Burrow’s words unleash torrent of $$$ for local Food Pantry

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The entire country’s eyes turned to rural Athens County this week after Heisman Trophy winner and Athens-area native Joe Burrow called attention to the issues of poverty and child hunger in his home county during his Heisman acceptance speech Saturday evening in New York City.

The award presentation show, which was telecast on ESPN in primetime, reportedly drew 2.54 million viewers.

Burrow’s mention of poverty in Athens County and southeast Ohio sparked several online fundraisers including a locally based one that as of Wednesday morning had raised more than $430,000 in donations for the Athens County Food Pantry.

That money will be put to good use.

In Athens County, roughly 30 percent of all children in 2017 lived in households that were below the poverty level; that same year, the total rate of people living below the poverty line in Athens County was roughly 30.7 percent, which would be the highest rate in all of Ohio (and almost three times the national average).

Meanwhile, more than one in four children in Athens County are still considered “food insecure,” meaning there’s little certainty about when their next meal will come.

Burrow – who won this year’s Heisman award for his stellar college

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