



THE BREAD BOX

FALL 2017 NEWS LETTER



You're helping families have food for the holidays

My name is Sandra, and I have to admit, it's been hard coming to this food distribution. I'm used to being the one helping, not the one needing help.

When my husband was still in the military, I was the one putting together the Christmas boxes to give to the soldiers. This

holiday season we're on the other side of the table. The food is a big help for us.

My husband grew up in this area. Years ago, he invested in a house here. After getting injured in Iraq and Afghanistan he was medically retired. Moving here from the military base in Texas was a big shift for us and difficult for our kids.

We have five children, and we've always been able to provide for them. But since things are tight financially, I finally signed up to get assistance. This is our second time receiving food here.

I did have a job driving a school bus, but I lost my route. I haven't been able to find another job that allows me to care for our children and my husband.

One way we're providing for ourselves is by having a big garden and raising rabbits and chickens. That helps put food on the table as well. I enjoy cooking German food. The cabbage we got today is going to be turned into something delicious for our family.

The holidays are the hardest time of year. Not only because of what it takes to celebrate with the family, but when the weather gets colder our heating bill gets high. So, we're thankful to have this food available to us because all of it helps. I see the food distribution making life easier for a lot of other people as well. It's a good example of the community coming together

At Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania we're committed to helping families like Sandra and Dennis' have the resources they need to put food on the table during the holidays. Read more about the ways your support can make a difference to the 167,000 people we serve every year.

A MESSAGE FROM KAREN

I love the holidays—the smell of a turkey roasting, cooking a special meal and gathering with my extended family to eat and give thanks.

Creating those holiday

traditions with my children matters. My kids have wonderful memories of Thanksgiving, because we're able to provide a full table around which we can gather.

For families struggling with food insecurity, being able to provide a holiday meal is not always guaranteed. I know because I grew up in one of these families. It's not only about having enough to eat; a meal brings a family around a table and allows them to create traditions that build their bonds.

Now, I am so inspired to see the way this community steps up to ensure our neighbors have access to the food they need to have a happy holiday season. Thanks to friends like you, our warehouse is bustling with volunteers filling holiday meal boxes and sorting food donations for distribution through our partner agencies.

As you read the stories in this issue of our newsletter, I hope you'll have a new understanding of how much your compassion and generosity matter to the families who come to our food distributions for help. From all of us, thank you for caring and for doing something to make a difference.

Gratefully,



Karen S. Seggi, Executive Director



We've had Thanksgiving meals because of your support



Palma has seen a lot of changes over the nearly 40 years she's intermittently come to get food assistance at Emmaus, one of our 308 partner agencies. "Times have changed, but helping people doesn't change," she says. "And it doesn't take much—a smile and some kindness go a long way."

As a single parent raising three children, Palma relied on the food pantry to help her provide enough food for her children. Paying the rent and her bills took most of her income, but Palma says she always found compassion and understanding at Emmaus. "We never went hungry thanks to the Second Harvest," says Palma. "This program really helped my children and they would tell you how grateful they are."

Over the years, Palma has received a Thanksgiving meal box. The food she receives now helps her feed her grandchildren and great-grandchildren when they gather for a holiday dinner. "It's a blessing," says Palma. "They provide the whole meal so you don't have to go without. It helped us have enough food and give thanks."

Volunteer Spotlight

A history of caring for our community

Pam Forsyth was one of the first volunteers at our annual Holiday Drive-Thru Food Drive when it started in 2001. Now, as the general manager of Erie News Now, she actively organizes it. "People are always teasing me because I'll chase a car down. Saying 'we'll take a dollar,' and telling the story that \$1 will obtain \$17 worth of food at Second Harvest," she says with a laugh.

Pam is full of stories about battling snow, rain and sun, receiving unexpected donations or sharing the fun and passion of the volunteers. But there's one story that reminds Pam why she's so committed to helping feed those who are food insecure in northwest Pennsylvania.

Many years ago, a young woman pulled up to the drive-thru area of the food drive. "She had two little kids in cars seats," recounts Pam. "I thought she was coming to ask for food." The woman popped her trunk and it was full of grocery bags. Pam asked her which bag was a donation. "They all are," said the woman. "Because people have helped me."

"We appreciate everything people give," she says. Yet this woman's generosity overwhelmed Pam. "That's why I get involved."

Over the years the food drive has grown and now includes 11 different locations. Last year the community donated 31,614 pounds of food and \$37,383. The amount of food and funds collected has turned into a competition among the cities and companies represented. "It's become a passion that's fun. We challenge each other," says Pam. "I think people are excited to be a part of this because it makes a difference they can see."



Pam recently joined our board and is eager to use her marketing and promotion experience to help others understand hunger in our community. "People are misguided about hunger. These are solid, working poor that need food assistance. Everybody hits bad times at some point. They can look like they're perfectly fine with middle class income, but they don't have money to buy groceries because they've paid everything else," says Pam. Without Second Harvest, people would be hungry."

A legacy of fighting hunger



One way to continue the impact of your giving long into the future is to include Second Harvest in your planned giving. By joining our Second Harvest Table Setter Society, you'll help ensure that struggling families don't have to go hungry. You'll also help Second Harvest plan ahead in our efforts to alleviate hunger for years to come.

There are a variety of options to evaluate when considering a planned gift that benefits both the giver and the beneficiary. For example, bequests and wills provide an opportunity to

give a specific dollar amount or asset to the Food Bank. You can also include Second Harvest as a beneficiary of retirement or insurance assets. Your financial adviser can offer other ways to help you leave a lasting legacy of fighting hunger in our community.

If you've made arrangements for a planned gift or plan to do so, contact Zachary Webb, 814-459-3663 ext. 114, or email zwebb@nwpafobank.org.

Upcoming Events

Erie Federal Credit Union Holiday Food Drive and Fundraiser

November 1st through 16th, 2017

The Erie Federal Credit Union will hold a Holiday Food Drive and Fundraiser at all nine branches to benefit the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania. You can find participating locations at <https://nwpafobank.org/events/>.

Erie News Now Holiday Drive-Thru Food Drive

November 15, 2017

Our annual all-day, drive-thru food drive and fundraiser is coming to Erie, Meadville, Corry, Warren, Edinboro, Titusville, Waterford, East Springfield and Franklin. All the food we receive will remain in the community where it is collected. Your monetary donations will go a long way to supporting Second Harvest's mission throughout the year. So start loading your car with food and your wallet with cash to help families in need.

Tops Friendly Markets Little Brown Bag of Hope

December 2017

During the month of December put groceries on the table for our neighbors in need while doing your own grocery shopping. Purchase a \$5, \$10 or \$20 "Little Brown Bag of Hope" at Tops Friendly Markets when you check out. These bags of nonperishable food will go directly to the Second Harvest Food Bank to help struggling families.

Your support helps us meet the increased holiday need to feed hungry neighbors

For families like Sandra's who are struggling, the winter holidays can create an added burden to an already tight budget. Heating bills increase with the colder weather. People tend to get sick more often and kids are home from school over the holidays. Challenges like these can mean families need to make difficult decisions like whether to buy groceries or to pay the bills.

During the holidays, many families look to Second Harvest for help ... some of them for the first time. The holiday months are undoubtedly the busiest time of the year. To meet this need, we work with many businesses and organizations to provide holiday boxes for families in need. We, in turn, rely on the community to generously support our programs. With your assistance, Second Harvest provided 6,400 holiday dinners last year, to families who are struggling with hunger.

At Second Harvest, we keep our overhead costs low, so that 97 cents of every dollar you give goes directly to programs that feed hungry neighbors. We've also earned Charity Navigator's four-star rating for sound fiscal management for the tenth consecutive time.

None of this work can happen without the generous support of people like you-thank you. Please take a moment today to help make the holidays happier for our northwest Pennsylvania neighbors who are in need of food. It's easy to give online at nwpafodbank.org.



Thank you to our supporters!

The work we do at Second Harvest would not be possible without the generous and loyal support of our donors. Thanks to the many who help with Second Harvest's mission, thousands of our neighbors in northwest Pennsylvania received emergency food and grocery products when they needed it the most.

Stay connected to the work you support!

Follow us on social media and subscribe to our eNewsletter to stay up to date on Food Bank activities.

