

# Food Pantry Network News

## Midland County Emergency Food Pantry Network

*Our Vision: "Always Food in Every Home"*



August 2013

### Community Garden At Holy Family Episcopal



The small community of Holy Family Episcopal Church on Swede Avenue had a vision to have a community garden in order to provide fresh produce to those in need. They chose to partner with the Emergency Food Pantry Network (EFPN). Starting a community garden is not an easy task. They worked through many challenges and the garden is starting to produce vegetables that are being given to EFPN pantries.

Elisabeth Christiansen and Tony Germain are spearheading the project with the support of Reverend Sarah Carter. Dan Draves, master gardener, gave a lecture on growing

vegetables. Lee Smith also provided gardening advice.

Girl Scout Troop 50730, led by Michelle Gibbs, Lisa Ryan and Amanda Smith, volunteered labor and plant funds. These 7th and 8th grade girls are working on their Silver Award, using profits from their cookie sale to pay for plants and tomato cages. A grant was obtained from an endowment fund of St. John's Episcopal Church to help purchase raised beds and a watering system.

Signup to help, view a full list of supporters, and see details on the Harvest Celebration Ice Cream Social on August 25, 1-5 PM by visiting [holyfamily-episcopalchurch.org/community\\_garden.php](http://holyfamily-episcopalchurch.org/community_garden.php). The garden is still in need of people to help with the harvesting. All those who work in the garden will be able to take some of the produce. This garden is a great example of the power of a vision, prayer, community and lots of hard work. Together we are making a difference in the lives of those in need.

### Remembering Colin Broddle

It is with great appreciation that EFPN remembers Colin Broddle, one of the original founders of EFPN. Colin faithfully served the Food Pantry Board as treasurer from 1983-1988, and then as president of the board of directors from 1988-2003.

In the 1980s, Colin represented several Midland churches while researching other food pantries in the state. He also worked with the Ecumenical Community Outreach Group to address the community's hunger issues. Subsequently, the Emergency Food Pantry Network of Midland County was created.

Harry Smith, current secretary of the EFPN board remembers those early days. "Colin was

a quiet man who took charge," Harry reflected, "and he was my friend".

Angela Buske, current president of the EFPN board comments, "I had the privilege of being on the EFPN board with Colin. I remember him telling a story about his encounter with migrant workers at Kmart. I remember thinking here is a man who sees the needs of others and has great compassion for all."



### Food for Thought:

- When a single mom lost her job and had no means of support, EFPN provided her with food and personal care items.
- When a Grandmother gained custody of her grandchildren with just 2 days notice, EFPN's U Pick Pantry came to her aid.
- A man with no income and no food was provided an Emergency Box until he could visit a pantry.

### Children Feeding Children

- Midland High School National Honor Society, led by student, Anna MacDonald, collected over 2300 food items for Midland families.
- Meridian Junior High students donated \$1125 to EFPN from a Penny Drive kicked off at a school wide assembly in the spring.

# Backpack Buddies Program

Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers who assisted with Backpack Buddies during the 2012-2013 school year! From the men and women who assist with distributing pallets of food to the schools, the administrative worker at each school who tracks names of students receiving food, the people who pack and distribute backpacks each week—and of course, those who generously donate money to keep the program running.

This year, the Backpack Buddies program served an average of 720 students each week at 13 elementary schools in Midland County. Our fantastic volunteers at each of the schools stuffed a total of 22,191 backpacks over the course of the year with items such as cereal, granola bars, soups, macaroni and cheese, and other kid-friendly items.

These products are provided to us from the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan for the

low cost of only about \$2.25 per backpack per week. In February, we also were fortunate to receive fresh oranges from Hidden Harvest following donations through the Dow High Music Program's fruit sale.

Donations to Backpack Buddies can be made by designating your EFPN check to the Backpack Buddies Program in the memo line. A donation of only \$70 covers the food costs for one child for the entire 2013-2014 school year.

*I love knowing that there will be food in the neediest children's homes over the weekend, or during breaks from school. Children always ask on Thursday if tomorrow is backpack day! They are always so pleased and proud to take their backpacks home."*

Sarah Barratt,  
Principal Meridian Elementary School

## **Backpack Buddies News Release Excerpts written by Siebert Elementary School Volunteers:**

While some kids might complain about school lunches, others are grateful for the meal because they know there's little food at home. For those children, weekends would be especially challenging if not for the Backpack Buddies program, which operates at Siebert Elementary and 12 other schools across Midland County.

Now in its eighth year in Midland County, Backpack Buddies offers a safety net for children who are considered "food insecure." Each Friday from October to May, students enrolled in the program receive a backpack containing enough food for six weekend meals. Children in Midland Public Schools are eligible to participate in the Backpack Buddies program if they receive a free or reduced school lunch, live in a household that receives Food Stamps, or live in a household that qualifies for WIC assistance.

"The children are always excited to get their food backpack to take home for the weekend," said Joanne Coates, the office professional who coordinates Siebert's Backpack Buddies. "They are curious to see what is in the backpack and what new food product they will get to enjoy. "

"It's a program I wholeheartedly support because it has a direct, positive impact on the students at Siebert," said Deb Ahn, a Siebert parent who has volunteered with Backpack Buddies for the past two years.

Members of the Bolger + Battle staff began volunteering at Siebert in 2011 after Backpack Buddies was selected as one of the firm's community service projects. "Philanthropy is something we are committed to at B + B," said Bolger + Battle's owner Wendy Traschen. "During the current school year, a dozen Bolger + Battle employees have volunteered a total of 25 hours to Backpack Buddies.

Karen Dastick, the Backpack Buddies coordinator for Midland County, says volunteers like those at Siebert are crucial to the viability of the program. "This program could not run without the volunteers; they are absolutely essential," Dastick said. "The food is received at the Midland Public Schools bus garage where the employees assist with unloading the truck. Employees of all four districts then distribute pallets to the individual schools, where volunteers pack and distribute the backpacks. Altogether, we probably have in the neighborhood of 70 volunteers who keep things running smoothly."

The program, which operates on just \$50,000 a year, has a big impact on children and their families. "Many parents report that the extra food coming in helps them meet their food needs for their family, and the kids have mostly been pleased with the foods they are given," Dastick said. "Teachers report that many children are better behaved and pay better attention in class when they have received weekend food."

# Kroger Helps Feed the Hungry



As part of the Kroger's Community Rewards Program, EFPN has grown to 40 registered households and received \$242.00 in rewards for the first quarter, 2013. Register your Kroger card and choose EFPN for community rewards. You will be donating to EFPN every time you shop at no additional cost to you! Kroger will donate a percentage of your qualifying purchases back to EFPN.

For information on how to register your Kroger card to support EFPN, see "How you can help" on the EFPN website, [www.midlandcountyeftp.org](http://www.midlandcountyeftp.org). The EFPN Kroger Non Profit Organization Number is 91387.

Sign-up requires access to the Internet. If you do not have Internet access, contact us at 486-9393 and we can sign up your card.

## Meijer's Simply Give Program



EFPN will receive donations from Meijer's Simply Give Program July 28 thru September 28. Purchase a \$10 Meijer Food Pantry Donation Card and Meijer will provide EFPN with a \$10 gift card which will help stock pantry shelves. In addition, Meijer's Corporation will make a contribution to EFPN.

These cards are available at the check-out registers at Meijer.

This donation comes at a crucial time for EFPN as pantry stocks are low during the summer months. We urge our supporters to purchase the donation card so that EFPN will receive both the Meijer's gift card and the additional contribution from the Meijer's Corporation.



## Letter Carriers Nationwide Food Drive

Beaverton.

We were able to supply 12 food pantries and organizations with food: SAM's, HELP, North Midland Family Center, West Midland Family Center, Messiah Lutheran Church, St. Brigid's Catholic Church, Trinity Wesleyan Church, Midland Community of Christ, Lighthouse Body of Christ, Salvation Army, Open Door, and Caregiving Network.

Youth groups from Blessed Sacrament Church and St. John's Episcopal Church helped to unload the carriers' trucks and then reload vehicles from the food pantries.

Thanks to everyone who worked to make this food drive such a success. This is the twenty-first year the letter carriers have conducted a food drive.

On Saturday, May 11, 2013 the National Association of Letter Carriers held a nationwide food drive. The Midland Emergency Food Pantry Network helped to coordinate the effort here in Midland. A total of 27,123 pounds of food was collected from Midland County, Coleman, Sanford, Gladwin, Clare and

## happenings

### MOBILE FOOD PANTRIES:

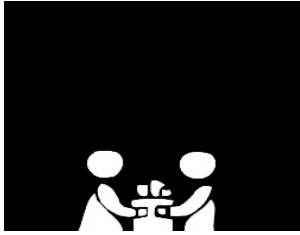
Aug 22, 2013 - North Midland Family Center

Sept 18, 2013 - West Midland Family Center

Oct 16, 2013 - United Steel Workers Bldg, James Savage Road

CROP WALK - Oct 6, 2013

THANKSGIVING BASKET COLLECTION - NOV 24, 2013



Midland County  
Emergency Food Pantry

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

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[www.midlandcountyefpn.org](http://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 Food Pantry**

at Coleman City Hall • 465-6961

### **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

*Anyone in Need please call 989-486-9393*

## EFPN ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

EFPN celebrated its 30th anniversary at Whiting Forest on April 8, 2013. Jim Ostler and Thayre Talcott were honored for their years of service as HELP pantry coordinators and Thayre Talcott as a past board president. Doug Koop, outgoing board president, was also recognized for his service.

