

SPECIAL INGREDIENTS

A Publication of The Food Bank for Central & Northeast Missouri
Summer 2016

SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED

With nearly 650 Veterans in Boone County at or below the poverty line, The Food Bank pilots program to help our heroes in need.

Introducing the
VIP Veteran Pack.

Robert Gash, a U.S. Army Veteran, selects peppers at Central Pantry.



J.D. Smith reflects on his military service while waiting for a Mobile Pantry to open earlier this year.

Smith served in Vietnam and spent some time in a prison camp—an experience he says most people would never be able to fathom.

He has faced challenges at home, too, having lived for a time at Welcome Home, a shelter for Veterans in Columbia.

Smith is one of more than 5,000 U.S. Veterans living in poverty in The Food Bank's 32-county service area, according to census data.

While he relies heavily on The Food Bank for nutrition, his options are still limited. Smith has dental issues that prevent him from eating hard or sticky foods.

Recognizing the unique needs of Veterans, The Food Bank is piloting a program to get additional nutrition to those in need who have served our country.

VIP Veteran Packs are boxes that contain ready-to-eat pasta, soup and fruits in cans with pop-top lids, as well as toiletries.

"We took an assessment of our programs and realized we have programs specifically for children and senior citizens, but nothing for Veterans," says Bobbie Kincade, associate director of The Food Bank. "While we know we serve Veterans at our pantries, we feel it is appropriate to have a special program for this very important population."

Anthony Gray was the first recipient to pick up a VIP Veteran Pack at Central Pantry. Gray served in the Air Force from 1976 to 1980 before working for the Illinois Department of Corrections. Having had a leg amputated, he moved to Columbia to be closer to Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans' Hospital.

"This is great," he said, putting the box in his cart. "It's something Veterans need."

While the main distribution will be at Central Pantry, VIP Veteran Packs will also be distributed to Welcome Home and Patriot Place, public housing for Veterans in Columbia.

Sarah Grim, director of Welcome Home, plans to distribute the packs to the many homeless Veterans who come to the shelter looking for assistance. "Hunger is such a huge issue," she says. "This will be ideal."

A Note from Lindsay

We are so excited to tell you about our new VIP Veteran Pack program in this issue of Special Ingredients. A pilot program, VIP Veteran Packs allow us to package and distribute food and personal care items for those Veterans who are homeless or living in poverty in Columbia.

At The Food Bank, we are constantly assessing our programs and making sure we are meeting the needs of special populations. We recognized that we did not have a program specifically for Veterans - and we certainly consider the men and women who served this country a very special population deserving of a program to meet their unique needs.



For me, the desire to assist and honor Veterans is also personal. My father served in the Air Force during the Korean War, and both grandfathers served in World War I. I have a deep respect and appreciation for those who left loved ones behind and made tremendous sacrifices to ensure the freedoms we enjoy. It is

our responsibility and duty to help our Veterans.

It truly takes a troop of individuals to make this operation possible. From our committed volunteers to our employees who go above and beyond each day to those who support The Food Bank, we are so appreciative of your time, talent and treasure. Thank you for all you do to help us share food and bring hope to those facing hunger.



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Employee knows first-hand struggles Veterans face on the home front

DeWaldon Frazier, a member of The Food Bank's Warehouse staff, is especially excited about a new program designed to benefit Veterans living in poverty.

"I think anything you do for them to show appreciation for what they did for our country is great," he says.

Last month, The Food Bank began a pilot program providing VIP Veteran Packs to low-income and homeless Veterans in Columbia.

Frazier has first-hand knowledge of what service men go through when they return, oftentimes waiting for

benefits to kick in. After he served in Germany in the U.S. Army, Frazier temporarily lived in a homeless shelter in Arkansas, an experience that shaped his faith and future. He later led a ministry for homeless Veterans and currently volunteers at the VA in Columbia.

Veterans often have difficulty trusting others, Frazier says, and many are battling other issues that prevent them from establishing a permanent residence.

He is hopeful having extra nutrition will not only help resolve the hunger issue but will also encourage Veterans to



trust and seek out other benefits.

"Any effort to show Veterans that people care about them will always be appreciated," Frazier says. "I, for one, would just love to shake their hands."

Volunteers recognized for service



Alan Adams, center, with his family and The Food Bank staff.

Alan Adams is the type of volunteer who makes volunteering easier for others.

He is the go-to person when tubs need to be refilled at volunteer stations or when finished product needs to be returned to pallets.

Adams has volunteered at The Food Bank every afternoon for the past four

years. Retired from a position at Columbia's sheltered workshop, he says volunteering gives him an opportunity to get out of the house and make a difference.

His hard work has paid off. This year, The Food Bank nominated him for the *Columbia Daily Tribune's* HERO award recognizing the community's volunteer of the year. The nomination

allowed him to be recognized at a community-wide event.

In April, Adams received another honor when he was named Volunteer of the Month at The Food Bank.

"Alan is the one we rely on to do the heavy lifting," says Melanie Lake, volunteer coordinator. "We are so appreciative of his service."



The Boone County Retired Teachers Association was recognized as the Volunteer of the Month in May.

Between eight and 10 members of the group serve at The Food Bank two days every month. Since 2005, members of the organization have logged more than 5,000 volunteer hours.

"These dedicated public servants make such a difference to our organization," says Melanie Lake, volunteer coordinator. "They spent their career dedicated to others and continue to give back in ways that impact children."

Members of the group were honored during a reception on May 25.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Series to recognize those who make The Food Bank possible

The Food Bank is able to operate each year because of a mosaic of individuals who come together to share food by giving. These extraordinary people ensure that their neighbors in need have enough to eat.

The Food Bank is recognizing some of these individuals who are, indeed, making a difference. If you would like to share why you support The Food Bank or would like to recommend someone, let us know. Email Janese Silvey at janeses@sharefoodbringhope.org.

Wedding makes lasting impact

When Sara Potterfield and Nick Cahill decided to have a big Catholic wedding, they agreed on forgoing one tradition—gifts.

Knowing that loved ones would still want to celebrate their union, however, the couple opted to ask for donations in lieu of presents.

“We were combining two households, so we needed nothing, but we know people always want to do something,” Potterfield says. “Nick and I love helping the community and coming up with different ways to help.”

Potterfield met Cahill when she hired his company to stock her new pond with fish. He agreed to deliver them and the two hit it off. Potterfield says she knew by the second date that he is the one for her.

About 280 guests attended the April wedding and were encouraged to support any of three charities, including The Food Bank.

Because of its affiliation with Feeding America, The Food Bank is able to acquire and distribute 15 pounds of food for every \$1. That means donations made in honor of the newlyweds will allow The Food Bank to provide more than 20,600 meals to families in need.

Potterfield was surprised by the number, but not the efficiency.

“I’ve said you can walk up to someone in need and give them \$5 and one person will have \$5 for food, or you can give \$5 to The Food Bank and feed so many more,” she says. “I’m teaching my kids the right way to help people.”

The couple is now encouraging others in the same situation to consider using a wedding to give back.



Photo courtesy of Kim Wade, SilverBox Photographers

“Supporting a charity is a great way to enhance the community aspect of the ceremony,” Potterfield says. “It also allows the celebration to continue and have a far greater impact on others.”

A Spirit of Giving



Connie Benson has always had a spirit of giving.

She gives hundreds of books to school children to read during the summer. She takes care of adult readers, too. In fact, she keeps a bookshelf at Benson Financial Group in Hannibal stocked with Christian books, Bibles, business guides and other resources that she gives to clients and visitors.

“As a born-again Christian, I want to do God’s will, and a few years ago, I received what I call my marching orders from God,” she says. “He laid on my heart to not only feed His sheep spiritually, but to feed His sheep with food, as well.”

At the time, Benson had just begun mentoring at a nearby elementary school and saw how many children were relying on free or reduced-price lunches. She realized if she was going to help low-income children have additional nutrition, she needed a partner to help maximize her efforts.

She began giving to The Food Bank’s Buddy Pack program, which provides bags of nutritious food on weekends to children who rely on subsidized lunches during the school week. She currently supports Buddy Packs for children at New London and Monroe City elementary schools.

“I saw that if I gave to The Food Bank, they could use my resources so much better and distribute much more than what I could do on my own,” Benson says.

In northeast Missouri, the need is great. A former teacher, she believes the solution is education—and that means having children who are focused and ready to learn.

“They are not going to be focused on their studies if their stomachs are growling because they are hungry,” she says. “We need to be investing in our kids to make sure they are educated and to help them develop into healthy young adults.”

Benson and her husband, Pat, own and operate Benson Financial Group in Hannibal. They both grew up in Monroe City. Her parents were farmers and instilled in her the value of investing in others while also making sure she had plenty.

“I’ve always had food,” Benson says, tearing up at the thought of some children who are not as fortunate. “I never had to worry about a meal.”

Six years ago, Benson joined Benson Financial Group as a client relations and insurance consultant, which she says has given her more flexibility to give back.

“God has blessed us and entrusted us with resources,” she says. “I feel strongly about giving to The Food Bank as a way to give back to my community. There are so many giving opportunities that we encounter every day, we just need to keep our eyes open so we don’t miss out. God uses us in mighty ways.”

Having compassion on God’s Children

Fred and Betty Weisel have supported The Food Bank for more than 15 years, and continue to be impressed with the work of the organization.

“I feel as though it is growing and getting better all the time,” Betty says.

She became involved after volunteering at the Samaritan Center in Jefferson City, which receives food from The Food Bank.

“I would see people come in who were destitute and homeless—people very much in need of support,” she says. “I knew The Food Bank was helping them.”

That help, she says, is the work of the Lord. “I feel like I’m led to help people because of God’s compassion,” Betty says. “We need to have compassion on God’s children, and the people The Food Bank serves are God’s children. They have special circumstances they are going through, and they need help.”

Rescuing Food, Feeding People

Sunday runs keep produce out of landfill

John Tucker grabs a box of colorful produce and carries it into the back of a refrigerated truck.

Today has been a nice haul, he says, estimating he has picked up more than 1,600 pounds of food—mostly fruits and vegetables—from Lucky's Market in Columbia.

It is food that otherwise might have landed in a landfill.

Every year, an estimated 70 billion pounds of food go to waste in the U.S., according to Feeding America. Through member food banks, the organization is able to divert more than 2 billion pounds to those facing hunger.

Doing so takes commitment, and on the local front, Tucker single handedly ensures that local produce left over on Sunday gets to those in need on Monday.

Tucker has been making the Sunday run to Lucky's since he started working at The Food Bank's Central Pantry two years ago. He knew the store—known for its organic, healthy goods—had to throw out food on Sundays if no one was able to collect it.

Tucker volunteered, knowing it would require him to work every Sunday, hauling all of the boxes from the store to the truck, then from the truck to the cooler at Central Pantry, by himself.

Tucker stresses that he does not mind the hours or the labor. A former pantry client, he understands the importance of having access to nutritional food.

"It's so important," he said during a trip on Mother's Day. "And everyone appreciates it."



John Tucker hauls boxes of produce into The Food Bank truck.

The following day, that included Darrell Turner. He was among a crowd of clients gathered at the produce station at Central Pantry and noticed the abundance of produce. Turner had not visited the pantry in months and was surprised to see the variety of fruits and vegetables.

"This is nice," he said, filling his bag with peppers, corn on the cob, tomatoes and onions.

Another client discovered the mangoes. "I don't eat too many of these," he said, inspecting the fruit, "but I think I'll try them."

Lucky's is the only store The Food Bank visits on Sundays, but The Food Bank picks up food from other retailers including Walmart, Gerbes, Hy-Vee, Schnucks and Aldi, during the week.



It is a critical part of The Food Bank's operation, says Food Solicitor Don Moore.

"We know America does not have a food crisis, it has a hunger crisis," he says. "There is plenty of food if we are strategic about getting it to people in need. Partnering with these retailers—along with restaurants, convenience stores and other businesses—helps keep pantry shelves stocked and perfectly good food out of the trash. We also know it wouldn't happen without dedicated employees. John ensures that Central Pantry clients have plenty of healthy food to choose from on Mondays."



A Cargill Cares Food Pantry client in California selects okra from a variety of Grow Well Missouri seeds.

Pantry clients reap benefits of gardening

Crystal Krogstad eyes a variety of tomato plants being offered at Cargill Cares Food Pantry in California before settling on one to take home.

Until this spring, Krogstad had never gardened before. She decided to give it a try after receiving complimentary seeds at the pantry through Grow Well Missouri.

"It's better than going to the store, and my family loves fresh vegetables," she says, adding that she has four children. "I'm starting to get lettuce, carrots and snow peas. It's a slow process, but I'm learning."

Grow Well Missouri is operated through the University of Missouri's Interdisciplinary Center for Food Security. It provides seeds and starts at no charge to food pantry clients in an effort to supplement their diets with fresh fruits and vegetables.

It began as a pilot program in 2012.

"We took some seeds and educational materials from MU Extension to food pantries just to see how it would go," says Bill McKelvey, program coordinator. "We found that people were very receptive. A lot of people already had experience gardening and knew what to do with the materials. Other folks were new to gardening but still had an interest in getting started."

The program now includes pantries in 13 communities. Last year, McKelvey found through post-season surveys that 78% of respondents who took seeds planted a garden.

With help from local Master Gardeners and other volunteers, McKelvey makes sure an experienced gardener is stationed at a pantry when seeds are being distributed. That interaction is important, he says.

"Not only does it give people a chance to ask questions, it also helps us build relationships and get to know people," he says.

At Cargill Cares, McKelvey convinces Joe Wagner to try growing lima beans, assuring him he could use a simple structure to allow the vines to grow.

"I've never messed with lima beans much, but if they grow like pole beans, they should be fine," Wagner says, accepting the seeds.

The produce is important, McKelvey says, but not the only benefit. Studies have shown that gardening provides an incentive for people, especially older adults, to get active.

Rhonda Gammill uses her garden as an educational tool. She home schools her daughter, and after receiving seeds from Grow Well Missouri last year, began incorporating agriculture into her studies.

Perhaps the greatest benefit, McKelvey says, is the sense of accomplishment from growing one's own food.

Krogstad says she is experiencing that first hand. "It feels good to be a little more self-reliant," she says. "I feel better about myself."



Tigers fans tackle hunger

For many of us, food is very much a part of the Mizzou football experience. We tailgate with friends, oftentimes enjoying elaborate appetizers and hearty meals.

In central and northeast Missouri, however, one in six adults and one in five children face hunger not only during football season but on a daily basis throughout the year.

The Score Against Hunger campaign is an opportunity for football fans to cheer on the Mizzou Tigers while also helping those in need.

The campaign began in the early 1990s and has raised more than \$9 million to date. All proceeds go directly into the acquisition and distribution of food in The Food Bank's 32-county service area.

To join in on the action, pledge an outright gift or agree to donate a dollar amount per point the Tigers score this season.

Because of The Food Bank's affiliation with Feeding America, we are able to purchase 15 pounds of food with every \$1 we receive. That means we are able to provide 12.5 meals to those in need for every dollar pledged during the campaign.

"This is such a fun but important way to support both the team and the fight against hunger in our communities," says Lindsay Young Lopez, executive director. "We appreciate Coach Odom taking the lead on this and helping us share food and bring hope. Go Tigers!"

Visit sharefoodbringhope.org to learn more about how you can help the Tigers score against hunger this fall.

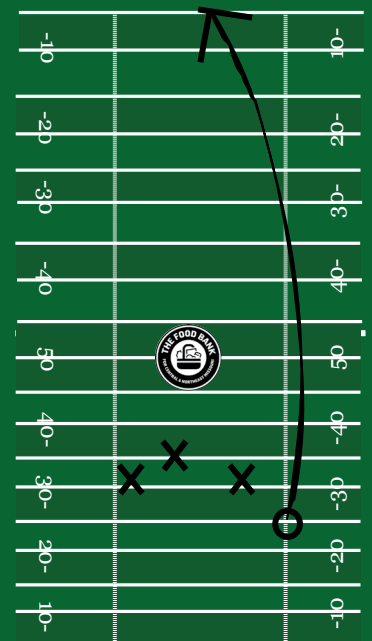
SCORE AGAINST HUNGER

Join Coach Barry Odom as the Missouri Tigers tackle hunger. Simply pledge an outright gift or dollar amount per point scored during the 2016 season to get in on the action!



"I am thrilled to be a part of this campaign, and I invite you to join me this season as we score both on the field and against hunger in central and northeast Missouri."

– Head Football Coach Barry Odom



COACH BARRY ODOM'S
MISSOURI TIGERS
SCORE
AGAINST HUNGER

