

Winter 2016

kansasfoodbank.org

SEEDS OF HOPE

**OLDER ADULTS
ARE GRATEFUL
FOR YOUR GIFTS!**

KANSAS
**food
bank**
HELPING THE HUNGRY • SINCE 1984

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

DEAR FRIEND,

With the new year now in full swing, I want to take a moment to thank you for your generous support of the [Kansas Food Bank](#). Together, we've gained a lot of ground in the fight against hunger by connecting thousands of families and individuals with vital meals. But as you know, there's always more work to be done.

Especially during these colder winter months, the needs of our elderly neighbors are constantly on my mind. After decades of hard work, these men and women deserve nothing less than a healthy and happy retirement. But even for those who've saved for the years ahead, living on a fixed income can be a challenge — especially when it comes to affording essentials like food when winter utility bills go up.

Because the number of seniors finding themselves in this situation has only increased in recent years, your partnership is more crucial than ever. And your gifts of food, funds and time make it clear that you're up to the task. In fact, the Kansas Food Bank is ranked as one of the top ten food banks for increasing meals to seniors over the past three years, thanks to your help.

Through your generous support, we're able to respond to the unique needs of older adults through a variety of services, including monthly senior boxes, the Bob Box program and the Senior Mobile Pantry. You'll read more about the impact you're making through these and other programs in this spring edition of *Seeds of Hope*.

As we roll out our new strategic plan this year, be on the lookout for new opportunities to help our neighbors in need. This promises to be an exciting year at the Kansas Food Bank and I hope you'll choose to continue helping change lives, one meal at a time. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Brian Walker
PRESIDENT AND CEO

Board of Directors

CHAIRMAN

Doug Jenkins
Professional Software, Inc.

FIRST VICE CHAIR

John Keating
Cargill Meat Solutions

SECOND VICE CHAIR

Don Meiergerd
Retired Excel Food Distribution

SECRETARY

Jim Shelden
Retired Ratheon/CEI

TREASURER

Sam Seward
M&L CPAs Chartered

PRESIDENT & CEO

Brian Walker

DIRECTORS

Lionel Alford, Jr., Engineering Consultant
Joan Barrett
Dale G. Diggs, Jr., Diggs Construction, LLC
Kenny Doonan, Doonan Truck & Equipment of Wichita, Inc.
Dan Eilert, Intrust Bank
Pastor Junius Dotson, Saint Mark United Methodist Church
Helen Galloway, The First Place
Clark Goetzinger, Westar Energy
Michael Johnston
Roger Kepley, Rose Hill Bank
Dana Knott, Dillon Stores
Rebecca Rather
Jim Urso, Spirit AeroSystems
Tim Zynda, Concrete Materials Company

EMERITUS BOARD

Tom Kitch
Fleeson, Gooing, Coulson & Kitch
J.V. Lentell, Intrust Bank, N.A.
John E. Moore, Lt. Governor – Retired
Dr. Charles Wood
Estate Planning Consultant

YOU'RE HELPING OLDER KANSANS

Bill used to have a steady job in road construction — until he was diagnosed with cancer. This devastating news instantly changed the course of his life in ways he'd never imagined.

“Without this help, we would have to cut back drastically on other things we need.”

Two months into his radiation treatment, Bill has become too weak to continue driving the heavy

machinery needed to do his job. This has left him and his wife, Kathy, dependent on monthly Social Security benefits to afford basics like groceries.

Because his treatment is so expensive, Bill constantly worries about balancing his family's basic needs with paying his mounting healthcare costs. Lately, life has been especially challenging, as he's been unable to buy enough gas to make the trip to Hutchison, where he receives his radiation treatment.

Desperate to help make up for her husband's lost wages, Kathy recently

tried returning to work for the local school district. But with her own health problems, she's found that there are very few jobs available that she can do.

When a few friends from church learned about everything Bill and Kathy were going through, they suggested the couple visit the Pretty Prairie Food Pantry, a local [Kansas Food Bank](#) hunger-relief partner. With each visit, they're able to receive plenty of fresh fruits, veggies and lean meats. Bill explains what a lifeline this pantry has been for him and Kathy.

“Without this help, we would have to drastically cut back on other things we need,” Bill says.

Because he's on a strict diet aimed at helping him endure his treatment, Bill appreciates having access to healthy items that are packed with essential nutrients. And thanks to friends like you who give to the Food Bank, the pantry he visits will continue to have plenty of these foods on hand.

“Thank you for helping,” Bill says, expressing his deep gratitude for your gifts.



YOUR GENEROSITY HELPS FEED KANSANS OF ALL AGES!



Dillons Community Reward Card



Thanks to Dillons, fighting hunger has never been easier! Every time you shop, be sure to show your Dillons Plus Card to the cashier, and a donation will be made to the Kansas Food Bank through the grocery chain's Community Rewards Program.

To Enroll in the Community Rewards Program:

- Visit www.dillons.com/communityrewards
- Sign in or create a new account
- Click "Enroll Now"
- Enter the 5 digit nonprofit number and search – our number is 86065
- Select Kansas Food Bank and click on "enroll"

A Partnership in Fighting Senior Hunger

In efforts to feed even more seniors

across the 85 counties that we serve, the [Kansas Food Bank](http://www.kansasfoodbank.org) has joined the State of Kansas and one of our agency partners, Wesley House. Through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, the Kansas Food Bank helps provide 184 senior food boxes each month to seniors facing financial hardship in Crawford County. Distribution points include Wesley House, Girard Public Library, Cherokee Senior Center and two senior housing communities in Arma.

Bob Box



The Bob Box program, named after Senator Bob Dole, continues to serve seniors in 44 counties across Kansas. Each box contains foods that are low in sugar and sodium — perfect for older adults' dietary needs. Since the program's inception in the fall of 2012, over 18,000 boxes have been distributed.

Senior Box

Each month, the [Kansas Food Bank](http://www.kansasfoodbank.org) works with Senior Services in Wichita to provide elderly men and women with emergency food boxes. The Food Bank packs the boxes with the help of volunteers and makes them available to Senior Services, which directly serves seniors in Wichita.

Welcome New Pantries

The Kansas Food Bank is excited to welcome several new pantries from the following communities into our hunger-relief network: Burrton, Cherokee, Columbus, Douglas, Frontenac, Hill City, Mulvane and Oakley. Among these is Corky's Cupboard, which is working with the students at Emporia State University, making it our very first college pantry partner.



VOLUNTEER PROFILE: CLAIRE MEREDITH

When Claire Meredith and her husband, Ross, retired from their jobs at Conoco-Phillips, they could have chosen to relax after decades of faithful service. Instead, they moved back to Kansas and began dedicating their newfound free time to helping feed the hungry.

Having both grown up on farms, neither Claire nor Ross has ever struggled to put food on the table. It's because of these advantages that they're now so passionate about helping others access nourishing meals.

"When you are blessed with lots of resources, it's our obligation to give back," Claire says.

While working for Conoco-Phillips, Claire recalls volunteering with a local food pantry in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. It was here that she first saw the kind of impact she could make on the lives of those facing hunger.

This experience was at the forefront of Claire's mind when she and her husband returned to Kansas. At her first opportunity, Claire hopped online and sent a message offering to volunteer with the Kansas Food Bank in any way she was needed.

Because of her background in clerical work, Claire was invited to answer phones and complete data entry. While she's in the office,



Ross spends several hours a week preparing *Food 4 Kids* weekend backpacks and *Bob Box*, food boxes for seniors to distribute to hunger-relief agencies across the state. Both find their roles very fulfilling.

But this isn't the only way Claire and Ross help our hungry neighbors. Thanks to their former employer's charitable grant program, Claire's

and Ross's gifts of time also provide funds for the [Kansas Food Bank](#) — up to 40 hours worth of wages per person each year.

We want to extend a big thank you to Claire and Ross. Without faithful volunteers like you, this work would simply not be possible.

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

A SENIOR'S LIFE IS CHANGED, THANKS TO YOU

Mike has never shied away from a hard day's work. But when he began to lose his eyesight, he had to retire early from his job in housekeeping. He now lives with his son, William, who helps him by driving him to his doctor's appointments, the grocery store and other places around town.

"It takes a special type of person to give help to a stranger."

In addition to Mike's monthly Social Security benefits, William brings in regular paychecks through his job at a nearby turkey farm.

Unfortunately, their combined income still isn't enough to cover their basic expenses. Because of this, Mike says that there have been days when there wasn't enough food in the house for both of them.

Whenever this happens, Mike now knows exactly what to do — he asks William to take him to McPherson County Food Pantry, his local [Kansas Food Bank](#) hunger-relief partner agency. At each visit, Mike receives a box of healthy food that supplements his family's income for the month.

After struggling so long on a fixed income, Mike is relieved to know that there are generous friends like you who give to those in need.

"They really do take care of me here," Mike says, gratefully.

Mike adds that he's not the only senior struggling to make ends meet in his community. He volunteers often at the pantry, and encounters people facing similar circumstances.

Like Mike, these neighbors would rather buy food themselves, so asking for help can be difficult. But by making food available to those who need it, you make it possible for seniors to accept the help they really need. Mike, for one, is thankful you have the heart to give.

"It takes a special type of person to help a stranger," Mike says.



YOU GIVE STRUGGLING SENIORS HOPE

Priscilla at Reno County Food Bank



relief partner agencies across the state.

“I wouldn’t eat if it wasn’t for [you],” Priscilla says, describing exactly what your generosity means to her.

Like many proud seniors in Kansas, Priscilla suffered quietly, not knowing where her next meal would come from. But because you choose to give, older adults — including those who are isolated and vulnerable — now have access to the healthy food they need.

Having this resource brings so much relief to Priscilla, who is extremely grateful she can count on you as she struggles to survive.

“This is very helpful,” she says, with sincerity. “I really appreciate this support.”

For Priscilla, 72, the last few years have been extremely lonely. When her husband, Jim, passed away, she became a widow with no friends or family for miles. Today, the only person who visits regularly is her caseworker from the county.

While she’s more than willing to go to her doctor appointments or to

undergoing three back surgeries, she mostly relies on her caseworker when she needs to travel.

Because she’s no longer able to work, Priscilla does the best she can to make ends meet on a meager \$750 in monthly Social Security benefits. This, Priscilla explains, is barely enough to pay her bills.

With so little money, Priscilla’s often unable to afford groceries for even simple, inexpensive meals. Thankfully, she was given a referral that now allows to her receive monthly food boxes through the Reno County Food Bank, one of the [Kansas Food Bank](#)’s many hunger-

“I really appreciate this support.”

run errands on her own, neither is truly an option for Priscilla. After



1919 E. Douglas
Wichita, KS 67211
316.265.FOOD(3663)
kansasfoodbank.org



[twitter.com/
KansasFoodBank](https://twitter.com/KansasFoodBank)



[facebook.com/
KansasFoodBank](https://facebook.com/KansasFoodBank)



MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**