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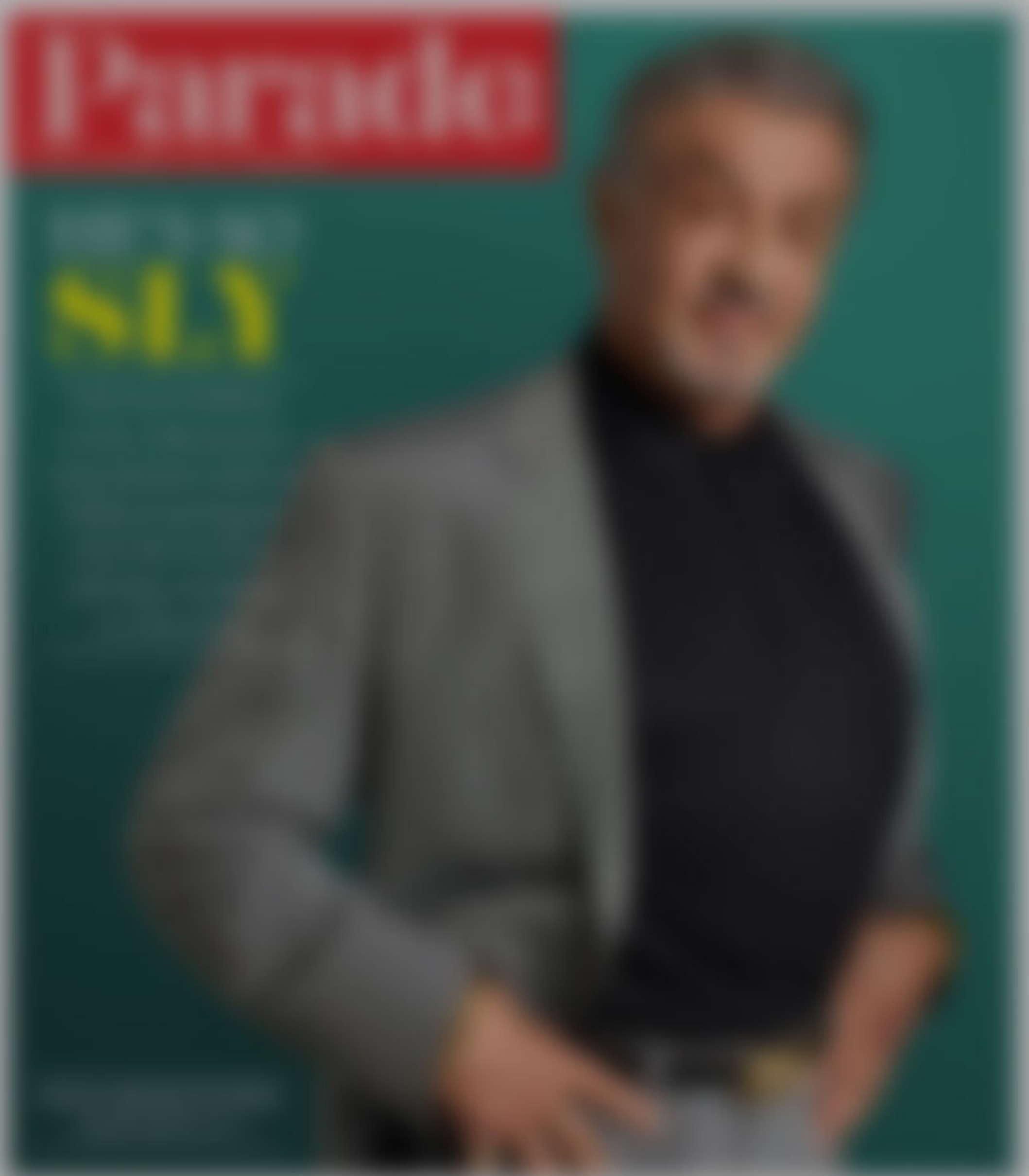
Local 11



Batman's voice goes silent: Kevin Conroy dies at 66

Local 11

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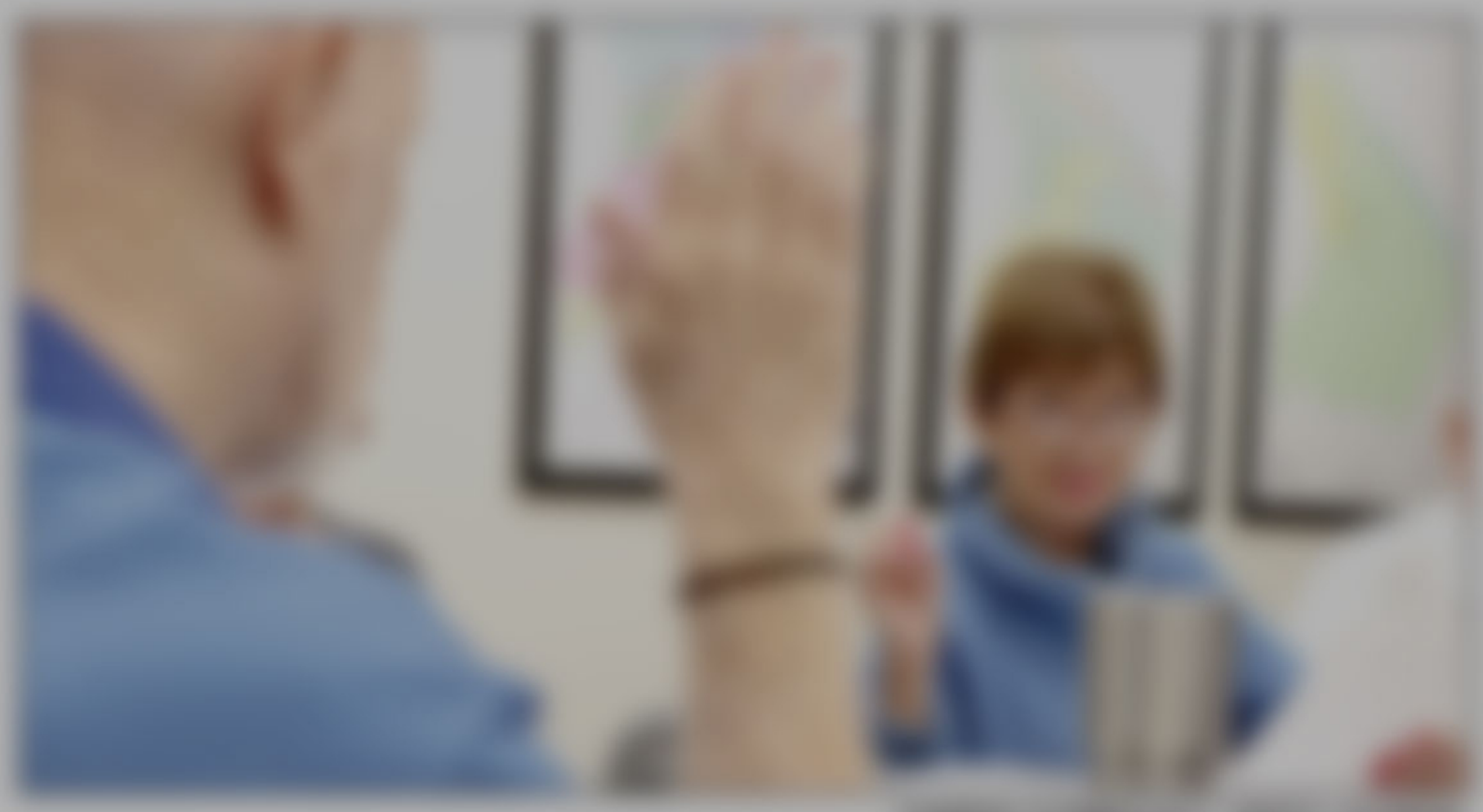
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Feedback encouraged with confidentiality

Troy town council seat heads to runoff election

By Lindsey Hodges
The election will see an incumbent...



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The runoff election will be held...

Hunger help



Weekend food programs offer schoolkids something to eat

By LINDSEY HODGES lhodges@indexjournal.com

Most people in Greenwood County go to bed with full bellies. But not all. Kids in the county's public schools who face a barrier to food get help on the weekends with food provided by various churches and organizations...

Weekend food backpack programs send bags of food home with varying numbers of students who have been identified as having need.

"They're in our care," said Terri Ward, guidance counselor at Ninety Six Primary School. "And we can't have them having a need if we don't try to take care of it."

Ward and other school officials across the county don't require proof of that need. They don't question parents, they just give what's needed, knowing that someone is being fed who might otherwise have gone hungry.

Woodfields Elementary School Principal Janette Miller mentioned the idea of "Maslow before Bloom," a principle among educators that students' basic needs laid out in Maslow's hierarchy of needs — things such as food, water, security and love — must come before Bloom's taxonomy, which is an academic hierarchy.

In short, fed students learn better. "It's very important for those basic needs to be met in order for their educational needs to be met, so we do all we can to provide for those students who need it," Miller said.

Mary Anderson works at Woodfields Elementary School in Greenwood as a support facilitator. She described her position as a bridge between the school, students and their families, and the community. Her main job, she said, is to make sure students are at school.



Troxy Minyard with Ninety Six Primary School hangs food on a teacher's doorknob to be distributed to children.



PHOTOS BY LINDSEY HODGES | INDEX-JOURNAL

ABOVE: Members of St. Paul United Methodist Church pack weekend food bags on a recent Monday morning. At left is Barb Gilbert. Second from left is the Rev. Scott Gilmer. TOP: Sandwiches from E.A. Sween are being added to the weekend food packs at Ninety Six and Ware Shoals primary schools, courtesy of the company.

See HUNGER, page 4A

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LINDSEY HODGES | INDEX-JOURNAL  
From left, Linda Culbertson, Connie Hill and Becky Schoenberger look at the food available at Ware Shoals Primary.

HUNGER

From page 1A

In Anderson's office, those basic needs are met. Food brought in by local churches and organizations fill tubs, waiting for students to pick them up. Snacks, piles of clothes and hygiene items are also available when students have an emergency.

When it comes to the weekend food program, Anderson said students are referred in a variety of ways. Sometimes teachers may come and mention observations about students who are often hungry, she said. Anderson will talk to the student, ask some basic questions, and call the parent and let them know what programs are offered.

At Woodfields, about 70 students come every week. Anderson and Miller each said the need for food is getting bigger.

"Students want to eat, and they're just so grateful for this food," Anderson said.

"I really don't know what our students would do if it wasn't for this because they really, really depend on it," she said.

She mentioned she had to go by a student's home one day, the same day students had gotten their weekly allotment of food. Two little boys were sitting in the yard, eating their canned spaghetti without even heating it up. They told her if they took it inside, younger siblings would want it.

She's also had students who asked for her leftover food from lunch, like an apple. She mentioned one student who, when she asked him why, told her they didn't have a lot of food at his house and he knew his parents would be out of the house most of the weekend.

Anderson said some people will think students just want the food for snacks. Her response: "No."

Students want something to fill them up, she said, and the weekend food program does that.

The program at Ninety Six Primary serves 16 students. Each Friday, a bag of food is left on their teacher's doorknob and distributed to them.

Ward said the situation could vary: parents are working on the weekend and aren't home, or just don't have a lot of resources.

She said the case is not just that parents aren't doing what they need to do. She summed up the situation as simply "there's a need."

They will see sometimes situations such as grandparents who are raising children and might be stretched thin.

"Even if on Saturday, everybody gets something out of that bag, it's something there," she said.

On Monday morning, members of St. Paul United Methodist Church in Ninety Six shuffled around a counter, packing bags for students. Piles of ravioli, Beefaroni, shelf-stable milk, cereal bars and more — 16 of each for

How to help

For those who would like to help, here's who you can contact:

District 50: Contact Julian Gale, director of student services, at 864-941-5400 or email at galej@gwd50.org. You can also contact Johnathan Graves, director of communications, at graves@gwd50.org.

District 51: Contact Superintendent Fay Sprouse at 864-456-7496.

District 52: Contact Terri Ward, school counselor at Ninety Six Primary, at 864-456-7496.

the students at Ninety Six Primary — were placed into bags by church members. They chatted while packing, a Monday morning task inspired by a desire to help.

Church member Barb Gilbert said the church has been involved for four or five years. It grew out of a study on how to grow the church, and from that grew community service.

"The schools in Ninety Six are just a core part of the community, so we talked to them to see what their needs were, and for the primary school, it was to provide backpacks because they needed it," Gilbert said.

The Rev. Scott Gilmer said church members are providing physical nourishment for students, but gain spiritual nourishment themselves.

"It's just a great need," he said. "We talk when we do this that a lot of us have a great fortune that we were fed on the weekends, and just to think about that there's people who aren't able to be fed. And it's a sad thing to think about."

At Ware Shoals Primary, students lined up outside the nurse's office at the end of the day on a recent Friday to receive their food.

There, members of Mt. Gallagher Baptist Church provide the food and help pack the bags. Church member Connie Hill said she had seen a post from a school nurse in a different district post about schools, and reached out to Greenwood School District 51 Superintendent Fay Sprouse to see how the church could help in Ware Shoals.

Along with the usual fare given to students, kids in Ninety Six and Ware Shoals are now sent home with a sandwich from E.A. Sween, a sandwich company establishing a facility in Greenwood County. The sandwiches, which are given to the students frozen and are good for seven days, add another option for the weekend and are provided free to districts.

At Woodfields on a recent Friday, the appreciation for the food came freely from students as they packed their backpacks with the food they were given in Anderson's office.

"Thank you. Goodbye, Auntie!" one student warmly called to Anderson on his way back to class.

Contact staff writer Lindsey Hodges at 864-943-5644 or on Twitter @LindseyNHodges.

Marie Loretta Thomas

Marie Loretta Thomas, 88, of ... died ... on ... at ...

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Funeral services for the late ... will be held at ... on ... at ...

Jack Louis Hervey Sr.

Jack Louis Hervey Sr., 88, of ... died ... on ... at ...

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Kevin Conroy, a defining voice of Batman, dies

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Kevin Conroy speaking at a public hearing in 2011 at the University of South Carolina.

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