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May 2021

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

PANTRIES ON WHEELS

In this issue of "Scoop", you will learn about some volunteers at one of our Mobile Pantry Programs in Beaver Dam. For those who are not familiar with what mobile pantries are, they essentially are "pantries on wheels" designed to fill-in gaps where there might not be a permanent pantry nearby, or during the pandemic, where we needed to quickly expand our capacity to meet the spike in need.

Here's a glimpse of how important the Mobile Pantry Program is to our hunger-relief efforts:

- About ¼ of all the food we distribute goes out through mobile pantries
- Prior to the pandemic we had 28 mobile pantries each month; during some parts of the pandemic we held more than 80 mobile pantries per month, and we're currently operating around 50 per month
- Since April 2020, almost 80,000 households have been served by one of our mobile pantries

Mobile pantries have always been a flexible way to provide food resources, and the pandemic caused us to push the limits of that flexibility. **"Adapt" has been the key word for the past year**, not just in the number of mobile pantries, or the locations we serve, but also by reinventing them as no-contact drive-up distributions until we can resume the park and walk-up shopping method. Additionally, we've added smaller neighborhood pop-ups,



and mobile pantries at school sites where school pantries aren't able to operate while some schools were closed.

As the pandemic subsides and we head into a recovery phase, our mobile pantries – in addition to our amazing network of partner agencies – will continue to serve families in all 16 of our counties with fresh produce, dairy, proteins, and other staple items.

None of the work we do, like our Mobile Pantry Program, is possible without your generosity. **Thank you for continuing to support us as we work to help those whose lives are changed by the food resources we provide.**

Michelle



Adopt
a DAIRY
COW

GiveDairy.com

For most, milk is a delicious and important part of a healthy diet. Unfortunately, for those struggling with hunger milk can be difficult to get because it is rarely donated to the food banks and food pantries they rely on to meet their food needs.

During June Dairy Month you can provide milk to those facing hunger when you Adopt-A-Dairy-Cow. Your "adoption" provides funds that we will use to purchase milk from local dairy producers. Join us this June to give the gift of milk!

2021 Sponsors:



IMPACT: HELP AT 2 A.M.

It's 2 a.m. and Sandy Kahlhammer – along with her dog Marley – is the first in line for a mobile food pantry distribution that is scheduled to begin at 8 a.m. in the parking lot of Moraine Park Technical College in Beaver Dam. The next car won't get there for another four hours!

When asked why she was there so early, her answer was simple, "My husband died last year, I wasn't sleepy, and I didn't have anything else to do." So, she packed up her faithful companion, tossed an extra blanket in the car, and started her hour-long drive to Beaver Dam.

During our conversation her husband, Roger was always on top of Sandy's mind. They met in Port Washington on Thanksgiving Day. From the very beginning they were "inseparable." Less than six months later they were married. "We just knew," Sandy said, "we were together ALL the time." During their 53-year marriage Roger worked for a manufacturing company and Sandy worked various jobs at places like the local canning factory, a flower shop, and a daycare. With three kids, money was tight and they relied on buying expired food from "Bent & Dent" stores to make ends meet.

But struggle was nothing new to Sandy. Growing up she was the eldest of six kids and taking care of her siblings was one of her jobs. "**It was rough going.** I grew up with all second-hand clothes. I didn't know what it was like to have a new dress, or new clothes. In the Summertime we had a very big garden that gave us a lot of food."



One day, just before Mother's Day of 2020 Sandy's life changed. Roger was walking into the house, fell backward, and broke his arm. While at the hospital they discovered that an earlier bout with cancer had caused him to have a hole in the back of his throat. Days later – on Mother's Day – Roger passed unexpectedly.

Today Sandy lives in a small rural town in central Wisconsin with her youngest daughter and a young man she's helping by providing a roof over his head.

Struggle is still no stranger to Sandy.

Her Social Security and small pension from Roger's job leave little extra in the coffers at the end of the month. But, thanks to monthly visits to Second Harvest's mobile food pantry, she not only has food, she has purpose.

"I feel like I've got a purpose in life again," said Sandy. "What I can't use, I find someone who can use it. We get some very good food, nothing goes to waste. A lot of people by me are in their 80s, they don't drive anymore, so I do it for them. I don't know what they would do if they didn't get this food. It would be a lot harder for me and a lot of people (without this mobile)."

Thanks to Second Harvest supporters, thousands of people just like Sandy are being helped by our Mobile Pantry Program every month...even if they arrive a little later than 2 a.m.

IMPACT: WATER LOGGED

On December 23, 2020 the 375 residents of the Village of La Valle learned that there were unsafe levels of benzene - a chemical found in gasoline and used when making plastics - in their only well. Within 24 hours the Village had hundreds of bottles of water they purchased available for its residents. Several Village Board members, including Village President Rocky Sobeck, even delivered water to



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IMPACT: HELPING IS PERSONAL

For the Tri-Coordinator of the Beaver Dam Mobile Pantry, helping those facing hunger is personal.

“I grew up on welfare when I was younger,” said Lana Raffensperger. “This is my way of giving back to the community and helping people who can’t get food, like when I was younger.”

For Robert Krist, it’s about repaying the help that was given to him. “I became disabled a few years ago with multiple injuries and back issues. I had people helping me, so I found something that I can give back. Time.”

And for Sue Benter it’s about making a difference. “They’re so grateful for the help. That’s the biggest takeaway. **They really need it and are very thankful, especially the elderly.** So that’s why I do it.”

The Mobile Pantry Program directly serves participants in areas of high need to supplement other hunger-relief agencies in that area. Through a Mobile Pantry, a truckload of food is distributed to participants in pre-packed boxes. Each box contains staples like pasta, bread, and rice along with fresh fruit and vegetables.

Lana, Robert, and Sue arrive about two hours before the scheduled beginning of the food distribution to get things setup, with another 30 volunteers trickling in over the next hour. Together, they will guide more than 300 cars through a maze that wraps around a building and ends up in a side parking lot.

Sue directs the volunteers stationed at pallets of food to place boxes and food bags in the trunks of cars. “It makes me feel like we’re doing what we need to help them. **All of us as volunteers, Second**



From left to right, Sue Benter, Robert Krist, and Lana Raffensperger

Harvest bringing in food...it all has to work together. People appreciate it!”

“There’s a need - a tremendous need. It’s good to see people come in and get food that they need,” says Robert.

“I’ve heard stories that if it wasn’t for us that they wouldn’t have anything to eat. If you need it, we’re here for you,” adds Lana.

Within an hour and a half, the food and the line of cars waiting was gone.

Thank you Lana, Robert, Sue, and all the fantastic volunteers throughout our 16-county service area who are helping our neighbors stretch their limited budget to make ends meet.

If you would like to join the movement in ending hunger in our community, head to SecondHarvestMadison.org/Get-Involved

If you need additional support, visit SecondHarvestMadison.org/Find-Food for details on programs that can assist you and your family.

IMPACT: WATER LOGGED

residents who were unable to pick up their supply.

Second Harvest’s Food Resource Manager, Danielle Lawson, read about the water crisis in a local media outlet. After hearing their residents’ needs, Danielle reached out to Village officials to see if Second Harvest could help.

A week later Second Harvest had provided a month’s water supply (roughly 11,000 pounds), saving the Village hundreds of dollars.

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“We’re very grateful. We’re not a Village with a lot of revenue. Since the flood, we’ve lost businesses. Getting a donation of water was greatly appreciated,” said Sobeck.

Assisting families and communities in times of need is an essential part of our mission. We are proud to be part of the effort to help our friends and neighbors.