deciding where to contribute our funds. Kids Café is where we found our answer.

Kids Café is an after-school supper program for children who are at-risk for hunger. Kids Café started in Savannah in 1989 when two young brothers were found in a community center kitchen late at night looking for food. In 1993 the Kids Café was launched as a national program by

Feeding America (formerly America's Second Harvest). Today, the program operates throughout the country with over 1,700 established locations, most where children already come together, such as girls and boys clubs, churches and schools.

Kids Café ensures that children have a safe, nurturing place to go during the critical hours after school when parents are often working. Educational, social, and recreational activities are provided for the children. There are 27 Kids Café sites served by ASHCG.

ASHCG was trying to attain a grant for help with their nutrition and exercise awareness educational program. The need was crucial, yet the funds were not there. OHC stepped in and provided them with the means to buy the necessary supplies to get this project up and running.

OHC has since visited several Kids Café sites

in Savannah to see the benefit this program is having on the children. Among the supplies bought were sporting items such as hula-hoops, jump ropes and bouncy balls for exercise games.

To see this program come to fruition and to see the kids having so much fun was a rewarding experience. We look forward to working again with ASHCG and appreciate the great impact they make on Savannah's hungry children.

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6030 Cans  
Collected

**"Second Harvest... is able to provide nutrition education for program participants through an award from SpenserNation's non-profit affiliate, Operation Hungry Child."**  
ASHCG press release  
February 2009



## Letter from the Director

Hello hunger patriots! I am so excited to send out our first newsletter. This has been a great experience that has been both frustrating at times (waiting for the IRS) and rewarding – seeing your donations in the mail, many accompanied with an encouraging note.

For those of you that do not know why we started Operation Hungry Child, let me share our story. As SpenserNation was making its start, we began learning more about our cause, and our passion – childhood hunger. We have learned about the food bank's programs to provide for hungry people and the staggering statistics about poverty and hunger in our own backyard. To say the least, it has been an eye-opening experience for us.

While the author's proceeds of the SpenserNation books go to the food banks in those areas,

we initiated a non-profit affiliate that could directly support specific causes. The donations we raise will assist in ear-marked programs, such as our first project with America's Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia's Kids Café program (see cover story in this newsletter).

OHC sponsored food drives both in Portland at our first book launch in December (see below), and at an elementary school book reading in Highlands, NC in February (page 3). We have found that the kids in the schools are so excited to be involved and to participate in helping out with our nation's hunger problem and being "world changers" in our midst.

OHC and SpenserNation have exciting events coming up surrounding the launch of our next two books, *Spenser Goes to St. Louis* (summer) and

*Spenser's Savannah* (fall). Check out: [spensernation.com](http://spensernation.com) for details!

Get involved in the fight against hunger. Join me in being a world changer!

Thank you for your support,

Lindsey Brooks Buck  
Executive Director



## Spenser Goes to Portland Book Launch

In December, the SpenserNation team went out to Portland to launch the first SpenserNation book, *Spenser Goes to Portland*. The author's proceeds from the sale of this first book benefit Oregon Food Bank (OFB).

The first day of the trip was spent touring all of the places Spenser visits in the book. "Mom" felt it was very important for Spenser's two-legged siblings to learn all about the great city of Portland. This also enabled us to appreciate the unique city itself and relate to the people there during our events.

We held an event at OFB for the first and fourth grade classes at Tigard Elementary School. The children brought with them

canned goods totaling over 1,500 cans! The children participated in food measuring and packaging in the warehouse.



After learning hands-on the importance of OFB to many residents in Oregon and Washington, they gathered for lunch and a special book reading with Spenser and his mom, Melanie Brooks.

Our last day in Portland was spent at City Christian School in Portland, where we started the morning with a school-wide book reading. They also held a food drive to help OFB. Afterwards, the SpenserNation team went around to the classrooms sharing more information about SpenserNation and showing the illustration process of Spenser and our first book.

For more information on Oregon Food Bank, visit: [www.oregonfoodbank.org](http://www.oregonfoodbank.org)

**"A tiny dog and his mom,  
together with "little" people,  
endeavor to change the world."  
Spot Magazine, Portland**

For Valentine's Day, Spenser went to visit the children at Highlands Elementary School in North Carolina. A school-wide food drive collected over 400 canned goods. Spenser's mom read the Portland story to the children gathered in the gym, and Spenser brought Valentine cookies and picture postcards for all of his new friends. Afterwards, part of the SN team visited the local food pantry to deliver the food and learn more about the poverty level and hunger problem in the area of what many consider an upper-middle class vacation town. "It's one of the most touching things that's happened in a long time," said Barbara Landwehr, Highlands' food-pantry coordinator.

Planning is underway for the launch of our eagerly anticipated third book, *Spenser's Savannah*. This book

will directly benefit the food bank of Savannah, America's Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia. In this story, Spenser and Mom share their favorite things about Savannah. With a decidedly military flavor, Spenser introduces his friends to all branches of the military since all are represented in the Savannah area. Of course, he also has to touch our dear Tybee and the fabulous St. Patrick's Day parade.



Follow America's Favorite Traveling Dog, Spenser, and Mom, at his blog: [spenseraftd.wordpress.com](http://spenseraftd.wordpress.com)

In March, Spenser and Mom explored the North Carolina Mountains by following the Blue Ridge Parkway. The research from this trip forms the first step in the definition of a future book which would be called *Spenser Goes to the Blue Ridge Parkway*. Exploring these areas led Spenser and Mom to the largest private home in America to some of the oldest mountains in the world to a Native American reservation and to the world of apple orchards. The children along the Blue Ridge Parkway from Highlands to Hendersonville to Boone have been warm and welcoming to Spenser and eager to join him as a world changer.

The *Meet Spenser* companion book is also planned for later this year.

## Food for Thought

We are always on the lookout for kids' causes to support. Please let us know if there is one you would like to nominate to receive OHC funding.

Spenser books are available through our online store, [www.spensertown.com](http://www.spensertown.com) or by calling our customer service department at 800-247-6553 or at any of the major online

stores: Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and Borders.

The Spenser coloring sheet included with this newsletter will be a regular feature. They are produced by our illustrator and are also available as part of the Spenser Birthday party package. Pass them on to someone who colors - and enjoy! Perfectly okay to copy!

Help us go **GREEN!**

Please email Lindsey at [lbuck@operationhungrychild.com](mailto:lbuck@operationhungrychild.com) if you would like to receive your newsletter via email.

Join OHC on Facebook! For all members, look for us under causes.

\*\*Mail carriers food collection is Mother's Day weekend\*\*

## IRS Tax-exempt Status Finalized!

We are pleased to announce that the IRS approved our application for tax-exempt status at the beginning of March.

The unexpected wait was due to an IRS backlog of non-profit applications and a shortage of IRS specialists due to employee layoffs.

This process is complete and we are officially a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused our donors.

All donations accepted during our December drive were endorsed over to America's

Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia (ASHCG). Donors should have received an acknowledgement from both OHC and ASHCG.

The Donate button on our website is now up and running, and, of course, we also welcome donations by mail!

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Address block

Ending childhood hunger,  
one city at a time.

We're on the Web!

OperationHungryChild.com

Thank You to our First Donors!

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	\$201-\$500
	\$501-\$1,000
	+ \$1,001