

Food Pantry Network News

Midland County Emergency Food Pantry Network

Our Vision: "Always Food in Every Home"



November 2016

Need For Food Assistance Increases



EFPN is experiencing an increase in requests for all our programs. We do not know all the reasons for these increases but job loss and cuts in Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is being cited by a number of our recipients. Visits to our eight pantries are up. The Backpack Buddies Program enrollment is up over 100 children from last year to a record of 780 children. We have an increase in people coming to our mobile pantries, the Thanksgiving Program has 588 families signed up compared to 525 last year, and we

are spending a greater amount on our nutritional supplements for people referred to us by Cancer Services, Senior Services, and DaVita Dialysis. This program also provides vouchers for special more expensive formulas needed by some babies. One of our pantry coordinators mentioned recently that it is becoming challenging to keep the shelves stocked with food and getting enough food in to fill those shelves.

EFPN greatly appreciates all donations of food, personal care, and cleaning supplies. Monetary support is also crucial for our programs and greatly appreciated as well.

Last year over 205,940 items were distributed from our eight pantries. Approximately 120,430 of these items were donated. 85,510 items were purchased. We are able to stretch your donated dollars by buying food from the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan. We also purchase at local grocery stores because the Food Bank does not have all the items needed to stock a pantry.

The Backpack Buddies Program provides a weekend backpack of food for elementary school children who qualify for free or reduced price lunches and two Head Start classes. The price of a backpack has increased from \$2.60/backpack/week to 2.80/backpack/week this year. This still is a very cost effective price for these items. We are increasing our 2016 budget from \$60,000 to \$70,000 for 2017 to cover these additional children. The board has approved an additional \$10,000 to expand to more preschool classes.

The 2016 budget for the Nutritional Supplement Program was \$15,500. Because of the increased demand, the 2017 budget was raised to \$22,000. Many of our mobile pantries are funded by churches and individuals. For those that are not, we need additional income to keep this program going. EFPN also provides clients in our regular and Thanksgiving programs with \$10 or \$20 gift certificates which enables them to buy fresh or perishable items. Last year we distributed almost \$60,000 in gift certificates through these programs.

We are very grateful to all our supporters for trusting us with your donations. We are constantly striving to keep our administration costs low. We are honored that you trust EFPN to make wise use of your donations to help those in need. Please be assured that your generosity of food, money, and time to our organization has made a difference in the lives of many.

Unique Donation Makes A Difference An employee at Dow Chemical noticed that the janitorial service replaced partial rolls of toilet paper with full rolls. She checked with her employer about taking the partial rolls to donate to our pantries. We had some reservations about giving out partial rolls because we were cognizant of the feelings of our recipients. Would they be offended to receive partial rolls or would they be glad to get this toilet paper? A compromise solution was decided on. Our recipients would still get new full rolls and we would put a number of these rolls in plastic storage bags and offer them as give aways. Recently a family of 6 came to a pantry-a single mom with her 5 children. The children noticed the packages of toilet paper and took one bag. A pantry volunteer noticed and said we had a generous supply so they could take more. Each child came and took a few bags for the family. One child remarked "this is one less thing she has to worry about". Who would have guessed that the idea of this Dow employee would have such an impact on one child? This also proves that the simplest of things is appreciated by those in need.

Reflections

* A grandma was suddenly in charge of her grandchildren ages 14,10 and 9. She realized they were eating more than she could provide for. She called for help and you could hear the relief in her voice when she knew she was getting food.

* A family lost everything to a fire. The Red Cross gave them vouchers to use for clothes and personal needs. In addition to help with food, we gave them phone numbers of other agencies who could help.

* A working mom's food stamps were cut from \$160.00 to \$80.00/month. She said she needed help till she could adjust to this change.

Recipient Letter

"There are not enough words to tell you how grateful and thankful I am for your help. At my age, it is hard for me to ask for help. I feel my life should be in order by now. You treated me with such respect and dignity. You reassured me that there was plenty of food for others and that I did not need to worry. I wanted to share with you the impact of your generosity. When my grandson saw all the food, he started to cry, overwhelmed by your generosity. I wasn't aware he was so concerned about how we would get enough food. When he would ask, I reassured him we would be okay. Not to worry. Yet he worried anyways. But the best thing is what he learned about how a community comes together to help each other. We are looking into where we can volunteer. Thank you for all you have done for us."

Our Pantries

EFPN has eight pantries located throughout Midland County. This article highlights our Coleman Pantry.

Spotlight on the Coleman Pantry



In 1983, when the Michigan economy was in a slump, a group of people from various Midland County churches got together to see if there were ways they could help to meet the needs of their communities. Judy and Jerry Falor of Coleman met with a group called "Ecumenical Community Outreach" as they explored the concept of an "Emergency Food Pantry Network."

With a grant from Memorial Presbyterian and St. John's Episcopal Churches, the project was underway by March of 1983 and a coordinator was hired. The Falors got permission from the Coleman School District to set up a pantry for Coleman in Room 8 of the Middle School. The Coleman Ministerial Association helped the pantry by having food collections from their member churches. They also funded gift certificates, or vouchers, for the pantry customers.

In 1984, the school needed the space used by the pantry, so the pantry was temporarily moved to a store on Railway Street. In November of that year, it was moved again to a spare bedroom in St. Phillip Neri's rectory. That year Judy Faylor gave out mini-Christmas stockings with a candy cane bearing the name of an item needed in the pantry and had a good response.

The pantry moved again in the fall of 1989 to a room at Earl Keim Realty, where they stayed until September 1992, when they moved upstairs in the City Hall Building. Transporting bags and boxes of groceries up and down the steep stairs, mostly by retired folks, was not easy.

In January 1996, the pantry was moved to a room in the new Fellowship Hall of Faith United Methodist Church. The best is its' location; not only ground floor but just inside the building. The food was transported to City Hall for pick-up.

Coleman was sponsoring two food pantries, one at the Coleman Family Railway Center and the EFPN pantry at Faith United Methodist Church. It was decided in 2014 to consolidate the two pantries into one and locate it at the Coleman Family Railway Center. Volunteers no longer had to transport the food to the former pick-up location at City Hall. The pantry is now larger and recipients can take advantage of activities at the Greater Midland Coleman Family Center.



The Coleman Business Association hosts a food drive during their Annual Variety/Talent Show. There is also a community food drive in December in which a large amount of food and cash donations are collected. Support is also received from many local businesses, churches and residents. The Coleman pantry handles the senior delivery program for low income homebound seniors in Coleman.

Program for Low Income College Students



One of the programs of EFPN is the student assistance program. This program helps low income college students with food once a month. Often these students are single parents returning to school in order to get a better job. Students must provide proof that they are a student. EFPN wants them to focus on getting their education without having to worry about having enough money for food. EFPN had around 15 students per month for the 2015-2016 school year. If you know of a student that can benefit from this program, please have them contact our EFPN office at 486-9393.

**Thank You
Local Businesses,
Churches and
Organizations for
Recent Food and
Monetary Donations!**

American Association of University Women
American Chemical Society Garden
Assumption Blessed Virgin Mary Parish
Benjamin F. Edwards and Co.
Blessed Sacrament Parish & School
Chapel Ln Presbyterian Farmer's Market vendors
First United Methodist Church
Gordonville United Methodist Church
H.H. Dow High School
Kroger
Meijer
Midland Balloon Festival
Midland Jaycees
Midland-Gladwin Central Labor Council
National Assn. of Letter Carriers, Branch 2317
Northwood University's GO MAD Day Food Drive
Sanford Community Of Christ
The Peter & Dorothy A Solomon Foundation
Trinseo
United Health Care
United Way Of Midland County

Donate a Deer

Community Thanksgiving Food Collection

Thanksgiving is a time to be grateful for all that we have. It is also a time to remember those who struggle to put food on their table. On November 20, resources from the Midland community will come together to provide 588 families with a Thanksgiving meal. This program is a partnership of Aldersgate United Methodist Church, EFPN and the Midland County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS). The list of recipients is compiled with input from DHHS, EFPN and many of the nonprofit agencies in Midland County. This is a record number of people requesting help. To contribute to this Thanksgiving program you may bring your nonperishable food items and personal care items on Sunday, November 20, between 11:00 am and 1:00 pm to Aldersgate United Methodist Church at 2206 Airfield Lane. Many churches, schools and businesses in our community are collecting food for this event. If you cannot make it to Aldersgate on November 20, volunteers are available to pick up donations. Please call 839-9879 or 486-9393



What is Needed:

Food Needs: Canned fruits, vegetables and soup. Cereal, spaghetti sauce, noodle, boxed potatoes, rice, dessert mixes, juices, stuffing, Jell-O, pie mixes

Personal Care Needs: Shampoo, bar soap, deodorant, combs, hair brushes, razor/shaving cream, toilet paper, tooth paste, tooth brushes, laundry detergent

Cookies: Donations of homemade cookies (labeled and packaged, a dozen per package in sealed plastic bags) would be especially appreciated. At least 588 dozens of cookies are needed.

Cash Donations: We need over \$10000 in cash donations to give recipients gift certificates which the families use to purchase perishable foods. Your tax deductible checks should be made payable to: Midland County EFPN, P.O. Box 2521, Midland, MI 48641-2521. Please designate your donation as Thanksgiving Baskets.

This quote by W. Clement Stone reminds us of the true meaning of this holiday- "If you are really thankful, what do you do? You share."

Kids Count In Michigan Data for Midland County*

Economic Security	2006 Number	2006 Rate-%	2014 Number	2014 Rate-%
Children in Poverty, ages 0-17	2698	13.5	2649	14.8
Children ages 0-5, eligible for SNAP	1182	20.2	1310	23.7
Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunches	3547	25.0	4176	34.1

* Michigan League for Public Policy

EFPN has a partnership with the Chippewa Nature Center. In the fall months, deer that are harvested at the Nature Center are donated to EFPN. EFPN has the deer processed with a U.S.D.A. approved processor, and the venison is given to clients.

EFPN also runs a venison program independently of the Chippewa Nature Center program. Deer can be delivered to 784 South Poseyville Road, Midland or we will pick up any deer within a 50 mile radius of Midland. For information or to request a deer pick up, call (989) 835-9601. EFPN pays for the processing of the donated deer. We are grateful to the Chippewa Nature Center and hunters for providing venison for our clients.



**Midland County
Emergency Food Pantry
Network**

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

**www.midlandcountyefpn.org
989-486-9393**

**NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MIDLAND, MI
PERMIT NO 181**

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

**Two Great Concerts - Two Opportunities to
Help Those In Need**



MIDLAND
COMMUNITY
ORCHESTRA

The Midland Community Orchestra, led by new conductor Gina Provenzano, will be having a free concert on **Sunday, November 20, at 3:00 PM** in Bullock Creek High school auditorium, 1420 South Badour. Attendees are encouraged to bring a food donation to help stock the shelves of EFPN.

The Men of Music, led by Grace Marra, will hold their Christmas concert on Sunday, **December 4** at the First United Methodist Church, 315 W Larkin St., Midland, at **2:00 and 7:00 PM**.

There is no admission charge. A free will donation will be collected with proceeds going to support EFPN. Please come and enjoy the music while supporting those in need.



EFPN requests will be on the red tags on the Sharing Tree sponsored by United Way. These tags represent the typical EFPN recipient. Please be generous in supporting the Sharing Tree. Your donations help make Christmas special for those in need. EFPN tags requests personal care items, kitchen utensils, and gift cards for restaurants, produce, meat and dairy.