

Food Pantry Network News

Midland County Emergency Food Pantry Network

Our Vision: "Always Food in Every Home"



March 2015

EFPN Launches the "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. This year 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 an incentive to donors who contribute food and money to EFPN in March

and April. EFPN will receive a check 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 donated money we receive during this period. In 2014, we spent almost \$135,000 with the Food Bank for food purchased for our regular program as well as the BackPack Buddies Program. A credit would help us reduce this bill.

Our goal for this campaign is \$75,000 in food and money. Please consider giving at this time. Donations toward any of our programs will qualify for the campaign. Monetary donations may be sent to EFPN, P.O. Box 2521, Midland, MI 48641-2521. Food donations may be brought to any of our pantries or to our warehouse location at 503 S. Saginaw Rd. See page 4 of this newsletter for pantry locations and contact information. If you would like to leave a donation at the warehouse, please call 989-486-9393 to arrange a time for delivery. Check www.midlandcountyefpn.org, to watch our progress towards this goal.

Reflections

* A construction worker was diagnosed with cancer and because he could not lift, he had to leave his job. He had to be encouraged to take enough food for himself.

* An elderly woman was told she needed 3 more rounds of unexpected chemotherapy. She was despondent and out of food and she thought it would take a long time to get an appointment. We were able to help her the same day with food and a nutritional supplement voucher. She shared how she had been worrying about her food situation but now she had no more concerns about food.

* A family lost their home to foreclosure and found a new place to live. They needed some "start up food" for their new home.

How Your Sharing Tree Red Tag Donations Made a Difference

Our EFPN coordinator was about to begin her vacation for the Christmas holidays. Her phone rang as she was about to leave. She decided to answer the phone. It was a lady who had custody of her grandchildren and she needed food. Our coordinator set her up to receive food at one of our pantries. Our coordinator sensed that something else was going on. The grandmother finally said that she had no money to buy presents for her grandchildren. The coordinator knew the pantry this lady was being sent to had Sharing Tree gift cards to a local "one stop" store. Our coordinator was also going to ask the pantry to give her a Sharing Tree gift card to a local fast food restaurant so she could take her grandchildren for a treat. Some of the EFPN requests are for gift cards for grocery stores as well as restaurant gift cards. At the end of the conversation both the grandmother and our coordinator were in tears.

It was Christmas Eve and one of our pantries asked to help four families instead of the usual five families so volunteers could get home for Christmas Eve. Because of demand they were assigned the fifth family. It was a family of eight and they had no food on Christmas Eve. They received their food and the volunteers loaded them up with Sharing Tree Gifts that EFPN had requested - gift bags of personal care products, popcorn and hot chocolate. They were very thankful to receive food and gifts.

In both these stories our coordinator and volunteers got to be Santa for these families. The real Santas are the donors. EFPN tags for the Sharing Tree are the red tags. These red tags are not for specific people but are for the typical recipients that we see at our food pantries. We and our recipients appreciate very much the people who took these tags and were so generous. We are also very grateful to the United Way Sharing Tree Program for all their effort in making a difference in the two families we mentioned and many others.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

* A school child made survivor bracelets to sell at his school's craft fair. He donated the proceeds of \$120 to the Backpack Buddies Program. This funded about 1.7 children's backpacks for the school year.

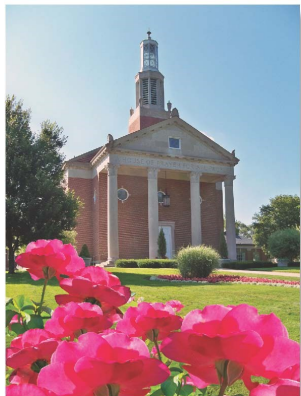
* In 2014: EFPN distributed over 18,000 items/month through our 8 pantries. About 45% of our outgoing items were donated. About 35% were purchased from the Food Bank and the remaining items were purchased at local stores.

Our Pantries

EFPN has eight pantries located throughout Midland County. This is the first in a series of articles highlighting each of our pantries.

Spotlight on the HELP Pantry at Memorial Presbyterian Church

(Hunger Eased Through Loving Persons)



In 1982, the Reverend Kirk A. Hudson made a request to the Board of Deacons for a few shelves of groceries in his office to give to people he counseled that were in need of food. From this humble beginning, the HELP (Hunger Eased through Loving Persons) Food Pantry grew to become one of the strongest missions in Memorial Presbyterian Church (MPC). Marcia Leach, from the Deacons Outreach Committee, aided by Tammy Hayhoe, followed up on Rev. Hudson's idea to determine the extent of the need for food assistance in our community. This resulted in the development of a questionnaire and an extensive survey by teams of college students in the summer of 1982, funded as an Advanced Concepts project. The larger vision coming from this survey was a network of pantries that was needed in various parts of the county. Jean Kellom from MPC joined the group of volunteers and was instrumental in the organization of pantries called Midland County Emergency Food Pantry Network, or EFPN. She was the Executive Director for many years, retiring in 2012.

The first pantry at Memorial Presbyterian Church was established in a small room under the stage of the Assembly Room. Members of the congregation donated food items to stock the shelves. As people in need heard about the food pantry and made contact with the church, volunteers would put up food for these people. Don Beshgetoor was the HELP coordinator for 12 years or more. As the pantry outgrew its home under the Assembly Room, he spearheaded the move to the pantry's present location on the lower level. This provided easy access for loading and unloading food items with an elevator close by and privacy for the clients, which for some was important. When Don retired from the food pantry, Jim Ostler and Thayre Talcott took over the day-to-day responsibilities and introduced a "you-pick" system, whereby clients were allowed to choose a week's worth of food. HELP was the first EFPN pantry to offer "you pick", and it was well received by both the clients and volunteers.

HELP serves four to five families a day, five days a week. 300-400 items are distributed each day the food pantry is open. Food items are purchased locally or from the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, plus HELP receives donations from other churches, schools, organizations, businesses and individuals. HELP serves almost 42% of the clients of EFPN. A lot of those in poverty in the city of Midland live around MPC. Clients sometimes walk or bicycle to the pantry.

In addition to the regular pantry program, HELP provides emergency boxes containing enough food for a couple days and are available when the office or pantry is closed, birthday kits for clients celebrating a family birthday, and the Elderly Assistance Program which provides a monthly box of food for seniors designated by the Department of Human Services.

In 2012, Vic Chichester and Doug VanHala became the pantry coordinators. Carol Macartney is the volunteer coordinator. There are about 65 volunteers from many different churches that help to run the pantry.

The members of MPC have been very generous in their financial support of HELP. In addition, an endowment fund established in memory of Ruth M. Frevel helps sustain HELP. The pantry also receives community-wide financial support through the EFPN network.

The quiet mentoring and guidance of the Reverend Wally Mayton helps MPC carry on this vital ministry begun more than 30 years ago, providing a much needed mission in MPC's own backyard.



Reminder on Additional Ways to Support EFPN

Register your Kroger Card thru the Kroger Rewards Program to support EFPN. Registration details are on our website www.midlandcountyefpn.org or call our office at 989-486-9393.

Shop at Amazon Smile (<http://smile.amazon.com>) when making purchases from Amazon and Amazon will donate .5% of your purchase price of eligible products to EFPN. Link your Amazon account to the charity Midland County Emergency Food Pantry Network. Check the EFPN website for further details or call our office at 989-486-9393.

We also now accept **online donations** through our website, www.midlandcountyefpn.org.

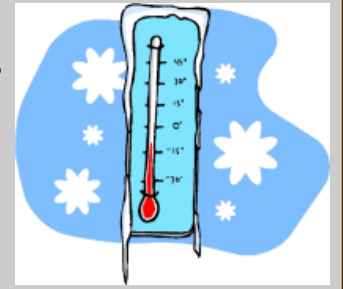
"Stamp Out Hunger" Postal Drive, Saturday, May 9

Heat or Eat?



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 9. This is the largest single day food drive in the country. Helping "Stamp out Hunger" is as easy as checking your mailbox. 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 all Midland County pantries. Besides EFPN, food will go to Salvation Army, Caregiving Network, Open Door and various other pantries. This is the last major food drive to help stock pantry shelves before the summer

These freezing winter months force millions of Americans to make a tough choice: To heat their home or feed their families. According to a Feeding America research study, "Hunger in America 2014", 69% of people served by Feeding America's network of food banks, that includes the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan and EFPN, have had to choose between buying food or paying utility bills. Our coordinator always tell our clients to pay their other bills because we have food to give them. Thanks to the generosity of our donors and the great work of our volunteers we have been able to meet the needs for food.



demand. Pantries experience increased demands in the summer because children are home. The children are no longer receiving their reduced price lunches or weekend food backpacks. We are very grateful to our local postal workers for participating in this event. Let us see if we can surpass last year's total of 30,479 lbs. of food collected in Midland County.

Thank You *Local Businesses and Organizations for Recent Food and Fund Raising Events!*

Blessed Sacrament Faith Formation

Chestnut Hill 3rd Grade
Chippewa Nature Center
Culver's

DaVita Dialysis

Dow Chemical CCLG
Dow High School Music Boosters

Girl Scout Troop 50092
Girl Scout Troop 50754

LaLonde's Market

Men of Music

Midland Community Tennis Center

Midland Kiwanis Foundation

Midland Noon Rotary
Psi Iota Xi

Senior Citizens of the Thumb

Spherion Staffing
St. Brigid Youth Public Speaking Group

Tata-Roche Contract

Trish & Toni House

Valley Society of Human Resources

Xi Alpha Alpha



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 one day event is on Tuesday, May 5. Many of the nonprofits in Midland County will be part of this event. All money collected on this day will go into the nonprofit's endowment fund. On May 5, 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. Last year EFPN received a \$200 bonus for having the most new donors to an endowment.

More Fresh Produce Needed

EFPN would like to provide more fresh produce to our recipients. One of the EFPN 2015 goals is to provide some fruit to children in our Backpack Buddies Program. We are looking at purchasing oranges, apples or pears.



Our regular pantries sometimes get fresh produce from the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan and Hidden Harvest. We also have received produce from the gardens at Assumption Catholic Church and Holy Family Episcopal Church as well as the heirloom garden at the Chippewa Nature Center and individual growers. Holy Family is looking for volunteers to help them in the garden this year. Check their website, www.holyfamily-episcopalchurch.org for details on how you can help.

This is a great project for families and groups. If you grow vegetables, consider planting an extra row and donating it to our pantries.

EFPN Annual Meeting



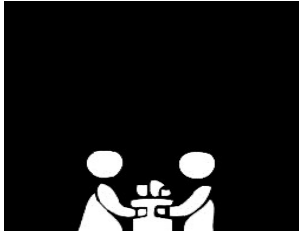
The EFPN annual meeting will be on Monday, April 13 at Whiting Forest, 2303 Eastman Ave.

Social hour is at 5:30 pm, dinner at 6:00 pm and meeting at 7:00 pm. Catering is by Simple But Elegant. Cost of the dinner is \$18.00 and is payable at the door.

You are welcome to come to the dinner and meeting or meeting only. You may pay the night of the event. We will also be honoring Harry Smith, who is retiring from the board and who was one of the original founders of EFPN.

RSVP to Jessica Robison, 989-948-9345 or robison.jessica1@gmail.com by Thursday, April 2.

This event is a time for volunteers and supporters to come together to acknowledge another year of making a difference in the lives of others.



Midland County
Emergency Food Pantry

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

www.midlandcountyeftp.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*

Volunteer Opportunities with EFPN

Even though EFPN has almost 500 volunteers, we still can use more. Some special needs we have at this point:

Drivers Needed to Deliver Food to Seniors

Senior Services has determined some of their low income home-bound clients may need food delivered to their homes. They anticipate around 5-10 clients would need this service. We are in need of volunteer drivers. The food would need to be picked up and delivered on the third Thursday of the month.

Co-coordinator for EFPN Mobile Pantries

EFPN holds approximately 7-8 mobile pantries/year at various sites in Midland County. The volunteer will help ensure necessary supplies get to the site, help oversee the running of the mobile pantry and help transport items back to storage. Volunteer would be needed from 8:30 am - 3:30 pm.

Pantry Workers

Our pantries and mobile pantries can always use more volunteers. Pantry hours vary and you can work as often or as little as you want. We sponsor around 7 mobile pantries per year.

Warehouse Volunteers

EFPN established a warehouse last year. Volunteers are needed to meet the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan truck every other Tuesday at 11:30 am and/or the Hidden Harvest truck every Thursday at 10:00 am.

Photographer

EFPN needs someone to take pictures at some of our events, pantries, or at some of our programs such as BackPack Buddies.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities, please call our office at 989-486-9393.