

# The Bread Box

Fall 2023 Newsletter



*Second Harvest*  
**Food Bank**  
*of Northwest Pennsylvania*



## Program Focus

### *BackPack/School Pantry Programs*

With another school year getting underway, classrooms are decorated, hallways are sparkling, and school meals are planned. For over 20,000 children in northwest Pennsylvania, receiving two daily school meals during the school year is their main source of nutrition. What about outside of school hours? Through Second Harvest's Backpack and School Pantry programs, participating schools provide a variety of shelf-stable foods —such as soup, mac and cheese, cereal, granola bars, and fruit cups — to students in need to take home for weekends and holiday breaks. During the 2022-2023 school year, Second Harvest supplied food to 48 schools for the Backpack Program and 22 schools for

the School Pantry Program, helping to feed an average of 3,400 students each week.

Liz Nies, LSW, the Community School Director at a local elementary school, has been involved with the Backpack Program for over a year. She reflected, "More times than I can count, a child has come to me to share that the fridge at home is empty, and they aren't sure where their next meal will come from." Nies also noted her perspective on food insecurity. "Experiencing food insecurity is not a personal failing. Our societal systems and policies need to be changed to fully support all Americans, but until they do, there is no shame in needing the support of programs like the Second Harvest Backpack Program."

Sara Musone, the Community School Director at another participating elementary school, understands families may be navigating

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# Donor Spotlight



PSN Labs' support of Second Harvest

Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania started with sponsorship of a 2018 fundraising walk. After learning more about Second Harvest's work, the engineering partner has continued to invest in the food bank. According to Tera Alabran, Director of Operations at PSN Labs, "The company's goal is to contribute to organizations that meet the basic needs of the community," which aligns with their company values.

Alabran noted, "Second Harvest is a catalyst for a healthier northwest PA, which fuels an increase in education, safety, and so many areas of improvement for our region." With support from donors like PSN Labs, Second Harvest can continue our work to provide food to people in need, resulting in a stronger community for all.

**For information about corporate sponsorships with Second Harvest Food Bank, contact Director of Development, Breanna Watts, at (814) 459-3663 ext. 114 or [bwatts@nwpafoodbank.org](mailto:bwatts@nwpafoodbank.org).**

## Perspective

People helping people. That is what best describes the work of the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania. Whether it's volunteers lending a hand, food bank staff driving a semi-truck full of food several counties over, or elementary students raising funds to feed neighbors in need, it is still people helping people. People are always at the heart of our work, and this is what makes our connections within the community so special.

We recently had the opportunity to recognize a community member who has made a substantial impact on our work. When founding Board member James Renshaw retired last February after 42 years, we held an orchard dedication ceremony to honor his legacy of service here at Second Harvest.

The Second Harvest orchard was installed in 2022 and consists of 41 young fruit trees that will provide a variety of fresh fruits once the trees mature. Being able to contribute food grown on our own property to feed families in need reflects the values that built the foundation of Second Harvest, values Jim helped instill from the beginning. Jim not only volunteered for decades on the Board, but also donated thousands of pounds of corn each year from his farmland.

Through people like Jim, our incredible volunteers, our dedicated staff, and the many communities that contribute their time and effort to support our mission, we see the embodiment of helping your neighbor in need ... of people helping people.



Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Karen S. Seggi".

Karen S. Seggi,  
Chief Executive Officer



Founding Board Member Jim Renshaw Speaking at the Orchard Dedication

**Our Vision:** A hunger-free community.

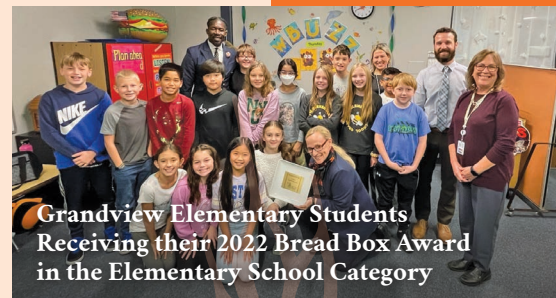
**Our Mission:** The mission of the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania is to provide food to those in need within 11 counties of northwest Pennsylvania while creating awareness and educating the community on the realities of hunger.

**Second Harvest serves 11 counties in northwest Pennsylvania:** Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Venango, and Warren.

# Grandview Elementary Food Drive

## *Kids Supporting Kids*

Grandview Elementary, part of the Millcreek Township School District, instills a sense of responsibility and community in students from the very start. After winning the Elementary School category for Second Harvest's 2022 Bread Box Awards last October, Grandview Elementary students have continued their endeavor to help their neighbors in need. The students also enjoy the challenge of improving upon the prior year's total. Last December, their holiday food drive collected 1,048 pounds of food, which puts them almost 200 pounds ahead of their award-winning total. But how are they so successful? That's where WBUZZ, the in-school television station, takes the stage. By doing plenty of internal promotion, the student-run station brings the school together in collaboration to support their community and work to alleviate hunger.



## Program Focus

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higher price points without additional income. "Families [are] choosing between transportation to work or groceries." Yet Musone also sees students rising to the occasion to help out. "The children

receiving these bags are never embarrassed. They understand what their family is facing and feel like they are helping by being able to bring home these items."

**If you'd like your donation to support the Backpack or School Pantry programs, contact Director of Development, Breanna Watts, at (814) 459-3663 ext. 114 or [bwatts@nwpafoodbank.org](mailto:bwatts@nwpafoodbank.org).**

## Recent Advocacy

### *Farm Bill 2023*

This year, Congress has the opportunity to double down on our nation's commitment to alleviating hunger by strengthening critical nutrition programs in the 2023 Farm Bill. This bill is the largest piece of federal legislation for food and farming. It impacts access to nutritious food for the millions of people in the U.S. facing hunger, a quarter of which are children. This chance only comes around once every five years and given current inflation rates and sky-high grocery prices, we need your help now more than ever. Please tell your lawmakers: Pass the strongest 2023 Farm Bill to help our neighbors in need!

**Learn more and take action at [feedingamerica.org/take-action/advocate/farm-bill](https://feedingamerica.org/take-action/advocate/farm-bill) or contact us at [advocate@nwpafoodbank.org](mailto:advocate@nwpafoodbank.org). Together, we can help end hunger both today and tomorrow.**



*Do you know someone in need of food?*

Leave a message on our food helpline at (814) 459-3663 x 117. An agency relations representative will reach back to you with information on resources near you.

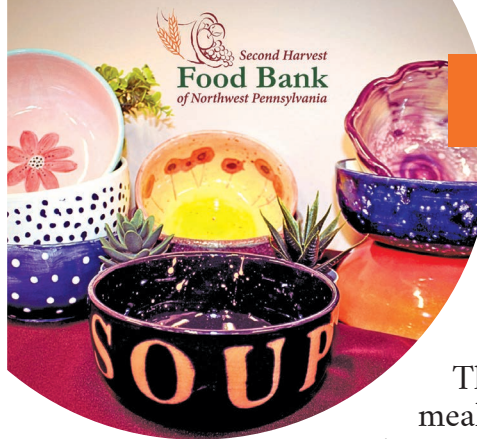
# Upcoming Events

## Wegmans Check Out Hunger Fall 2023

Shoppers contribute to Second Harvest by scanning a coupon at checkout that adds a donation to their order. 100% of donations go to Second Harvest to help alleviate hunger in our region.

## September is Hunger Action Month — Hunger Action Day is September 15, 2023

Millions of Americans make the daily choice between food and other critical needs — like medicine, housing, or transportation. Food shouldn't be an impossible choice. Second Harvest encourages everyone to take action to alleviate hunger. **Find out how at [nwpafoodbank.org](http://nwpafoodbank.org).**



## Empty Bowls

Second Harvest is thrilled to finally host the first in-person Empty Bowls event at the food bank on the evening of Thursday, October 19, 2023. This event will serve up a simple meal of soup and bread as a reminder that too many people throughout our region are facing hunger with “empty bowls.”

Guests will enjoy a wide variety of soups, bread, and cookies donated by local restaurants. More than 500 handmade bowls have been donated by local high schools, universities, and businesses. All guests in attendance will select a handmade bowl to take home as a memento of their contribution toward alleviating hunger. The concept of Empty Bowls started as a project in the early 1990s and has become an internationally recognized fundraising event, often held in conjunction with World Food Day (October 16).

**If your business or organization would like to become an Empty Bowls sponsor, please contact Special Events Coordinator, Alex Lockwood, at [alockwood@nwpafoodbank.org](mailto:alockwood@nwpafoodbank.org) or (814) 459-3663 ext. 113.**

To attend the Empty Bowls event at Second Harvest, please call (814) 459-3663 ext. 113 to RSVP. Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door.

# Healthy Pantry Initiative

## Meals Made Easy

*Sponsored in part by Northwest Charitable Foundation*

Meals Made Easy is a six-week program designed to provide cooking and nutrition education classes at our local food pantries. These hands-on demonstration classes are provided to our neighbors who visit the pantry. In the classes, they learn basic cooking skills for how to prepare nutritious and affordable meals, receive nutrition education to make healthier food choices, and get tips on how to shop smarter.

**To learn more about the Healthy Pantry Initiative, please contact Nutrition Specialist, David Godoy, RD, LDN, at (814) 459-3663 ext. 125 or [dgodoy@nwpafoodbank.org](mailto:dgodoy@nwpafoodbank.org).**



David Godoy at a Meals Made Easy Class

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