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## SunLine Launches 7th Annual Fill the Bus Food Drive

**(Thousand Palms, CA)** October 21, 2013 • SunLine Transit Agency launches its campaign to raise awareness of the 7th Annual “Fill the Bus” Holiday Food Drive. This annual event helps families in need and helps feed the homeless of the Coachella Valley during the holidays.

This year’s event will take place on Thursday, November 14th, from 7 AM to 7 PM and two outstanding community organizations will be recipients of this year’s donations: Martha’s Village & Kitchen and Food Now. These two organizations are supported by the generosity of Coachella Valley residents, and all donations will be delivered to these organizations within hours of the event’s conclusion (between 5:30am and 6:30am on Friday November 15th).

SunLine will park two of its state-of-the-art alternative-fueled buses at two grocery store locations in the Coachella Valley. SunLine invites the community to remember how “it is better to give than receive” by helping fill each vehicle with donated non-perishable food items, frozen meats and other assorted trimmings for holiday meals. SunLine also asks local residents to donate new packaged toiletries, personal hygiene products, diapers and other household products that are a tremendous help to those in need at this festive time of year.

Each of SunLine’s 40-foot buses can accommodate packaged items of any size or shape. Of course, checks and money orders are also gratefully accepted!

Members of SunLine’s management team (including new General Manager Lauren Skiver), members of staff, and volunteers from Martha’s Village & Kitchen and Food Now will be onsite to greet donors, assist with drop-offs and thank the community for their generosity. The locations of the buses this year are as follows:

- **Stater Bros:** 78630 Highway 111, La Quinta (Hwy. 111 & Washington)
- **Ralphs:** 1733 East Palm Canyon Drive, Smoke Tree Village Shopping Center, Palm Springs (East Palm Canyon Drive & Sunrise Way)

### About the Recipient Organizations:

Martha’s Village & Kitchen (83791 Date Ave, Indio), is one of the largest providers of homeless services in the Coachella Valley and Riverside County. It began in 1990 when founders Gloria Gomez and Claudia Castorena started serving meals to their homeless neighbors in need. Today, from its campus in Indio, Martha's Village offers a unique life-changing program based on the nationally-recognized continuum of care model pioneered by Father Joe’s Villages. Martha’s Village addresses the underlying causes of homelessness, and challenges each resident to become a better person through Bridges to Independence—a groundbreaking approach to rehabilitation.

Food Now (the food program for Family Services of the Desert or FSOD) is a nonprofit organization that protects the most vulnerable members of society by confronting issues of child abuse and domestic violence within the family. Since 1959, FSOD has been providing affordable, quality counseling and family support services to Eastern Riverside County Residents. Over the past 50 years, the agency has made a significant impact in the lives of tens of thousands of men, women and children by providing access to mental health and family support services, regardless of income. FSOD turns no one away!

**SunLine's Partners:**

Partnering with SunLine this year are presenting media sponsors KESQ News Channel 3 (ABC) and CBS Local 2. Mix 100.5FM (RR Broadcasting) will be broadcasting live from the Fill The Bus event sites – tune in and listen out for more details on Mix 100.5.

Special thanks to all of our local media sponsors and supporters.

More information about SunLine can be found at [sunline.org](http://sunline.org). • Media inquiries contact Norma Stevens at 760-250-5366 or e-mail [nstevens@sunline.org](mailto:nstevens@sunline.org).

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*SunLine Transit Agency is a joint powers authority formed in 1977 to operate the Coachella Valley's public transportation system. SunLine offers fixed route bus service and curb-to-curb paratransit for the mobility impaired. Its fixed route and paratransit vehicles travel more than 4 million miles per year, covering over 619 bus stops located throughout a 1,120 mile-service area, carrying approximately 4.82 million riders. SunLine Services Group regulates three taxi franchises who provide taxi services throughout the Valley. SunFuels alternative fueling station offers compressed natural gas and hydrogen for SunLine and the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To learn more, please visit [sunline.org](http://sunline.org).*