Turkey Gobble’s organizers.

volunteer, “said Jennifer Cofini, one of the

Christmas, instead.

Club of Wesley Chapel had to ask some volun-

timate.

The event is aimed at helping not only the

unemployed, the underemployed and the

homeless but also shut-ins who have no way

of getting a holiday meal, Byrne said.

Last year, the goal was to provide 400

meals. This year, the organizers are being more

ambitious. They hope to feed 750.

When they created the event last year, the

idea was to have people dine at the Dairy Queen,

where they could share the experi-

ence with others, Byrne said.

In retrospect, however, organizers decided

it would be better to give people a take-out

option, so they could enjoy the meals at

home, he said. So, this year, diners have a

choice. They can enjoy their meal of turkey

and all the fixings at Dairy Queen, or take it

home.

For those who are unable to go to the

Dairy Queen, 27328 SR 54 in Wesley Chapel,

there are volunteers who will deliver the

meals. Cofini said he had hoped that fewer people

would need this time this year - but many people

are struggling because of the tough economy.

Scores of volunteers, however, will be de-

voting a portion of their holiday to serving or
delivering hot meals to those who are less for-
tunate.

So many people signed up to help at the

second annual Turkey Gobble Feast at the

Dairy Queen in Wesley Chapel that the Rotary

Club of Wesley Chapel had to ask some volun-
ters if they could help deliver toys for

Thanksgiving, the aroma of roasted turkey will

fill the air, as family and friends gather to share

a feast and the pleasure of one another’s com-

pany.

The church raised money to purchase the

turkeys through a special fundraising event.

Tampa Rotary Club helped distribute the

turkeys and other holiday foods, he said.

The church also received $2,000 in dona-
tions from Thrivent Financial for Luthers, a

fraternal organization based in Appleton, Wis.

Besides the Rotary Club of Wesley Chapel,

other primary event sponsors included

Heritage Ford, other primary event sponsors

are the International Hair Co. and Florida

Medical Clinic. There’s also an anonymous

donor who has contributed $2,000 for the

Thanksgiving feast and another $2,000 for

Toys for Metropolitan Ministries, Byrne said.

The group has reached out to churches,
schools, homeless shelters and others to ask

them to spread the word about the

Thanksgiving meal.

Others across the region also have given

out their time and treasure.

Atovement Lutheran Church in Wesley

Chapel gave out 200 turkeys to families last

week during the church’s Turkey Drive, said

Scott Lindner, church pastor. The New

Tampa Rotary Club helped distribute the

turkeys and other holiday foods, he said.

The church also received $2,000 in dona-
tions from Thrivent Financial for Luthers, a

fraternal organization based in Appleton, Wis.

to help pay for the turkeys.

In another act of kindness, Heritage Ford

created a collection site in its dealership

where people brought in enough donations

to fill 50 food boxes in its first Boxes of Hope

campaign for Metropolitan Ministries of Pasco

County. The dealership at 28759 SR 54 W., col-

lected 686 pounds of food and donated a

turkey for every box it filled.

At Wesley Chapel Nissan, 28519 Wesley

Chapel Blvd., the dealership’s owner, Jay

Rosario, its general manager, Glenn Gibson,

and its internet director, Troy Stevenson, pro-

vided $800 in gift cards to help 47 families in

need in the community of Wimauma, through
efforts led by Myrtle Lake Baptist Church in

Land O’ Lakes.

Last week, the WWJD Food Outreach was

busily gathering donations for Thanksgiving
dinner boxes for 245 families. The Chancy

Road Christian Church also planned to pro-

vide meals on Thanksgiving for the elderly,

homeless and needy. Reservations for those

meals were due by Nov. 22.

Efforts are ongoing at Keystone

Community Church, 21010 SR 54, in Land O’

Lakes. The church has been collecting food,
turkeys and toys for Thanksgiving in its third

annual Metropolitan Ministries Holiday

Gift Drive.

The Thanksgiving drive was set to end on

Tuesday, Nov. 22. That tent will reopen on

Saturday, Dec. 10 and will remain open until

Wednesday, Dec. 21, to accept contributions for

Christmas.