

Food Pantry Network News

Midland County Emergency Food Pantry Network

Our Vision: "Always Food in Every Home"



February 2019

The "Stop Hunger Challenge" Is Here!

No one should have to worry about how they will afford to feed themselves or their family. Many people in our community are faced with this concern every day. Hunger does not discriminate. Hunger does not care about gender, age, race or religion. Hunger can affect people who are unemployed or working full-time. EFPN will be conducting its annual "Stop Hunger Challenge" during the months of March and April. Food and money collected during this time will count towards this challenge. Our goal for this campaign is \$80,000 in food and money. Donated food, personal care and cleaning items are valued at \$1.00 per item. We are once again very fortunate to have an anonymous donor offer a match for all donations. EFPN will receive a check from this donor in proportion to the total funds and food, personal care and cleaning items received during the challenge period. The Food Bank of Eastern Michigan is offering a 10% credit on our account for all money donated to us. In 2018, we spent \$131,060 with the Food Bank to purchase food for our



regular pantry program and Backpack Buddies and Mobile Pantry programs. Donations toward any of our programs or specific pantries will qualify for the campaign. Donations to our building fund will count towards the incentive from the anonymous donor but not towards the Food Bank incentive. Monetary donations may be sent to EFPN, P.O. Box 2521, Midland, MI 48641-2521. Food donations may be donated to any of our pantries or warehouse. If you would like to leave a donation for the warehouse, please call 486-9393 to arrange a time for delivery or pickup. Many of our supporting churches will be collecting. You can continue to bring your donations to your church collection site. Check our website, www.midlandcountyeFPN.org, to watch our progress towards this goal or to donate online. George Eliott, English novelist said, "What do we live for if not to make the world less difficult for each other." You can help make life less difficult for adults and children in need of food by helping to support the Stop Hunger Challenge.

Your Donations Helped

A teenager called on behalf of his family who needed food. The parents were too proud to ask for help.

A mom with three children lost her husband in a car accident. He was their only source of income.

A babysitter called to say the household had nothing to eat for the children. She was grateful that the children would be able to have food to eat.

A single mom lost her job. We told her we would help her till she got back on her feet. She soon called back to say she had a new better job and would not be needing any more assistance.

An elderly low income woman had a very large utility bill and she could not afford food.



We Have a Building!

Thanks to you, our supporters, we have taken a historic and exciting step for our organization. We purchased the building, under asking price, which we had been renting at 503 S Saginaw Rd. However, the building needs extensive renovations. Great Lakes Bay Construction has been chosen to do our project and plans are being finalized. The building committee has been hard at work making decisions that will enhance the use of this building to benefit our clients, pantries and programs and at the same time controlling remodeling costs. We are excited to have a building that will be handicapped accessible, easier for our volunteers to move food in and out, and have a temperature controlled garage that will allow us to store more perishable items. During the remodeling phase, the SAMS Pantry will be shut down. Plans are in place to distribute client requests across the other seven pantries. Clients should not experience any disruption in service. We have made arrangements for Food Bank deliveries, warehouse donations and other activities that normally take place at our

building. Our mobile pantries, Backpack Buddies and senior delivery programs will continue as usual. Our manager will relocate to a temporary office provided by Memorial Presbyterian Church. Our appliances and shelving will be moved to space provided to us by St John's Episcopal Church. We continue to be grateful to all who supported this effort including grants from The Allen Foundation, The Charles J. Strosacker Foundation, The Dow Corning Foundation, The Midland Area Community Foundation, and The Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation. Midland is very lucky to have foundations that help nonprofits improve how they serve those in need. This project is not completely funded. We were able to completely fund the purchase of the building but the renovation project is only 54% funded. We need your help to get to 100%. There is a spot on our donation envelope to have your donation go to our building fund. Money designated to other categories will only be used for food programs. Please let it be your donation that helps us reach our building fund goal!

Volunteers Share Their Experiences



Volunteers are crucial to running EFPN. We have many wonderful and invaluable volunteers. We interviewed two of our pantry volunteers about their experiences.

One volunteer is Cheryl. Cheryl's husband passed away seven years ago and she needed something to fill her life. She decided to volunteer at one of the EFPN's pantries. She has worked every Tuesday for the past 6 years. Cheryl says the volunteering experience makes her feel good and feels like she is really helping people. Many people are embarrassed to come to a pantry. She often encounters people who do not take too much food because they want to leave food for others. They have to be encouraged to take a week's worth of food. She says the stories these people tell her make her heart ache. In listening to these stories Cheryl realizes how much the pantries are needed. Often recipients have seasonal work or just lost their jobs and need food assistance. Many come very infrequently. She remembers one widowed woman in her 70's. All she had in her home was one frozen meal, 1/2 loaf of bread and a quart of milk. Cheryl works at a client select pantry so recipients pick their own food. She said EFPN is a worthy organization to volunteer for and she loves working at a pantry.

We also interviewed Linda who has volunteered for 4 years at one of EFPN's pantries. She had many of the same observations as Cheryl-people are embarrassed to come to a pantry and they need to be encouraged to take more food. She said you cannot even force them to take more food. Linda likes volunteering at the pantry because she can set her own schedule. She can volunteer once a week, once a month or whatever works with her calendar. Linda said some of her friends do not realize that there are pantries in Midland. Some people think people are taking advantage of the system. Linda tells them that the people are screened before coming to the pantry and in all her years working she thinks only 4 families may have taken advantage of the system. She said volunteering at the pantry is very rewarding and she feels she is helping people in real need. It makes you appreciate what you have and that many of us may be just one catastrophe away from needing to go to a pantry. Linda remembers one lady cried through most of her pantry visit. She could not believe all the food that was available to her.

We thank Linda and Cheryl for their willingness to share their experiences. If you are interested in becoming part of the EFPN volunteer team, please call 486-9393 or use the contact us on our website www.midlandcountyeftp.org.

What is SSI?

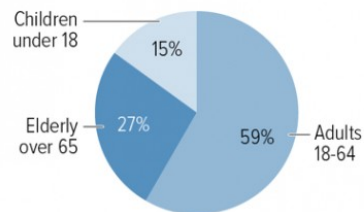
SSI stands for Supplemental Security Income. Social Security administers this program. It provides monthly benefits to people with limited income and resources who are disabled, blind, or age 65 or older. Blind or disabled children may also get SSI.

Many people who are eligible for SSI may also be entitled to Social Security benefits. In fact, the application for SSI is also an application for Social Security benefits. However, SSI and Social Security are different. Social Security benefits may be paid to you and certain members of your family if you worked long enough and paid Social Security taxes. Unlike Social Security benefits, SSI benefits are not based on your prior work or a family member's prior work. SSI is financed by general funds of the U.S. Treasury--personal income taxes, corporate and other taxes. Social Security taxes do not fund the SSI program.

The medical standards for disability are generally the same for both Social Security and SSI programs for individuals age 18 or older. To be considered disabled for Social Security disability or SSI purposes, individuals must have an impairment, either medical, psychological, or psychiatric in nature, that keeps them from being able to do a substantial amount of work. For children from birth to the attainment of age 18 there is a separate definition of disability under SSI.

The monthly payment amount for the SSI program is based on the "federal benefit rate" (FBR). In 2018, the FBR is \$750 per month for individuals and \$1,125 for couples. As of 2018, if you have earned income of more than \$1,180 per month at the time you apply, you are not eligible for SSI benefits.

Supplemental Security Income Recipients by Age



Note: Figures do not total 100 percent due to rounding.
Source: Social Security Administration: SSI Monthly Statistics (August 2017), Table 3

CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES | CBPP.ORG

Give Local Midland May 7

Once again, EFPN is joining more than 50 local nonprofits in this one day giving challenge sponsored by the Midland Area Community Foundation(MACF). Give Local Midland is part of a national online giving event. This 24 hour one day event is on Tuesday, May 7 (12:00 am-11:59 pm). All money collected on this day will go into our endowment fund. We hope to build our endowment fund to eventually fund programs such as the Backpack Buddies Program. On May 7, you may make your donation to EFPN at www.givelocalmidland.org. If you do not want to use the online system, you can drop off your donations at the MACF office, 76 Ashman Circle, on May 7. Every donation will receive matching funds. There will also be prizes and incentives awarded to the participating nonprofits throughout the day. Our wonderful supporters have helped make us one of the top charities for this event. Thank you for this and hope you will continue to support us. Check the Midland Give Local website to learn more about this event and the fun incentives.

Thank You Local Businesses, Churches and Organizations for Recent Food and Monetary Donations for November, 2018—January, 2019

Aldersgate United Methodist Church
 Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church
 Benjamin F. Edwards * Blessed Sacrament Church
 Blessed Sacrament School
 Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church
 Charles J Strosacker Foundation
 Children's Therapy Group
 Chippewa Nature Center * Church World Service
 Consumers Energy Foundation
 Corteva Agriscience * Dow Chemical DSS Team
 Dow Chemical New Hire Social Group
 Emmanuel Baptist Church * F/A Pnacek Ltd
 Family Fare * Fifth Third Bank
 First Church Of Christ Scientist
 First United Methodist Church
 First United Methodist Youth Group
 Great Lakes Bay Construction
 Gold Wing Road Riders Association Chapter V-MI
 Hidden Harvest * Holy Family Episcopal Church
 Kiwassee Kiwanis Club * Krogers
 M-30 Storage * Mapleton United Methodist Church
 Memorial Presbyterian Church
 Michigan Sugar Company
 Midland Area Catholic Community Youth Ministry
 Midland Brew Supply * Midland Center For The Arts
 Midland Church Of The Brethren
 Midland Cogeneration Venture
 Midland Community Orchestra
 Midland Downtown Development Authority
 - Jingle Bell Run
 Midland Figure Skating Club * Midland Jaycees
 Midland Kiwanis Foundation * Midland Lions Club
 Midland Morning Rotary
 Midland Nazarene Church Adult Sunday School
 Midland Reformed Church * Midland United Way
 Midland-Gladwin Central Labor Council
 New Hope Community Church
 Pine River Elementary School
 Poseyville United Methodist Church
 Quad Graphics * Quilters Squared Guild
 Sanford Community Of Christ
 Spartan Nash Foundation * St John's Lutheran Church
 St Timothy Lutheran Church * Studley Grange
 Stutzman's * The Dow Chemical Company
 The Peter & Dorothy A Solomon Foundation
 United Church Of Christ
 Women of Michigan Action Network-Rally for Good
 Women of Floyd Church Of God
 Woodcrest Kindergarten classes

Volunteers Make a Difference

Words are not adequate to thank the many volunteers who keep our organization running. Because of our volunteers, many people will not go to bed hungry. It is estimated that we have at least 400 volunteers in our organization. We wish we could personally thank each one of them. EFPN only has three part time paid positions-our coordinator who interviews the clients, her back-

ups, and a part time manager. It takes a lot of work and dedication to operate our eight pantries. We gave out over 17,000 items/month through our regular pantry program in 2018. That is a lot of food that has to be bought, counted in, shelved, and counted out. Pantries also track which organizations, businesses or churches donated the items. Our Backpack Buddies Program has a dedicated volunteer who oversees the program. The volunteer weekly monitors the numbers of students in the program at 11 elementary schools and 5 preschools and orders the necessary amount of food as well as working with the schools to make the process as efficient as possible. We are grateful to the Midland Public School Grounds' group and the staff

from county schools who transport the food to each school and the many teachers and school volunteers who pack the bags. For some schools, local churches provide space and volunteers to store and pack the bags. We have a team from Park Place Homes who secure, divide and deliver the fruit that we place each month in the backpacks.

Our Senior Delivery Program has a group of people who each month deliver food throughout Midland County to low income home-bound seniors. Each of our 11 mobile pantries takes at least 65 volunteers. We have a crew of warehouse volunteers who meet the truck from Hidden

Harvest as well as help with food donations. All our board members volunteer their time. There are many other tasks that are done by volunteers that are crucial to keeping our organization operating. Volunteers have a choice as to where they spend their precious time. Winston Churchill said, "You make a living by what you get. You make a life by what you give." Thank you to our many volunteers for giving their time to EFPN and making Midland County a better place for those in need of food.



Blessing Box At North Midland Family Center



EFPN is piloting a Blessing Box at North Midland Family Center. The Blessing Box is a miniature food pantry but can include other items such as books, gloves and mittens. On the front of the box we have included the saying "Take what you need, give what you can, above all be blessed". A volunteer constructed the box. He included leaves in the design because he was inspired by the setting at North Midland Family Center. We are trying to determine if food can withstand the cold and heat of our area. Will people use the Blessing Box? Anyone can take items that are in the box and anyone can help stock the box. People are often embarrassed to go to a pantry. We hope this blessing box helps a little for those who are reluctant to go to a pantry.

Volunteer Needs

EFPN can always use volunteers in our regular pantries and mobile pantry programs. We currently have some specific needs:



- ◆ Mobile Pantry:
 - * Co-Coordinator
 - * Person to pick up supply items before and after the mobile pantry
 - * Person with a trailer to pick up grocery carts from Family Fare and Memorial Presbyterian before and after a mobile pantry
- ◆ Be part of a team of people to pick up produce on Saturdays at the Midland Farmers Market
- ◆ Transport items to our outlying pantries

If you are interested in volunteering, please call 486-9393 or use the contact us on the EFPN website, www.midlandcountyeFPN.org



**Midland County
Emergency Food Pantry**

**P.O. Box 2521
Midland, MI 48641-2521**

www.midlandcountyeftpn.org

989-486-9393

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PAID
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Midland County EFPN Locations

Please call before delivering food & supplies to pantries

Bullock Creek Outreach Pantry

at Messiah Lutheran Church

1550 S. Poseyville Rd. (corner of Gordonville Rd.) • 835-7143

Coleman Railway Family Center

4839 N. Coleman Schools Drive • 465-2079

EFPN Warehouse

503 S. Saginaw Rd. • 486-9393

HELP Pantry

at Memorial Presbyterian Church

1310 Ashman St. (use Allen St. entrance) • 835-6759

North Midland Family Center Pantry

2601 E. Shearer Rd. • 689-7770

SAMS Food Pantry

hosted by St. John's Episcopal Church at

503 S. Saginaw Rd. • 631-2260

Sanford Food Pantry

at Sanford United Methodist Church

2560 N. West River Rd. • 687-5353

Wheeler Road Church of Christ Pantry

1123 E. Wheeler Rd. • 835-8559

West Midland Family Center Pantry

4011 W. Isabella Rd. • 832-3256

*If you know of anyone in need of food, please have them
call 989-486-9393*

UPCOMING EVENTS

EFPN Annual Meeting

The EFPN annual meeting will be on Monday, April 8, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 3701 Jefferson. Social hour is at 5:30 pm, dinner at 6:00 pm and a business meeting at 7:00 pm. Following the business meeting, there will be a short program by the Belltones, a musical ensemble from Northeast and Jefferson Middle Schools. Cost of the dinner is \$15.00 and is payable at the door. You are welcome to come to the dinner and meeting or meeting only. If you would like to attend the dinner, RSVP to Sandy Warner, 486-9393 or manager@midlandcountyeftpn.org by Monday, March 25. This event is a time for volunteers and supporters to come together to celebrate another year of making a difference in the lives of others.

Stamp Out Hunger Postal Drive on May 11

Every year our local postal workers join the National Association of Letter Carriers' food drive in their "Stamp Out Hunger" food drive. The drive this year is Saturday, May 11. This is the largest single day food drive in the country. Just leave a bag of non-perishable food items by your mailbox. Your mail carrier will pick up the food. The food will be distributed to EFPN pantries as well as Salvation Army, Caregiving Network, Open Door, Shelterhouse and other pantries. We are very grateful to our local postal workers for all the work they do to make this such a success. Please support your local postal worker as they work to stock pantry shelves for the summer months.

