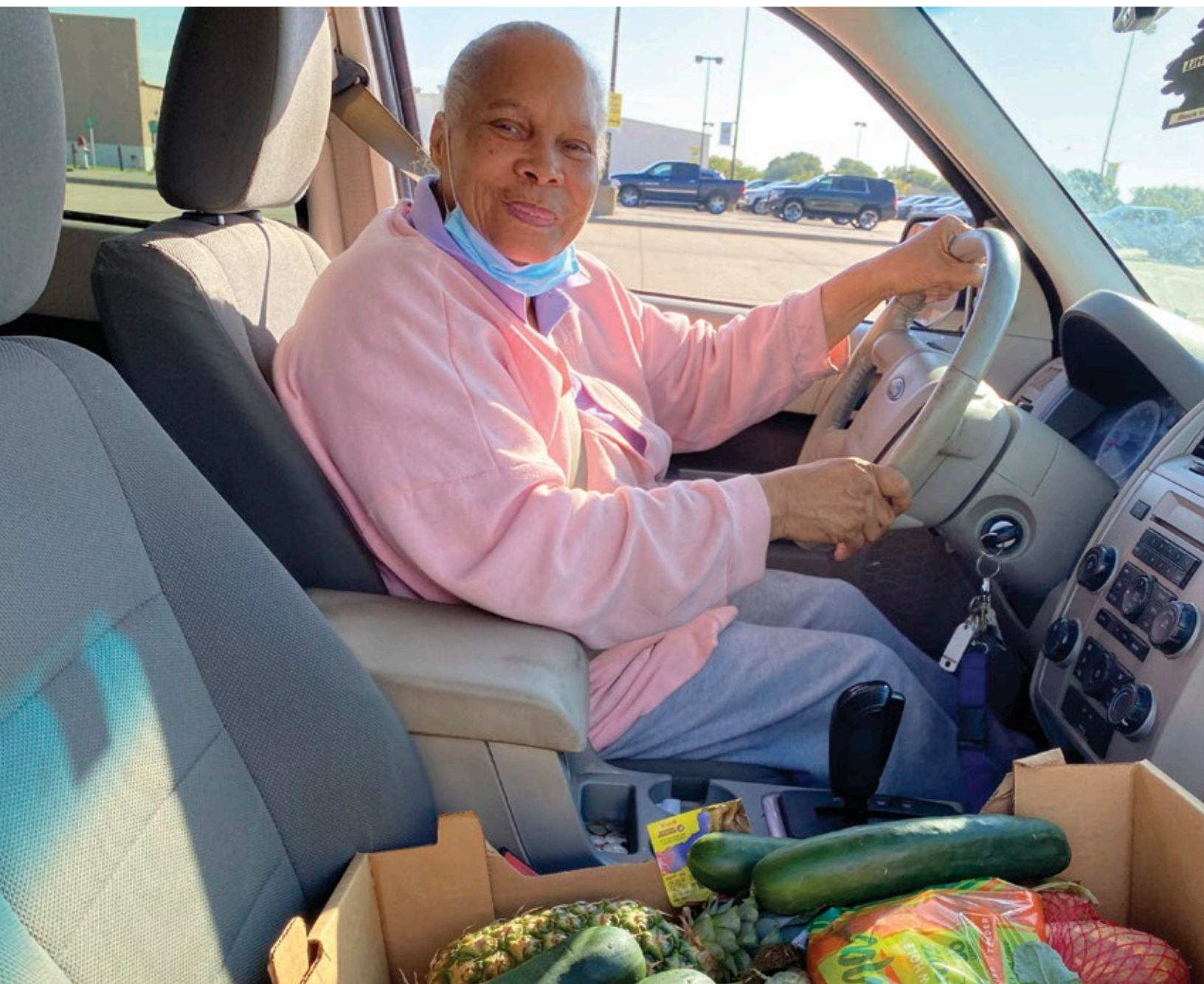


SEEDS OF HOPE

Winter 2022

kansasfoodbank.org



IN THIS ISSUE:

PG 3 *Leslie Thanks You for Being There*

PG 7 *You Help Kathy's Family Thrive*

PG 8 *You Make Food Available in Uncertain Times*

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AMERICA**



Brian Walker
PRESIDENT & CEO

YOU HELP SENIORS ACCESS NUTRITIOUS FOOD

Dear Friend,

Another cold, Kansas winter is upon us, and the focus of the Kansas Food Bank shifts once again to seniors. For our most vulnerable community members, the cost of heating a home is much higher than anyone would expect.

In the winter, utility bills go way up. And now, as our community confronts surging inflation, seniors who live month to month on a limited fixed income are having to miss meals in order to keep the heat on.

What if you had to make the impossible choice between putting food on the table and heating your home?

Because you choose to give, countless neighbors are saved from this difficult decision. I am incredibly grateful for all you have done and continue to do for the [Kansas Food Bank](#) to ensure our community members have enough food to eat.

I hope you enjoy these stories in our latest issue of Seeds of Hope. Thanks to your generous support, neighbors like Leslie, Kathy and Ricky have access to healthy food even after the bills are paid.

Thank you for choosing to support the Kansas Food Bank. Your gifts bring renewed hope to the people in our community who need it most.

Gratefully,


Brian Walker
PRESIDENT & CEO

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LESLIE THANKS YOU FOR BEING THERE

When she was young, Leslie's mother taught her to always help others.

"Give what you can from the heart," Leslie says. "Even if it is just a loaf of bread, give that loaf."

Leslie, 72, cared for her mother until her mother's death in 2020. Leslie, a mother of six grown children herself, also lost her husband and has been living on a fixed income for many years now since he passed. But the little she receives can only cover part of her bills.

In order to keep food on the table, Leslie visits [MCC Table of Hope](#), a local pantry in partnership with the Kansas Food Bank. When she goes, she always keeps people she knows who may be struggling in mind as well. After getting home from the Food Bank, Leslie will make dinner and cook enough to give to her younger brother who has been unable to work since undergoing surgery last year.

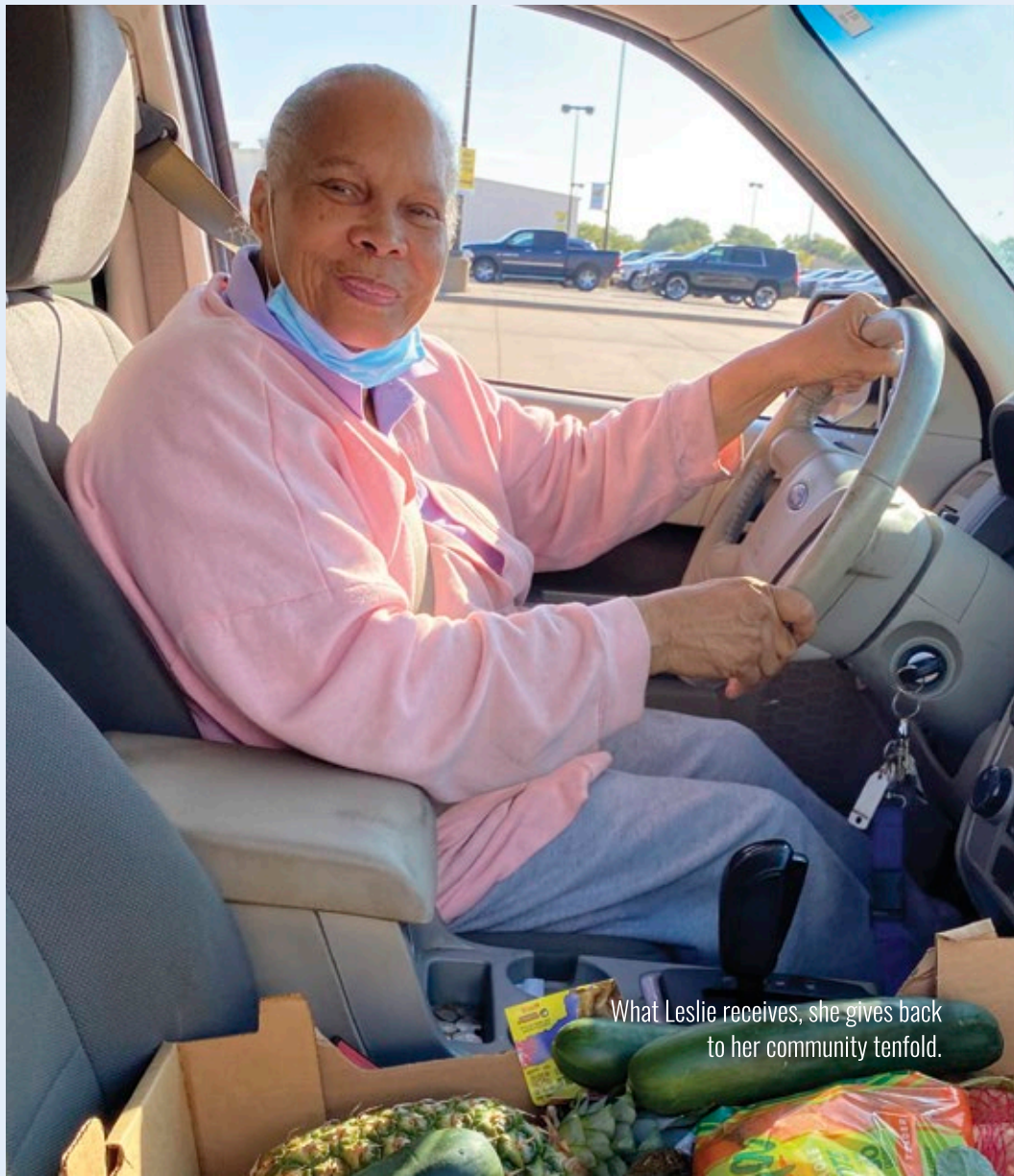
“Whatever I [have] to give, I give it.”

Leslie looks out for the community she lives in. "I share," she says. "Whatever I [have] to give, I give it."

"It hurts me to see so many homeless people because it could be us," she adds. "So many have lost their homes, jobs, etc. We

are still able to keep a home and cook for ourselves. So, why not help?"

Leslie is so grateful for all the help she has from you, our supporters. Thank you for being a lifeline so that every Kansan has access to healthy resources.



What Leslie receives, she gives back to her community tenfold.

PROGRAMS AND UPCOMING EVENTS DEDICATED TO FIGHTING HUNGER!

RURAL SERVICE EXPANSION

Thanks to [Feeding America](#) on behalf of multiple donors, the Kansas Food Bank was awarded a \$150,000 grant this year to improve access to nutritious food among people experiencing the highest rates of food insecurity, with a focus on communities of color and/or people living in rural communities. Funds will be used to help us expand our service in three counties: Chautauqua, Decatur and Seward. Funds will go toward expanding mobile outreach and fresh produce, growing food pantry services including providing cultural-specific food, as well as a brand-new Mobile Pantry in Sedan.

VOLUNTEER CENTER REOPENS

COVID affected our ability to host volunteers for quite some time. Our Volunteer Center closed in March 2020, but we are open again with volunteers helping prepare Food 4 Kids packets, sort donations, pack senior boxes and more. It has been great to see activity resume this year. While we do have some COVID restrictions and safety guidelines we are asking everyone to follow, things are going well. Vaccinated, masked and socially distanced volunteers are happy to be back and keeping folks healthy and safe. We are so thankful!



FILLING THE GAP: SPRING BREAK LUNCHES FOR KIDS MARCH 14

It's hard to believe that Spring Break is just around the corner. Beginning on March 14, kids will be out of school for a week and missing meals they rely on every day. We will be offering our Filling the Gap meals at 5 sites strategically placed around the Wichita area. Kids will pick up meal kits on Monday, the first day of Spring Break that contain five days' worth of breakfast, lunch and milk. Filling the Gap is an important program that provides children in our community healthy food.

KENNY WORKS HARD TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Before his many years of service came to an end as an airline tool technician, Kenny Stone obtained his degree in computer science, went through a hip replacement and made a full recovery from COVID-19. Kenny has had many ups and downs in life, but he is always ready to provide a helping hand to his neighbors in need.

For the last five years, Kenny has regularly taken time to volunteer. He offers his time at the Kansas Food Bank's Mobile [Hygiene Pantry](#) as well as at the Lord's Diner, a Food Bank partner agency. He helps other organizations, too.

Kenny heard about volunteering with the Kansas Food Bank through a former coworker during a discussion surrounding community engagement. Since then, Kenny has donated his time and efforts to making his community an even better place to live.

Now, in his retirement, which began just a few months ago (congratulations, Kenny!), he wants to make sure he spends even more of his time volunteering.

"It is a feeling of giving back to people that enriches my life," he says.

A big thank you to Kenny for working so intentionally to improve his neighbors' lives. We are so grateful for him and people like him who care so deeply for our community.

“It is a feeling of giving back to people that enriches my life.”



Kenny (pictured far right) is eager to do more volunteering like this now that he's retired"



*Kathy thanks you for everything
you do for her family.*

YOU HELP BRING HEALING TO KATHY'S FAMILY

Kathy has been a cornerstone of our Kansas community for decades. Before her recent retirement, she worked for 20 years as a custodian at Dodge Elementary in Wichita. Now, she helps take care of her daughter and her grandchildren while her daughter continues to look for work.

Now that she is retired, Kathy lives on a fixed income. It's next to impossible to cover the costs of a five-person family with only Social Security income. But the consequences of not being able to afford good, healthy food can be utterly devastating...

Kathy's 16-year-old grandson died of complications from undiagnosed diabetes. The family was shattered. Had they known, they would have done anything to save his life.

"It is important now more than ever to keep healthier food in the house," Kathy says, gravely.

It is difficult to overstate how much it means to Kathy and her daughter to have found the Bread of Life Food Pantry, a partner agency of the Kansas Food Bank that provides access to nutritious groceries. Because of generosity from friends like you, Kathy's family now has

enough healthy food on the table, which is literally life-saving.

"You give us the means to make it every day," Kathy says to you. "You make it possible."

No one should suffer from hunger or poor nutrition for lack of ability to afford healthy food. Thank you for stepping in to become a lifeline for so many of our Kansas neighbors. Your generosity is truly meaningful to our community.

*“You give us the means to
make it every day.”*

YOU MAKE FOOD AVAILABLE IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

Ricky has been retired since 2005, when his declining health finally forced him to stop working. Now, he walks very slowly and has noticeable back trouble.

Ricky receives disability assistance each month, but that money goes straight to rent and utility bills. He never has enough to cover the fresh, nutritious food he needs to live his healthiest life.

Recently, he has just been trying to take it easy. The pandemic has been especially hard for him because of how scary it is to go out on errands. So many seniors like Ricky are nervous to leave the safety of home and lack anyone else to rely on.

With so many services temporarily or permanently suspended due to the pandemic, not only is going out difficult because of COVID, it has also become harder to find help to make ends meet.

Luckily, Ricky found out about Our Daily Bread, a Kansas Food Bank partner agency. This food pantry is open and ready to provide fresh, healthy food to as many neighbors as possible thanks to generosity from friends like you.



Ricky takes home fresh food from Our Daily Bread, a Food Bank partner agency.

“Thank you for the time and service,” Ricky says, gratefully.

The Food Bank simply could not serve our community without your support. Please know your generosity is truly helping our neighbors facing hunger.

“*Thank you for the time and service.*”

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