• Special to the Leader & Times “We depend on the Stamp Out Hunger Post Office food drive – it is the largest single food donation we receive,” said Susan Roberts, executive director of HomeCare, which operates the Liberal Food Cupboard. “We hope people will be generous this year because our supplies are seriously depleted.” This year is the 21st anniversary of the nation’s largest food drive.

To help Stamp Out Hunger this year, simply leave a sturdy bag containing non-perishable foods, like canned soup, canned vegetables, pasta, rice or cereal, next to your mailbox prior to the time of regular mail delivery on Saturday, May 11. Food items should be in non-breakable containers, such as boxes and cans. People are asked to put non-perishable food donations by their mail boxes and the Liberal Post Office letter carriers will pick it up to be donated to the local non-profit food cupboard. For those who have a post office box, they may take the donation to the Post Office lobby and there is a receptacle for their donation. In the past, the Liberal Letter Carriers food drive has averaged between 2,000 to 5,000 pounds of food, according to Monica Correll, who is heading up the food drive for the Liberal Post Office. In 2012, donations were more than 3,000 pounds which filled the food cupboard shelves.

“This is the largest food drive in the nation,” said Correll, “and we’re always proud to be a part of it on a local level. Now in its 21th year, the Stamp Out Hunger food drive, which is always held on the second Saturday in May, has become the nation’s largest single-day food drive. In 2012, letter carriers picked up more than 70 million pounds of non-perishable food donations, which brought our grand total from more than two decades of collections to 1.2 billion pounds.”

To help supplement the Food Drive, this year, the Seward County United Way will be accepting food donations at its booth at the Cinco De Mayo Celebration, which is from 8 to 11 p.m. Saturday, May 4, at the Seward County Activity Building.

“For every can or box of non-perishable food donated, the donor will get a ticket for some prizes we have donated. We will hold the drawing before the festival ends. The food will be added to the Post Office Food Drive that will be held the next Saturday,” said Kay Burtzloff, director of the Seward County United Way.

Dillons Supermarket and Best Market are participating again this year by setting up receptacles in their stores. “We thought that people might find it easier to donate while they are shopping,” said Correll. “This has really helped to increase the donations in the past.” Since 2001, the food drive has received the assistance and support of the Seward County United Way.

Correll said that if any businesses or the Liberal and Kismet schools also wanted to participate in the food drive, arrangements could be made to pick up food on Friday, May 11 or Monday, May 13. “They can contact me at the Post Office, 624-4031, or the Seward County United Way, 624-5400, and we’ll be happy to pick up the food.”

In 2012, the Liberal Food Cupboard provided enough food for a family for five days to than 835 individuals which represents 292 families. In 2011, they served 771 cases which represented 225 families. “Each year, we’re called upon to serve more people and the Post Office food drive makes our resources go much farther,” Roberts said. “With today’s economy, we’re expecting our cases to go up in 2013.”

“Our single largest financial contribution comes from the Seward County United Way,” Roberts said. “While we get some individual donations, our two biggest supporters are the Letter Carriers and the United Way.”

HomeCare, which is housed in the Presbyterian Church, has been operating in Liberal since 1979, which makes it one of the oldest in the city. For more information about HomeCare Inc., contact Roberts at 624-0714.

Food Drive to be conducted at Cinco de Mayo Celebration

• United way To help supplement the Post Office Food Drive this year, the Seward County United Way will be accepting food donations at its booth at the Cinco De Mayo Celebration, which is from 8 to 11 p.m. Saturday, May 4, at the Seward County Activity Center.

“For every can or box of non-perishable food donated, the donor will get a ticket for some prizes we have donated. We will hold the drawing before the festival ends. The food will be added to the Post Office Food Drive that will be held the next Saturday, May 11,” said Kay Burtzloff, director of the Seward County United Way.

To participate in the May 11 Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, simply leave a sturdy bag containing non-perishable foods, like canned soup, canned vegetables, pasta, rice or cereal, next to your mailbox prior to the time of regular mail delivery on Saturday, May 11.

Food items should be in non-breakable containers, such as boxes and cans. People are asked to put non-perishable food donations by their mail boxes and the Liberal Post Office letter carriers will pick it up to be donated to the local non-profit food cupboard. For those who have a post office box, they may take the donation to the Post Office lobby and there is a receptacle for their donation.

For more information about the food drive, contact Burtzloff at 624-5400.