

Winter 2024 Newsletter

seeds of

Hope



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

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**



Brian Walker
PRESIDENT & CEO

YOU NOURISH OUR SENIORS

Dear Friend,

I hope you enjoy hearing the stories on the following pages. We have such amazing seniors who not only call Kansas home, but who regularly invest in the lives of other Kansans.

This time of year can be extra challenging for older adults. A limited, fixed income is difficult to stretch at almost any time of the year, especially while the cost of living remains high. But with utility bills escalating as cold weather forces us all to turn up the heat...people living on a fixed income can have a hard time keeping up.

Because friends like you care about our neighbors, the Kansas Food Bank is here to provide nutritious food when budgets are tight. Together, we can continue to ensure that our neighbors of all ages have consistent access to balanced meals.

Please take a moment to read about just a few of our neighbors, like Bradford (page 3), who were able to greet the new year with warm meals and full tables, thanks to your thoughtfulness.

Bradford, Pearl and Robert are all such wonderful testimonies of older adults who have poured their lives into making our communities so wonderful.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to provide comprehensive and compassionate hunger relief whenever and wherever it is needed. We are all so thankful for you!

Gratefully,

Brian Walker
PRESIDENT & CEO

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YOU HELP BRADFORD

STAY STRONG

At 90 years young, Bradford maintains a lengthy list of hobbies, from playing piano and reading to knitting hats for children in his neighborhood and cooking up meals for himself and any family who might be visiting.

“I cook all the time,” he says. “I cook whatever I have.”

Bradford is grateful to have plenty of healthy ingredients to cook

“It helps me. They give me a lot of good food.”

with, thanks to visits he makes to pick up nutritious groceries from Shepherd’s Heart Food Pantry, a Kansas Food Bank partner agency. Since 2017, Shepherd’s Heart has been focusing on distributing fresh fruits and vegetables to ensure pantry guests have

access to items they cannot afford to purchase.

“It helps me,” he says of the visits. “They give me a lot of good food.”

Bradford, an Air Force Veteran, was married for 28 years before his wife passed away, and he has lived alone ever since. The couple had three children, and now Bradford has two grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Two of his adult children live nearby and often stop by to visit. He’s always happy to cook for them.

“We get vegetables, soup, bananas, eggs, beef rolls, pork rolls,” Bradford shares enthusiastically about some of the food available at Shepherd’s Heart. “I couldn’t survive without it.”

“I couldn’t imagine not having this place,” he says.

Thank you for sharing so generously to make sure our neighbors have daily access to nutritious food this winter and all year!

Bradford displays one of the hats he recently knitted in his spare time.



SCAN AND HEAR MORE FROM BRADFORD ABOUT THE IMPACT THE KANSAS FOOD BANK AND SHEPHERD’S HEART HAS HAD ON HIS LIFE.

THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME



Johanne has volunteered twice each week for a year with the Kansas Food Bank.

Johanne Pachankis recalls a special piece of mail she received at just the right time. It introduced her to the Kansas Food Bank more than a year ago.

It just so happens that Johanne had been thinking she wanted to do something that would both be beneficial for her neighbors while also getting her out of the

house more. Volunteering with the Kansas Food Bank seemed like the perfect marriage of the two.

“I’ve helped in other ways, but nothing that makes this big a difference for people,” she says.

Johanne retired from Pioneer Balloon Company after working there for more than 21 years. Even while working, she volunteered in various capacities, including for the local Humane Society and other animal care organizations.

After giving time at the Food Bank, Johanne says she has been surprised by the scale of the work. She says she feels like she’s giving back to her community even though she is not physically handing food to anyone.

“I’m in the background where the work really starts,” she says.

We want to send our warmest thanks to Johanne and all volunteers who give from the heart to ensure every neighbor has access to healthy food!

“I’ve helped in other ways but nothing that makes this big of a difference for people.”

YOU INSPIRE PEARL TO PAY IT FORWARD

Pearl says, “my family is most important to me,” as a proud smile spreads wide across her face.

Pearl and her husband, Jose, raised two sons and two daughters. Now the couple have 25 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. On top of that, Pearl, 70, is proud to be called ‘grandma’ by several young adults who she once cared for as children in her in-home daycare.

“I raised a whole bunch of kids,” she says with a wide grin.

Over the years, Pearl also worked as an interpreter and in other daycares and schools before starting her own in-home daycare and eventually retiring. Jose just retired this year after a long career in road operations in Wichita.

One of the couple’s sons had a bad back injury and is unable to work, so he lives with them along with his children. Thankfully, Pearl can visit Westside Good Neighbor Center Food Pantry in Wichita to pick up groceries for her household. A long-standing partner agency of the Kansas Food

“ *Nothing goes to waste.* ”

Bank, the pantry offers a client choice model where recipients can select items they need the most.

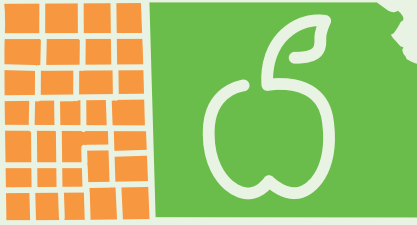
Pearl is not only grateful for your generosity, but she also has her eyes out for ways to pay your kindness forward by helping others in any way she can.

“People help me, and I will pass it on and help others,” she says.

Pearl is all smiles on a visit to Westside Good Neighbor Center Food Pantry in Wichita.



BUILDING A HEALTHIER TOMORROW



WESTERN HUB • GARDEN CITY

LOOK AT THE GOOD FOOD AND HOPE AC

GET READY FOR OUR WESTERN HUB IN GARDEN CITY!

The Kansas Food Bank is currently renovating a building in Garden City to provide better access to fresh fruits and vegetables and other nutritious food in our rural communities of Western Kansas.

Currently, *an estimated 15,000 Western Kansans face food insecurity on a regular basis — 52% of whom do not qualify for SNAP benefits.

With the addition of the warehouse and subsequent distributions of food, the amount of fresh produce distributed is estimated to double across our 31 Western Kansas counties, from 558,360 pounds in 2023 to 1.1 million in 2025.

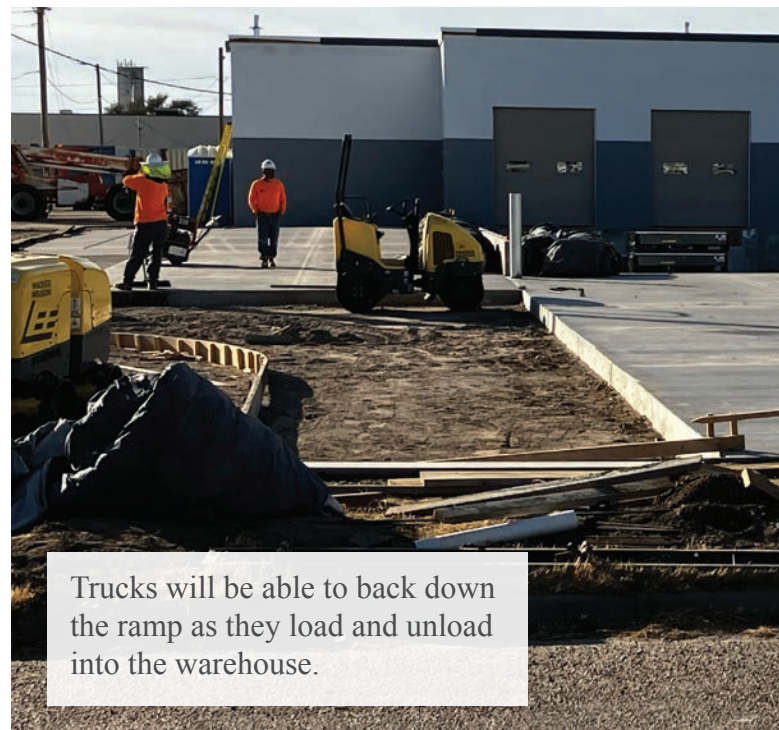
An overall distribution increase of 50% is estimated across our 31 Western Kansas counties, from 2,093,844 pounds in 2023 to 3,140,766 pounds in 2025.

Thank You for Your Support which will continue to make a lasting difference in our Western Kansas communities for a long time to come!

**Estimates based on 2023 Feeding America Map the Meal Gap Study.*



The front of the Garden City warehouse with its new Kansas Food Bank sign.



Trucks will be able to back down the ramp as they load and unload into the warehouse.

YOU DO TO SHARE ROSS KANSAS!



The soon-to-be volunteer area overlooking a future conference room and offices in the warehouse.



A view from the interior of the warehouse, including the tan wall of the new freezer to the right that holds three semi loads of frozen goods, and the opening to the new volunteer space in the center of the photo.

YOU PUT HEALTHY FOOD ON SENIORS' TABLES

Robert and his wife, Joyce, have enjoyed 50 years of marriage, raised eight children, and had successful careers. Now, in retirement, they're spending time with their family and maintaining healthy diets thanks to friends like you.

"As seniors, you try to make ends meet with what they give you, but you can't always," Robert says.

Robert, 83, worked for the city of Wichita for more than 30 years, working both in the fire department and as a bus driver. Joyce worked for a local grocer for more than 22 years.

We recently met Robert on a visit to New Beginnings Food Pantry in Wichita, a partner agency of the Kansas Food Bank. The couple recently heard about the

food pantry from a friend and Robert says this is their third visit. Many of the volunteers at New Beginnings are seniors who work hard to serve neighbors experiencing food insecurity.

"We come here to help supplement," he says. "We can keep the bills paid, but when it comes to eating, it gets sketchy."

Aside from arthritis in Robert's hands and Joyce's hips, the couple is in overall good health — something that is boosted by the nutritious food you help provide for them.

Robert also notes how timely your gifts are considering the current high cost of groceries — a true testament to your belief in treating "people how you want to be treated."

"We can keep the bills paid, but when it comes to eating, it gets sketchy."

This winter, your generosity is truly a beacon of hope for so many Kansas seniors — and neighbors of all ages. Thank you for taking hunger off the table.

Robert pauses to share his appreciation for the food he receives from New Beginnings Food Pantry in Wichita.



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