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A Feinstein Middle School student makes the acquaintance of Alan Shawn Feinstein during this year's can drive.

FMS food drive gets a special visitor

Coventry middle school gets visit from Feinstein

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COVENTRY — Canned good donations are coming in by loads at the Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School for their annual mission to help others in need, and the school received a visit from its benefactor.

Alan Shawn Feinstein recently visited the middle school to kick off the annual Feinstein Junior Scholar Food Drive.

Some of the most-requested items include canned vegetables, cereal, canned fruit, pasta, tuna fish, juice boxes, soup and crackers.

"The school has been taking part in this annual drive for many years," said Feinstein Middle School Principal Dr. Arthur Lisi.

Lisi described the spirit of the school during the drive as "lively."

"The students show great spirit during the food drive," he said. "They collect the cans and boxes and packages in homerooms and bring them down to an area outside my office on a daily basis."

Student council members also have the task of organizing the items and repacking them for the food bank.

Homerooms have competitions and there are other incentives such as a pajama day, sports day and hat day to encourage students to bring in items.

"Students really enjoy participating in the incentives," said Lisi. "For example, to wear pajamas one day last week, they had to bring in three cans. We collected over 1,600 items in one day. The students who organize the items do an amazing job in a very short period of time, which allows them to be able to report back to the

Students at Feinstein Middle School were offered incentives throughout their canned food drive as they try to reach 8,000 canned goods. Here, students participate in a "PJ Day," where they were allowed to wear pajamas into school in exchange for bringing in three cans.

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Drive sets goal: 8,000 canned goods

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team captains to tell them what items are needed most."

The principal explained that more items are collected when there is incentive tied to the administration as well, like last year when Lisi dressed as the good witch from the "Wizard of Oz," and the assistant principal dyed her hair.

"There is something in the air for this year as well," he said.

Lisi and others in the administration such as Anne Marie Printer and Jennifer

Pietros, student council advisors, agree the students really do care about their community and if they can help someone else that is struggling with getting enough to eat, it makes them think they can make a difference.

"It has been an annual even in all the 14 years I've been at the middle school," said Printer.

"Since Mr. Feinstein has been involved, the food drive has been called the Feinstein Junior Scholar Food Drive in honor of our students being called Feinstein Junior Scholars," said Pietros.

Some of the ways they're gathering the goods include challenging the school's homerooms to see who can bring in the most amount of items.

"The students make daily announcements with up to date totals," Lisi said. "They usually try to make them catchy like ringing a bell or playing a trumpet."

The goal is 8,000 items again this year to repeat last year's goal, which was exceeded. This year the administration is encouraging healthier alternatives (no ramen noodles this year), therefore the students set the same goal of 8,000.