

Food Pantry Network News

Midland County Emergency Food Pantry Network

Our Vision: "Always Food in Every Home"



March 2016

EFPN Launches 2nd Annual Stop Hunger Challenge



For many years the Feinstein Foundation has offered an incentive to pantries to collect funds and food during the months of March and April. Recently the Feinstein Foundation has decided to suspend their challenge. The Midland County Emergency Food Pantry Network has been very fortunate to have anonymous donors come forward and offer incentives for people to contribute food and money to EFPN during March and April. EFPN will receive checks from these donors in proportion to the total funds and food items received during the challenge period. Also, one of our supporting

organizations will offer an incentive of 2% of the value of all food and money donated, up to a maximum incentive of \$2000. All food and money collected from March 1 to April 30 will be counted for this "Stop Hunger Challenge". Food items are valued at \$1.00 per item. In addition, the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan is offering a 10% credit on our account for all money donated during this period. In 2015, we spent almost \$121,000 with the Food Bank for food purchased for our regular program as well as the Backpack Buddies and Mobile Pantry programs. A credit would help us reduce this bill.

Our goal for this campaign is \$80,000 in food and money. Please consider giving at this time. Donations toward any of our programs or specific pantries will qualify for the campaign. 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 to our warehouse location at 503 S. Saginaw Rd. If you would like to leave a donation at the warehouse, please call 486-9393 to arrange a time for delivery or pickup. Many of our supporting churches will be collecting at this time and 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.

Reflections

* A senior spent most of her Social Security check on medicine and had little money left for food. She was diabetic and needed the food to control her diabetes. A friend urged her to call EFPN. She was very grateful to get help.

* A mom lost her second job and, as a result, the grocery budget for her family was only \$20. She asked for help during this lean time. We were happy to help her so she could concentrate on finding another job.

* A family moved to Midland looking for work. The father called saying he had three children to feed. He was relieved to get into a food pantry quickly. He said, "I'm happy my kids will have a good dinner tonight. I don't care if I don't eat but my kids have to eat".

* A young man lost his paycheck—maybe in a parking lot. He called to get help with food. Later he got a call that someone had found his paycheck. He called us and asked to pay us back for the food. We were grateful for his honesty and told him to just enjoy his good fortune.

Thank You Note from a Client

"Dear Food Pantry,

I am writing to express the gratitude of myself and family for the assistance you provided us with food. It is appreciated greatly. All of our money goes to rent, vehicle payment and insurance, gas, medical and legal obligations. We don't have enough money for my spouse's visits to the doctors, surgeries or medicines each month much less food. We get \$23 food stamps each month which we stretch as far as possible. It was absolutely delightful to get a turkey yesterday (EFPN Note: we normally do not have turkeys but because of generous donors, we were given a few turkeys). We could not afford one for Thanksgiving or Christmas so our family will really take pleasure in the lovely meal it provides. We used the gift certificates for red skin potatoes to have with it as well as some taco shells, cheese and lettuce for another meal a different day. The volunteers are always really nice to us there and treat us with respect. A lot of places you go without the help you need badly because they treat you sarcastically and treat you like dirt. We are thankful they are always friendly to us."



Pantry Open House

See how your donations make an impact in our community by visiting EFPN food pantries. Now is an opportunity for you and your family to take a tour of a food pantry and see how it works. A number of EFPN pantries will be holding open houses. It is also an opportunity for us to thank you, our donors, for your support.

Please visit one or more EFPN pantries on Sunday, April 17, 1:00-3:00

- * Bullock Creek Outreach Pantry, Messiah Lutheran Church, 1550 S. Poseyville Rd.
- * Coleman Railway Family Center, 4839 N. Coleman Schools Dr.
- * HELP Pantry, Memorial Presbyterian Church, 1310 Ashman St.
- * SAMS Food Pantry, hosted by St. John's Episcopal Church at 503 S. Saginaw Rd. (enter off Cambridge)
- * Wheeler Road Church of Christ Pantry, 1123 E. Wheeler Rd.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

* A recipient who received help from a pantry called the pantry about making a donation. They had promised themselves that they would pay it forward once they were able.

* A volunteer at one of our client select pantries notes "when working at the pantry on any given day, I have never had anyone take advantage of us. More often than not, they say "I only want to take what we will use" or "I want to be sure there is enough for others." We find this very often, clients want to make sure there is enough for others. We and our clients are grateful to all who keep our shelves stocked.

Our Pantries

EFPN has eight pantries located throughout Midland County. This article will highlight our SAMS pantry.



Spotlight on the SAMS' Pantry (Share a Meal Service)

SAMS was established in 1984 as a ministry of St. John's Episcopal Church to provide food and personal care items to people in need in the Midland area. It is a founding member of the Midland County Emergency Food Pantry Network (MCEFPN). Open six days a week, SAMS serves about 35-40% of food pantry clients scheduled through the MCEFPN.

For 28 years, SAMS was housed at St. John's, evolving from a pre-packaged distribution run out of a small room – to a “client-select” operation occupying larger spaces. Since fall 2012, the SAMS ministry has served clients at its current location, 503 S. Saginaw Rd., whose inventory and pantry spaces afford clients greater selection and an experience closer

to grocery shopping. SAMS has hosted nutritional & cooking basics classes (in partnership with MSU Extension) and is one of the member pantries who pack boxes for the monthly MCEFPN Senior Delivery Service.

SAMS' inventory is supplied by several different sources:

- Purchases from the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan (FBEM)
- Local purchases from Krogers, Family Fare, Meijers, Dollar Tree, Walmart
- Periodic food collections by local churches, organizations and schools (e.g. St. John's, Trinity Lutheran, United Church of Christ, Aldersgate UMC, Eagle Ridge Church of God, Hidden Harvest, St. Brigid, and Trinity Lutheran)
- Large annual community food drives (Stamp Out Hunger Postal Drive, Balloon Fest Drive, Boy Scouts)
- Individual donations from St. John's parishioners and others

Grocery donation bags made available via St. John's Endowment Committee have helped increase donations to SAMS (and other MCEFPN pantries) since we began making them available in late 2015.

Just under 70 people share their time on behalf of the SAMS ministry. About 1/3 of this corps come from St. John's; the rest come from other churches and the Midland community. Most SAMS volunteers serve as receptionists, pantry helpers, inventory stockers, FBEM delivery helpers and administrators who coordinate all pantry operations. Regular volunteer commitments run from daily to weekly to monthly and can even be seasonal. Visit our website to learn more: www.sjec-midland.org/sams.



Kit Donations Appreciated



For years, EFPN has been giving out birthday kits to clients when a family member has an upcoming birthday. Community support for this program has been outstanding. Due to the success of the birthday kits, we have decided to try expanding this program to other types of kits.

We were contacted by a Girl Scout troop looking to make birthday kits for us. They agreed to make recipe kits instead. It was a huge success! We supplied the girls with recipes for food items that can be found in a pantry and they brainstormed some of their own recipe ideas too. They collected the necessary items and put all the ingredients for each recipe in a bag with a recipe card attached. The clients loved receiving these kits and the girls had a great time discussing recipes and putting the kits together.

If your organization is interested in supplying kits for our clients, please consider calling our office at 486-9393 to see what types of kits we can use. We'll let you know if we're in need of birthday kits or supply you with some pantry recipes for recipe kits. Examples of kits are located on our website at www.midlandcountyeFPN.org. Select "How You Can Help". All kits are welcome and appreciated!

How Many Households are Struggling in Midland County?

ALICE, an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, are households that earn more than the U.S. poverty level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county. Combined, the number of poverty and ALICE households equals the total population struggling to afford basic needs. In 2012 there were 33,235 households in Midland County. 4442 households (13 %) were living in the poverty and 6282 households (19%) were ALICE households.

Midland's United Way is facilitating a series of meetings among local agencies to discuss barriers these households face in getting food, resources available to them, and how we can insure that all in the community have access to healthy food options. In particular, the group is focusing on the ALICE population who may at present not qualify for food assistance options but are still struggling to put food on the table.

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

- Aldersgate United Methodist Church
- Aldersgate United Meth. Women
- Assumption Blessed Virgin Mary Church
- Bear Carpet & Water Restoration
- Blessed Sacrament Church
- Blessed Sacrament Wolf Cub Scouts
- Cabot Corporation
- Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church
- Chemical Bank
- Chestnut Hill Third Grade Class
- Culver's
- Delta Sigma Theta Sorority
- Dollar Daze
- Dow Agrosiences
- Dow Chemical Customer Information
- Dow Chemical Logistics Group
- Dow Chemical TERC
- Dow High School Music Boosters
- Family Medicine Associates
- First Church of Christ Scientist
- First United Methodist Church
- Game On
- Girl Scout Troop 50721
- GWRRRA Chapter V
- H.E. Lennon Inc.
- Holy Family Episcopal Church
- Holy Scripture Lutheran Church
- Iteuer Insurance Group
- Ittner Bean & Grain Inc.
- JC Penney Silicon Valley Community Foundation
- Kiwassee Kiwanis Club
- LaLonde's Market
- Life Leadership Group
- Lion's Club
- M-30 Storage
- Mapleton United Methodist Church
- Memorial Presbyterian Church
- Men of Music
- Midland Cogeneration Venture
- Midland Community Ctr. Aquacise Class
- Midland Community Orchestra
- Midland County Association of Retired School Personnel
- Midland High School Pom Squad
- Midland Figure Skating Club
- Midland Firefighters Youth Foundation
- Midland Jaycees
- Midland-Gladwin Central Labor Council
- National Association of Letter Carriers
- New Hope Community Church
- Peter & Dorothy Solomon Foundation
- Poseyville United Methodist Women
- Psi Iota Xi
- Saginaw Bay Underwriters
- Sanford United Methodist
- Spherion Staffing
- Strosacker Foundation
- Studley Grange
- Temple Beth El
- Tom White Family Foundation
- Tops Mi No 959
- Tri City Disc Golf Club
- Trinseo
- United Church of Christ
- Walmart
- Well Spring Naturopathic Health Serv.
- Wheeler Road Church of Christ
- Wines for Humanity
- Woodcrest School
- Younkens

Give Local Midland - May 3

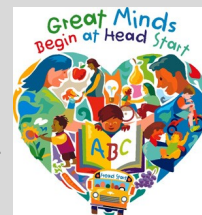


The Midland Area Community Foundation (MACF) is again sponsoring the Give Local Midland event,

Give Local Midland is part of a national online giving event. This 24 hour one day event is on Tuesday, May 3 (12:00am-11:59pm). Many of the nonprofits in Midland County will be part of this event. 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 3, you may make your donation to EFPN at www.givelocalmidland.org. Every donation will receive matching funds. There will also be prizes and incentives awarded to the participating nonprofits throughout the day. Check the Midland Give Local site to learn about some fun incentives.

Pilot Program to Expand Backpack Buddies to Head Start Children

EFPN is partnering with Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency (NEMCSA) in doing a pilot to expand our Backpack Buddies Program to children enrolled in the Head Start Program. Head Start is a child-focused program designed to increase the school readiness of children ages three through five years old. Head Start is funded by the Department of Health and Human Services. In Midland County, there are currently 177 children enrolled in the Head Start program at seven different sites. The pilot will involve up to 48 children enrolled in Head Start at two sites in Midland County. If the pilot is a success, EFPN will consider expanding the program to all Head Start children in Midland County.

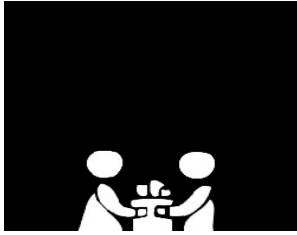


Volunteers - You Make a Great Difference

Volunteers are the life blood of our organization. It is estimated that we have at least 300 volunteers in our organization. We wish we could personally thank each one of you. EFPN only has three part time paid positions-our coordinator who interviews the clients and her back-up and a part time manager. It takes a lot of work and dedication to operate our eight pantries. We give out 17,000 items/month through our regular pantry program. That is a lot of food that has to be bought, counted in, shelved, and counted out as they are put in client's bags each month. In addition, the number of items in and out have to be reported for our internal statistics, for our annual IRS form 990 filing as well as making us accountable to our donors. Pantries also track which organizations 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 12 elementary schools and orders the necessary amount of food as well as working with the schools to make the process as efficient as possible. In addition, we have many volunteers who make this program work. This program would not run without the Midland Public School Grounds' group and the many teachers and school volunteers who pack the bags. In some schools, teachers have given up space in their teachers' lounge so there is a space to store the food till it is packed into bags. For some schools, local churches provide space and volunteers to store and pack the bags. Our Senior Delivery Service has a group of people who each month deliver food throughout Midland County to homebound seniors. Each mobile pantry takes at least 65 volunteers to run. Our mobile pantry coordinator besides overseeing the event on the day of the mobile pantry does a lot of work behind the scenes before and after these events. We have a crew of warehouse volunteers who meet the trucks from the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan and Hidden Harvest as well as help with food donations. All this food has to be counted in and shelved. 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. In spite of the large numbers of volunteers, we can always use more. If you are interested in volunteering please call our office at 486-9393 to learn about opportunities.

An unknown author said, "Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in". Thank you to our many volunteers for helping make Midland County a better place for those in need of food.





**Midland County
Emergency Food Pantry
Network**

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

www.midlandcountyeFPN.org

989-486-9393

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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

To learn more about EFPN, visit our website at www.midlandcountyeFPN.org

You can also like us on Facebook

Up Coming Events

EFPN Annual Meeting

The EFPN annual meeting will be on Monday, April 11 at St. Brigid Parish Hall, 207 Ashman. Social hour is at 5:30 pm, dinner at 6:00 pm and a business meeting at 7:00 pm. Cost of the dinner is \$14.25 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 Jessica Robison, 948-9345 or robison.jessical@gmail.com by Thursday, April 2. 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 14**

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 14. 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 Midland County EFPN pantries as well as Salvation Army, Caregiving Network, Open Door and various other pantries. We are very grateful to our local postal workers for participating in this event. Please support them in this endeavor.

