

spring 2012

seeds *of hope*



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

**You're Improving the Lives
of Kansans of All Ages!**



Brian Walker
PRESIDENT AND CEO

GIVING BACK TO THOSE WHO'VE GIVEN US SO MUCH

Dear Friend,

Although 2012 is now well underway, I didn't want to miss this opportunity to thank you one more time for the extraordinary generosity you showed this past holiday season, and throughout all of last year.

Because of your support, the [Kansas Food Bank](#) has been able to grow to better meet the needs of the increasing number of hungry Kansans across our service area.

As we charge ahead in the fight against hunger, we're setting big goals for this year. One major area of focus is getting more food into rural Kansas communities that have little or no access to food assistance. While poverty is certainly a problem in Wichita, it's also increasingly prevalent in communities in the far reaches of our state.

And while people of all ages face the challenges of food insecurity, one of the populations most at-risk of hunger is senior citizens. The winter months have been especially difficult for seniors and others living on fixed incomes, because while utility bills go up, Social Security checks stay the same.

Much of the focus of this issue of *Seeds of Hope* is on senior citizens. These special neighbors have given so much to our communities throughout their lifetimes and you're helping to make some of their difficult choices about how to spend limited fixed incomes a little easier. As baby boomers reach retirement age, we know that the next few decades will present new challenges and opportunities for hunger-relief in Kansas.

Thank you for all you continue to do for our neighbors in need. I hope we can count on your partnership throughout 2012 – together we can make such a difference.

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YOU'RE PUTTING FOOD ON THE TABLE FOR ELDERLY KANSANS

Mounting medical bills have recently cut into Dorcas's Social Security check more than usual, making it nearly impossible for her to pay all of her other bills.

And as if health problems and medical expenses weren't enough to make Dorcas anxious, her son, who lives with her and helps take care of her, is out of work. He's been looking for a new job nonstop, but unfortunately it hasn't come soon enough, and his unemployment benefits have recently run out.

With only one small fixed income for two people, food has been one of the first budget cuts they've had to make. In these desperate times, Dorcas had no choice but to ask for help.

“God bless you.”

When she did, she was so relieved to learn about Westside Good Neighbor Center, a [Kansas Food Bank](#) hunger-relief partner near her home. Here she can select free groceries right from the pantry

shelves, just like a real grocery store. She loves being able to choose only what she needs and says nothing ever goes to waste.

The food from the food pantry is so important to Dorcas that at 72 years old, she was willing to stand in line for over an hour in the rain.

The center's assistant director, Janice, says that she sees lots of senior citizens like Dorcas coming in for help because their fixed incomes often don't last through the end of the month. The vast majority of the food distributed by the Westside Good Neighbor Center comes from the Kansas Food Bank, so you're directly responsible for helping put food on the table for the people Janice serves.



As for Dorcas, she couldn't be more grateful for the help you've provided for her and her son during this especially difficult time. She hopes and prays that things will turn around soon, but until then, it gives her such peace to know that when her cupboards are bare, she knows where to find help.

"God bless you," says Dorcas. "Thank God for what you are able to do to help us get back on our feet."

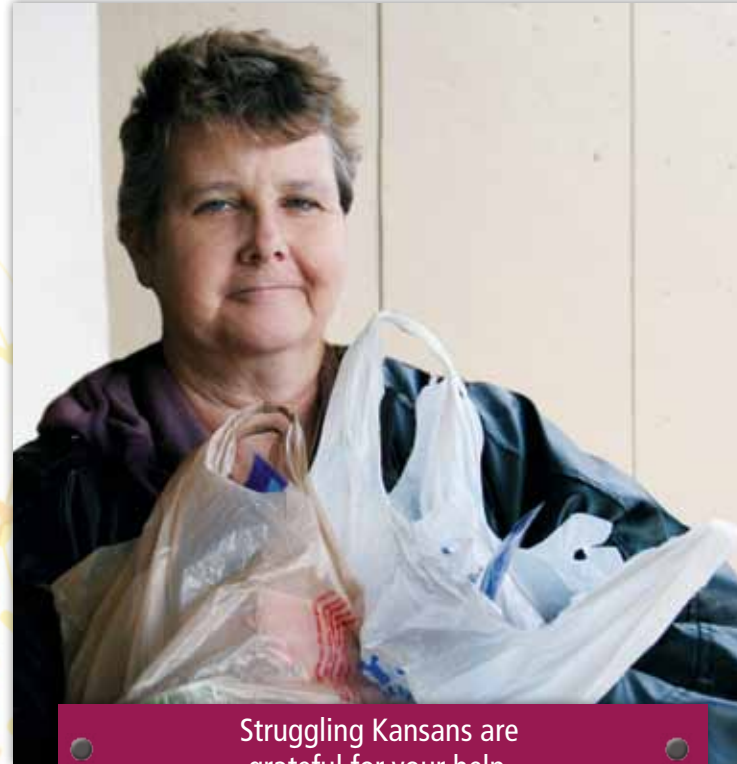
YOU'RE FEEDING HUNGRY KANSANS, YOUNG AND OLD!



Our older neighbors are thankful to have food they can depend on.



You're providing balanced meals for growing kids.



Struggling Kansans are grateful for your help.



Your gifts put smiles on children's faces.



Thank you for helping Kansans going through a tough time.

Filling the Gap – Spring Break 2012

In an ongoing effort to address child hunger, the [Kansas Food Bank](#) and Partners for Wichita are teaming up to provide meals for children during spring break. Last summer, Partners for Wichita joined the Kansas Food Bank in ensuring children who depended on the Federal Summer Feeding Program had meals to eat during the break when the summer program ended and school began. Meals were served at five different high need locations across the city. With spring break approaching, there will also be a week and a half



gap when children who rely on free and reduced-price meals at school may not have access to any other meal source. Seven locations have been identified where children will be able to access a free sack lunch provided by the Kansas Food Bank and Partners for Wichita.

Our Newest Addition

Thanks to a generous gift from WalMart Foundation, the Kansas Food Bank has been presented with a 24 foot refrigerated box truck to expand the retail store donation program. With the



addition of five new WalMart Markets in the Wichita area, the new truck will increase our capacity to pick up and receive additional produce via the

store's food rescue program. A total of 20 vehicles were awarded to Feeding America network food banks across the United States.

Smart Chicken

The [Kansas Food Bank](#) received 13,887 pounds of Smart Chicken as part of the Smart Giving Program, now in its ninth year. The donation included whole chickens, chicken tenders, chicken breast filets and chicken leg quarters. The donation program uses the number of pounds of Smart Chicken sold by Dillon's in December as its



received 3,000 more pounds than last year, due to increased sales of Smart Chicken in local Dillon's stores.

basis for how much chicken is donated to the Kansas Food Bank. This year, the Food Bank

You Help Seniors in Need!

Each month Senior Services of Wichita helps the Kansas Food Bank distribute prepacked pantry boxes to seniors who need a little bit of extra help. Many seniors living on limited fixed incomes are faced with the impossible decision of whether to pay for utilities or medicine, or buy groceries each month. But thanks to Senior Services and your support of the Food Bank, none of our elderly neighbors has to go hungry. Thank you!

GIVING BACK IN RETIREMENT



Bob Fleming believes that the aches and pains of getting older pale in comparison to an empty stomach. Which is why, even in his late sixties, he spends nearly all his free time working hard to help feed the hungry.

From serving dinner and washing dishes at [Kansas Food Bank](#) hunger-relief partner The Lord's Diner, to

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

preparing Food 4 Kids packs in the Food Bank's warehouse, to volunteering with his church, Bob stays busy giving back nearly all the time.

After his retirement from Cessna in 2006, Bob says he needed to get out of the house and into the community. He was introduced to the Food

Bank through his church and knew that we could help him reach more people. Bob says he's had a long and fruitful life, and he feels like it's his turn to do something for others.

"With others suffering, I needed to give back my time and talents," he says.

Bob loves being able to make an impact, even outside of his small hometown of Clearwater, Kansas. When he's not spending time with his wife and grown children,

doing something active outdoors or following his alma mater, Pittsburg State, in football, he can often be found at the Food Bank or The Lord's Diner, helping those less fortunate.

Bob encourages everyone to support the work of hunger-relief because it's such an important cause.

“With others suffering, I needed to give back my time and talents.”

"Please get involved," he says. "You'll feel so much better with yourself knowing that one less person goes to sleep hungry."

"The Food Bank needs our support," he adds. "Give what you can as often as you can."

Bob has made himself invaluable as a dedicated and generous volunteer. We're so grateful for his service and look forward to many more years of serving the hungry together.

YOU HELP NOURISH THE SICK AND JOBLESS

The loss of a job would be hard on anyone. But for someone like Dorothy's husband Steve, who has a heart condition and diabetes, losing his job meant serious concern for his health because he also lost his company health insurance.

If he had any lapse in coverage, it would have been nearly impossible to have his pre-existing conditions covered again. Which means nearly all of Dorothy's paycheck from her job working with the elderly goes to paying for Steve's temporary COBRA insurance until he can find a new job. Unfortunately, his unemployment has already run out and no one seems to be hiring for his skill as a machinist.

Unfortunately, their two grown children were laid off at about the same time as Steve, so Dorothy can't ask them for help.

After paying as many bills as she can with her small paycheck, Dorothy has nothing left to buy groceries. And with Steve's diabetic needs, fresh, healthy food is a must for his health.

Thankfully, Dorothy has sought help from a [Kansas Food Bank](#) hunger-relief partner called South City Southern Baptist Church. She says if it weren't for this special food pantry, she doesn't know what she'd do, but she knows their meals would be much more limited and much less nourishing.



Dorothy is grateful for the support of friends like you who make it possible for her to at least be able to put food on the table, even in the midst of such a difficult time.

"Thank you," she says, earnestly. "Please continue to give."

“Please continue to give.”

Dorothy and Steve have downsized everything possible, while still trying to keep their retirement savings in tact so that they don't have to face even more challenging circumstances later. With mounting medical bills and no job prospects, they've become desperate.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING KANSAS SENIORS STAY HEALTHY



When Earnest and Clara retired from their jobs as a mechanic and a secretary 20 years ago, they never expected to be struggling like they are now. They thought by the time they reached their eighties that they'd be traveling, spoiling their grandchildren and enjoying plenty of leisure time.

Instead, they spend a lot of time worrying. Will they be able to pay the mortgage this month and still cover the utility bills? What about

medicine? Will there be anything left over for food?

Although they still face difficult choices a lot of the time, Earnest and Clara now have at least one less thing to worry about. They have access to free, nutritious groceries every month from Catholic Charities, a Kansas Food Bank hunger-relief partner in Wichita.

The food from the food pantry is a great help in supplementing what they're able to buy at the store.

"You can have more of a variety of food," says Clara. "It helps to have a rounded meal."

And rounded meals mean Earnest and Clara can eat healthier, which keeps them from getting sick. And when they have enough to eat, they also have more energy for their eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Earnest and Clara are both sincerely grateful for the food you've helped provide to keep them going strong. Without you, getting older would be even more challenging.

“We are so grateful.”

"We are so grateful and sure appreciate you donating to those who need it!" says Earnest.

Thank you for helping our community's senior citizens experience health and happiness as they live out their golden years.



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