

Students hold food drive to benefit charities

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Students from Queen of Peace Catholic Academy collected 2,214 cans of tuna for the Catholic Charities food pantry.

Students from Queen of Peace Catholic Academy recently held a food drive to benefit Catholic Charities Bureau Inc. of Gainesville.

The school contacted Catholic Charities early last month in hopes of filling a community need. Ray Milligan, community outreach coordinator at Catholic Charities, responded by requesting food for the group's food pantry, which provides food to more than 11,000 individuals and 5,000 families locally each year.

Specifically, the pantry needed cans of tuna - a staple food that "always goes quickly," Milligan said.

Students kicked off their week-long tuna drive last week, collecting cans of tuna from friends and family - many making trips to local grocery stores to buy the canned goods with their own money.

Milligan says that the school has been a regular contributor to the food pantry - last year, students donated more than 500 jars of peanut butter. But this year, he says, students outdid themselves when they donated 2,214 cans of tuna with two classes - Sister Franziska's third-grade class and Mrs. Vassou's first-grade class - contributing more than 300 cans per class.

For more information on the food pantry, call 372-0294.

Girl Scouts earn top award

Girl Scouts Jenna Johnson and Margaret Luther, of Troop 808 in Gainesville, recently earned the highest honor in Girl Scouts, The Girl Scout Gold Award, which requires members to dedicate at least 65 hours of time towards a community project.

Johnson, an Eastside High School graduate, provided the children of Interfaith Hospitality Network with crafts and supplies for a variety of projects.

Luther, a Gainesville High School graduate, created "Birthdays in a Box," birthday party supplies donated to children being housed in domestic violence shelters and homeless shelters.

Know someone in the community who has achieved something special? Contact Suzy.Richardson@gvillesun.com or call 374-5038.