

spring 2011

seeds

of hope



KANSAS
food bank
HELPING THE HUNGRY • SINCE 1984
A Member of **FEEDING AMERICA**

You're Feeding Hungry
Kansans of All Ages!



Brian Walker
PRESIDENT AND CEO

NEW YEAR, NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Dear Friend,

The New Year is already well underway, and with it comes new opportunities to reach more hungry Kansans than ever before.

While the economy might be officially in recovery, it may be quite a while before our unemployed Kansas neighbors start to see these positive effects in the form of new jobs. And the longer people remain unemployed, the more they turn to [Kansas Food Bank](#) hunger-relief partners for help to make it through.

Cold weather is hard for those in need. But perhaps the most affected population during the winter months has been our community’s senior citizens and others on fixed incomes. Seniors and the disabled are fighting to keep their heat on while still paying their living expenses and buying prescription medications. Food is often the first thing to get cut from an already stretched budget.

Fortunately, thanks to you, there’s a lifeline for these struggling Kansans who have given so much to our great communities. Please take a few minutes to read on the following pages about the lives you’ve improved with your compassion.

I can’t thank you enough for your continued generosity as we increase our efforts in the fight against hunger in Wichita, and notably, across more and more rural Kansas towns.

I was amazed at your giving spirit during this past holiday season, and I remain ever grateful that you’re choosing to stand with us for another year.

On behalf of those whose lives you’re improving through your gifts, thank you.

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THANK YOU FOR REMEMBERING HOMEBOUND SENIORS

In 2004, Tommy – a lifelong Wichita resident – got the biggest scare of his life. He was diagnosed with cancer.

What followed were aggressive radiation and chemotherapy treatments...and mounting medical bills. Already on a fixed income since retiring in 1998, Tommy has been in a tough spot.

Fortunately, his doctors say his cancer isn't progressing any further right now – although they stop short of saying he's in remission. But he still struggles daily with other major health concerns like osteoporosis, severe arthritis and emphysema, which have rendered him almost entirely homebound.

“It means a lot.”

His Social Security check is only \$682 a month, and he gets \$51 in food stamps. By the time he pays his bills and tries to make a dent in his medical debt, his income has all but vanished. His food stamps do help, but they're just not enough

to cover him for a whole month. Plus, it's nearly impossible for his fragile 124-pound frame to endure a trip to the grocery store.

That's where Senior Services, a hunger-relief partner of the [Kansas Food Bank](#), comes in.

Each month, Tommy gets a special delivery from Senior Services, right to his doorstep. His big box of food comes filled with fresh fruits and vegetables and other grocery staples – just the things his doctor tells him he needs to be eating to keep up his strength.

“It means a lot,” he says about the food boxes. “It really helps stretch your dollar.”



Tommy is well aware that the food boxes he's so fortunate to receive are a direct result of your generosity to the Kansas Food Bank. Without your support, Senior Services wouldn't be able to pack and deliver this life-giving food to struggling seniors like Tommy.

“Thank you,” he says genuinely. “It really is a big help!”

HUNGRY KANSANS YOUNG AND OLD ARE THANKFUL FOR YOU!



Hungry children have breakfast, thanks to you.



Your compassion provides meals for those in need.



Your gifts mean kids in need are full and ready to learn.



Kansas families have enough to eat with your help.



You're providing groceries for hungry seniors.

THANK YOU!

\$25,000 Award from Boeing

Thanks to a generous donation of \$25,000 from Boeing, we are able once again to offer capacity building grants to our agencies. Agencies are encouraged to apply for commercial grade freezers through this opportunity, which will better equip them to provide their clients with meat and other frozen food items.



Governor Brownback

As part of his inaugural events, Governor Sam Brownback visited the [Kansas Food Bank](#), helping fill Food-4-Kids backpacks. During the two hours the Governor was here, he and his crew filled over 1,500 packets. Currently 5,928 backpacks of food are distributed every week to food-insecure children across the state of Kansas.



ONEXONE

We are happy to report that we recently received a \$10,000 grant from ONEXONE, a non-profit foundation partnered with



Feeding America. These funds will go directly toward providing nutritious food for children in need through our Food-4-Kids program in Garden City. Thank you, ONEXONE!

Jam the Trailer

Our friends at Alef's Harley Davidson did more than jam the trailer this holiday season. In addition to collecting 3,250 pounds of food for the [Kansas Food Bank](#), they also presented us with a check for \$8,750 as part of their promotion. And Food Bank supporters Robert and Mona Abney were the winners of a brand new Harley Davidson Rocker C motorcycle! Thanks Alef's for such a fantastic promotion!



New Communities

As we continue our expansion across the state of Kansas we would like to welcome the following agencies into the Food Bank Family:

- Project Home – *Hugoton*
- Isaiah's House – *Ashland*
- Kiowa County Food Bank – *Greensburg*
- Christian Food Bank – *Pratt*
- Medicine Lodge Food Bank – *Medicine Lodge*
- Stafford Ministerial Alliance – *Stafford*
- Helping Hands Ministry – *Larned*

- Community Food Bank of Barton County – *Great Bend*
- Mt. Hope Sanctuary – *McPherson*
- McPherson County Food Bank – *McPherson*
- Genesis Thomas County – *Colby*
- Bible Baptist Church – *Goodland*
- Genesis Sherman County – *Goodland*
- Lighthouse Baptist Church – *Bloom*
- Attica Food Bank – *Attica*
- Safe Haven – *Parsons*
- Lebo Community Food Pantry – *Lebo*
- McCune Church of the Nazarene – *McCune*

A TRUE COMMUNITY SERVANT



Don Meiergerd

Don Meiergerd is a true champion in the fight against hunger. For 15 years, he's been a tremendous advocate and committed supporter of the [Kansas Food Bank](#).

He was first introduced to the work of the Food Bank as the vice president of distribution for Wichita-

If you'd like to volunteer at the Kansas Food Bank, contact Larry Gunkel at lgunkel@kansasfoodbank.org.

based Cargill, an international producer and marketer of food, agricultural, financial and industrial products and services.

When a colleague retired and stepped down from his position on the Kansas Food Bank board of directors, he suggested that Don take his place.

Don didn't know much about food banking

at the time, but he was more than familiar with the food industry and the logistics of distribution, so he thought he might be able to help. And help he has.

A few years into his board term and after a distinguished career with Cargill, Don retired from the company in 2003 and became even more invested in the Food Bank. He took on the chairmanship of

the Food Bank's capital campaign, soliciting from Cargill the largest private donation for the entire building project and solidifying the facility's new name as the Cargill Cares Complex.

Don continues to be an invaluable partner to the Kansas Food Bank in his fourth year as board chair. He's an outspoken advocate, a volunteer and a philanthropist. When he's not spending time with his grandchildren – Don is helping make the world a better place for Kansans in need. He's very humble about his involvement, and he says he's just glad to be able to help.

Looking around and seeing so many people in the community struggling lately has made him realize just how important it is that we all do our part to keep our neighbors from going hungry.

"During the tough times, the need goes up for a lot of people," he says. "If there's anything that the community can do to help serve the Food Bank, which in turn serves the struggling people of Kansas, it's certainly encouraged."

YOU KEEP SPIRITS RAISED

“I joined the millions and became unemployed,” says Kathy after being laid off last year.

Kathy was working as a receptionist at a real estate firm when her company merged with another. They only needed one receptionist, so Kathy was let go. She’s applied for a new job everywhere she can think of – from retail stores to machine shops – but her search keeps coming up empty.

To compound their struggles, Kathy’s husband is disabled and suffers from heart disease, diabetes and is bound to a wheelchair. Before she was laid off, Kathy’s job was their primary source of income. But now they’re living on just her husband’s disability check.

“Thank you for sending this blessing our way.”

“We juggle and juggle until we drop one of the balls,” Kathy says about their financial situation.

Kathy also cares for four of her grandchildren after school several days a week until their parents pick them up after work. Childcare is just too expensive. The kids are always hungry when they leave school and it’s hard for Kathy to keep enough food in the house to feed them.

Thankfully, after being laid off, Kathy found out about an innovative new food pantry called Streetlight Ministries. Every Tuesday evening, the doors of a converted home garage roll up and hungry Kansans flood in for bread, meat, canned goods and snacks to take home to their families. This [Kansas Food Bank](#) hunger-relief partner has made a huge difference for Kathy’s family. And she wants to thank you for making this invaluable resource available.



“Thank you for sending this blessing our way,” she says with gratitude. “Without it, the road would be a lot harder.”

You’re helping keep Kathy’s spirits up and her stomach full as she continues her search for a new job. Thank you for not giving up on our hungry neighbors at a time when they need your compassion the most.

YOU GIVE HOPE TO STRUGGLING FAMILIES



Beautiful little Lillian is three years old and full of life. She constantly tests her boundaries as she learns and grows – all the while testing her mother Casondra’s patience at the same time.

But no matter what Lillian gets into, Casondra glows with pride for her smart and energetic little girl. What keeps her up at night isn’t worrying about Lillian’s mischief, it’s worrying about keeping a roof

over her head and her tummy full so she can become the happy, healthy child she deserves to be.

As a single mom, Casondra knows what it’s like to lack stability, and she’s doing everything in her power to protect Lillian from this insecurity. But it recently became much harder when Casondra lost her job.

She’d been working as many hours as she could get at a local restaurant when a slump in

business caused them to cut back – first on hours, then on employees. Casondra was one of these casualties.

For the past few months, they’ve been surviving on not much more than food stamps. But even those run out before the end of the month. So you can imagine Casondra’s relief when she learned about the food pantry at Catholic Charities, a hunger-relief partner of the [Kansas Food Bank](#).

“This is the only way of getting food in the house,” she says as she picks up bags of free groceries from the agency. “Every little bit helps!”

And you play a big part in making sure those groceries are there for Casondra and other out-of-work Kansas parents when they need them most. Casondra, for one, couldn’t be more grateful.

“Every little bit helps!”

“Thank you. That’s just the simplest and easiest way to say it,” Casondra reasons. “I don’t know if you understand what it really means and does for people. It’s so appreciated.”



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