

YOU HELP BRING FOOD AND HOPE TO A COMMUNITY IN NEED

There's something unique about the town of Spencer, Oklahoma. With just under 4,000 residents – nearly one-fifth of whom live below the poverty line – you might expect to find a lot of sad and lonely people. But residents find encouragement, unity and much more through one special initiative – the Community Garden.

Rev. Floyd Jamison, 65, tends the Community Garden in Spencer with the help of several dedicated volunteers. Because of your gifts to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, dozens of Community Gardens are providing fresh produce to those in need all over central and western Oklahoma. Since there isn't a grocery store in Spencer and many of the residents can't afford to buy enough

food, Floyd says the garden is a big help to his neighbors.

“I see such a great need,” he says.

Floyd also says many families in his community are made up of grandchildren being raised by their grandparents. Often they can't afford to provide the food the children need to grow and learn.

Isaac, Esther and their grandchildren are just one of the many



Isaac, Esther and their grandchildren

families who have experienced the positive impact of the Community Garden. The couple is raising their 13-year-old grandson and 7-year-old granddaughter, but with a small Social Security check as their only income, it's hard to make ends meet. In addition to worrying about how to take care of the grandchildren, Isaac is currently undergoing chemotherapy for cancer.

Isaac and Esther are so grateful that they can come to the Community Garden for fresh produce for themselves and their growing grandson and granddaughter.

“It helps all of us, the whole community,” says Isaac.

Esther says that not only do they appreciate the food, but the sense of community involvement that accompanies the experience.

“It teaches the kids the meaning of sharing and caring,” she says.

Your compassion for our hungry neighbors is changing lives, one community at a time.

“We appreciate the help you've given!” says Isaac gratefully.



Floyd Jamison



THE LINK

“Fighting Hunger... Feeding Hope”™

SUMMER 2007



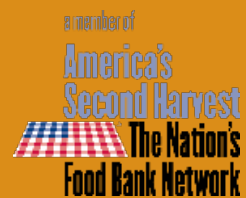
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 Executive Director: Rodney W. Bivens
 Editor: Shelley R. Haley
 Design by: Brad Cecil & Associates

Send your comments to Shelley R. Haley, Public Relations & Marketing Coordinator, shaley@regionalfoodbank.org.



The mission of the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma is to help the charitable community effectively feed people in need.

P.O. Box 270968
 Oklahoma City, OK 73137-0968
 (405) 972-1111



Your gifts are feeding hungry children this summer! See inside...

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FROM THE DIRECTOR



RODNEY W. BIVENS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friend,

Here in Oklahoma, kids are out of school for the summer and ready to take a break from the classroom and spend their days playing with friends and enjoying the warm weather.

But as you may know, not everyone in central and western Oklahoma looks forward to summer. This season is the hungriest time of the year for the families of children who depend on free and reduced-price meals at school. While schools are closed for the summer, many parents struggle to find another way to provide enough meals for their children.

Fortunately, because of your gifts to the Regional Food Bank, many of our partner agencies are able to provide food for hungry children during the summer. You can read about one of these special programs on the next page.

There are still many more who need our help. But because of your compassion, thousands of central and western Oklahomans have already experienced the transformative power of a full stomach.

A wise man once said, "If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion."

Your willingness to help those in need has changed countless lives. You have helped single mothers feed their children, struggling families get back on their feet, and senior citizens live healthier lives.

You have made thousands of people happy and hopeful by practicing compassion.

"If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion."



Children Have Full Stomachs Because of You

When a child is hungry, it's nearly impossible for him to concentrate on anything but his empty stomach. Studying and even playing with friends can take a backseat to thoughts of when he'll get to eat again.

The Presbyterian Urban Mission Kids Cafe is working hard to break the cycle of childhood hunger. For the past ten years, this Kids Cafe site has been serving nutritious after-school meals to more than 30 Oklahoma children each week. The site also stays open during the summer, serving breakfast, lunch and snacks to children at risk of going hungry when free and reduced-price school meals aren't available.

Director Peggy Garrett says the children who participate in her program are from low-income families and all of them are on the free and reduced-price school meal program.

"I don't know if they'd eat [at all] if it weren't for the Kids Cafe," she says.

In addition to receiving healthy meals and snacks, the children learn about the importance of good nutrition. They help prepare the meals each day and learn to grow produce in the Kids Cafe garden.

Peggy says the food makes a big difference in each child's life. They're able to concentrate more on homework during the school year, and in the summer it's a huge relief for them to have meals they can count on when the school cafeteria is closed.

Peggy shares the story of a single mother who has experienced this sense of relief. She is so grateful that she can send her 5-year-old and 8-year-old daughters to Kids Cafe while she works. It's hard to make ends meet with just one income, and she's very thankful that her children



Children eat healthy meals year-round at Presbyterian Urban Mission

can eat nutritious meals in a safe environment every day.

Thousands of children in our community are receiving the nourishment they need because of you. Your gifts to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma make it possible for agencies like Presbyterian Urban Mission to serve filling meals to hungry children during the summer and throughout the school year.

"Every dollar makes a difference in these children's lives," says Peggy.

Thank you for showing compassion for hungry children in our community.

Your Compassion Changes Lives

Summer can be the hungriest time of the year for many families in central and western Oklahoma. But because of your gifts to the Regional Food Bank, thousands of men, women and children will have full stomachs this summer. Every dollar you give becomes seven meals – THANK YOU!



WE'D LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING GROUPS FOR DOING THEIR PART TO HELP THEIR NEIGHBORS IN NEED:

KAPPA ALPHA THETA

Thank you to the Oklahoma City chapter of Kappa Alpha Theta Alumnae for its \$14,000 donation to the Food 4 Kids program and its additional three-year commitment to the program! This year's donation alone will allow the Food Bank to provide weekly backpacks to 121 elementary school children!

CHEFS' FEAST 2007

The Chefs' Feast 2007, *Road Trip – Drive out Hunger*, was a huge success, raising more than \$125,000 (net) to STOP hunger in Oklahoma. A record \$51,540 was raised during the "Fund-a-Child" portion of the evening! Thank you to the participating chefs, sponsors, volunteers, staff and guests for making the evening so spectacular!

PI BETA PHI FOUNDATION

The Pi Beta Phi Foundation of Oklahoma City donated \$4,000 to the Kids Cafe Library Fund. Thank you, Pi Beta Phi, for your generous gift!

MAGIC 104.1 KMGL AND NONNA'S EURO-AMERICAN RISTORANTE AND BAR

Thank you to Steve, Tara and the Magic Man (Jeff) of Magic 104.1 KMGL for auctioning off a New Orleans/Oklahoma City Hornets prize package on the morning show to benefit the Food Bank. Nonna's donated the prize, which included four floor seats to the final Hornets game of the season, an autographed jersey, an autographed basketball and an autographed pennant. The auction raised \$2,000 for the Food Bank. Thank you!

DEVON ENERGY YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD

Last year's team leader for Bishop McGuinness High School's Students Against Hunger food drive, Andrew Shaffer, was recently awarded the Devon Energy Youth Leadership Award. This prestigious honor included a \$500 check for his favorite charity, which he designated as the Food Bank. Thank you, Andrew, and congratulations on your award!

MAKE SURE TO SAVE THE DATE FOR THESE SPECIAL EVENTS!

NATIONAL HUNGER AWARENESS DAY

This grassroots movement to raise awareness about the solvable problem of hunger in America takes place on Tuesday, June 5th. Visit www.regionalfoodbank.org for more information.

HOPE'S HARVEST

This annual luncheon will be held from 12 – 1 p.m. on Thursday, November 1st at the Food Bank. The event is free to anyone who would like to learn more about how your gifts help to provide 48,000 meals per week to our neighbors in need.

TOURS OF THE FOOD BANK

If you would like to schedule a tour of the Food Bank, please contact Damon King at (405) 972-1111 x113 or by email at dking@regionalfoodbank.org.

You Give Hope in the Face of Despair

PROFILE

For years, Becky enjoyed a comfortable lifestyle in Minnesota with her husband and two children. She never could have imagined that one day she'd find herself living alone, worrying about how to buy groceries.

Becky's husband was injured in a car accident seven years ago. He was recovering well, but then passed away very suddenly. Becky was devastated by the loss. Since her children are grown and lived out of state, she wanted to move closer to some of her family. So she sold her house and moved to Yukon, Oklahoma, where her sister lives.

Because she had been receiving checks from her husband's pension fund, Becky wasn't worried about making ends meet in her new home. But when she received an unexpected notice in the mail that she wouldn't be receiving any more checks, she wasn't sure where to turn.

To compound her stress, Becky has been losing her hearing since she was in her 20s. Now at age 55, she's almost completely deaf. She says she's applied for all types of jobs but hasn't been hired because she's hearing-impaired. Her only income right now is from occasional babysitting, temporary jobs and selling dolls she makes by hand. She receives \$42 a month in food stamps, but she says it's very hard to make them last through the whole month.

Because of your gifts to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, Becky has a place to turn for the groceries she needs. The Manna Pantry, a Food Bank partner agency, provides nutritious food for families and individuals when they need them most.

"This really stretches it out!" she says.

She used to give regularly to charitable causes herself, and now Becky sees the other side of giving. She is so grateful for friends like you who make it possible for food pantries like this one to provide healthy food to those who need it.

"It may be hard to understand the difference you're making, but it has a huge impact," she says through tears of gratitude.

And above all, Becky says she is treated with dignity and respect at the Manna Pantry, which goes a long way in giving her hope for a better future.

You are helping transform lives by providing food for those in our community who need it most. Thank you for your compassion.



Becky takes home nutritious groceries from the Manna Pantry.

One Student Discovers Her Impact for Hunger Relief

It's Saturday afternoon in Norman. Most students at the University of Oklahoma are enjoying their weekend by watching television, playing video games or relishing the warm weather. But Leslie Moorehead, a 21-year-old journalism major at OU, can probably be found at the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma sorting boxes of food for those in need.

Leslie first volunteered at the Food Bank with her sorority as a service project and then started coming on her own. She had volunteered in other capacities as a high school student in Houston, Texas, but she says she never fully realized the difference she could make until her experience with the Food Bank.

"When I first went to the Food Bank, I felt as though I could make an impact," says Leslie.

Now Leslie comes to the Food Bank as often as she can to help pack and sort boxes of food for hungry central and western Oklahomans. She says it's especially gratifying to realize that thousands of children in the community will be fed because of her efforts, especially during the summer months.

"Just knowing that I can help to feed a child makes my life worthwhile," says Leslie, who hopes to teach overseas or in the Teach for America program after graduation. "Every child deserves the same chance at succeeding in life, and to be successful, one needs to be fed."

Leslie says her experience with volunteering at the Food Bank has really changed her perspective.

"Volunteering has helped me to look outside of myself," she says. "Now I know I really can make the world a better place."

And she encourages others to do the same.

"If you want to be a part of something bigger than yourself, volunteer your time," she says. "We can each offer

a small amount of aid, and when added together, that will make a huge difference."

One person can really make a difference. We are so grateful for the time, talent and efforts of Leslie and our many other dedicated volunteers!



Leslie sorts food boxes on a Saturday at the Food Bank.

Did you know...

...that without an estate plan, you have no say in how your assets are distributed? The courts will decide the distribution of any inheritance and, if necessary, will choose legal guardians for your children. An estate plan benefits anyone who owns anything. It can help you avoid probate, saving time, taxes and peace of mind.

The Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma can assist you with information about financial and estate planning tools. For more information, please call (405) 972-1111 x 113 or email plannedgiving@regionalfoodbank.org.