

holiday 2011

# seeds *of hope*



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**food bank**  
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**You Give the Gift of Hope  
to Hungry Kansans!**



**Brian Walker**  
PRESIDENT AND CEO

## SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER TO KANSANS IN NEED

Dear Friend,

The holiday season is such a special time of year. For many of us it means lots of get-togethers, time to reconnect with friends and family, and a special meal (or two!) with those we love.

But for those in need, the holidays can be stressful and heartbreaking. For hungry Kansans who have to choose between paying for housing and buying food, holiday meals might be missing altogether.

The [Kansas Food Bank](#) provides hope to so many across the state, and you are an important part of that. Nearly 32,600 Kansans – a third of whom are children – receive emergency food assistance each week through the Kansas Food Bank and our 530 hunger-relief partners spanning across 85 counties. Thanks to your support, this year we have distributed 10 million pounds of food to impoverished families, children, senior citizens, the homeless and the chronically ill. That’s 1 million pounds more than last year.

This holiday season as you celebrate with your family, we encourage you to also be mindful of those who are in need - those whose lives you’ve improved with your compassion throughout the year. In this issue of *Seeds of Hope*, you’ll read stories of those whose lives are made better, thanks to your generosity.

On behalf of Kansans at risk of hunger, I salute your giving spirit during the holidays and all throughout the year. I look forward to continuing our work together in the New Year to fight hunger in Wichita and rural Kansas.

Happy holidays!

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# THANKS TO YOU, CHILDREN HAVE FOOD DURING HOLIDAY BREAK

Bertha and her husband have three children, ages 11, 14 and 17, whom they love to pieces.

Bertha's husband has a job in construction, but his hours are very unpredictable, and so is their income. He's a hard-worker who's committed to providing for his family, so he does odd jobs – like picking up trash or painting – in order to make extra money.

Bertha does what she can to support the family, as well. But she's having a really hard time finding a good, steady job.

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**“Thank you very much for your help!”**

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Bertha says it's become very stressful to ensure her children have enough to eat. She's grateful to have found help at the Holy Savior God's Food Pantry, a [Kansas Food Bank](#) hunger-relief partner in Wichita.

“I don't have a job and we can't rely on my husband's job,” she explains. “I would cry without places like this.”

The food pantry, which was started in 1984, serves between 400 and 500 individuals and families each month.

Thanks to your generosity, 90 percent of the food distributed at the pantry comes from the Kansas Food Bank.

Bertha says the assistance helps fill the gap between what her family is able to buy on their own and what her children receive from the free lunch program at school. During the holiday break, Bertha



Bertha

says it's especially hard to provide those additional meals for her growing kids.

The family would go hungry without the nutritious groceries they get from the food pantry.

“Thank you very much for your help!” Bertha says gratefully. “It's a big help for us.”

# YOU'RE SPREADING JOY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!



You're feeding Kansas of all ages.



Kids can grow up strong and healthy thanks to you.



Families in need are grateful for your help.



Thank you for helping our hungry neighbors.



You're putting food on the table for Kansas families.

## Mobile Pantries: Observations from "Outside the Box"



This year has been one of growth and change for the [Kansas Food Bank](#). As we look to find the best possible ways to distribute food to underserved counties, we've had to move out of our pantry "box" and get creative.

One way we've done that is through Mobile Pantry Distributions. Mobile Pantries have been deployed in eight

counties since June, serving over 1,500 families in need. Mobile Pantries are an innovative way to serve a community that doesn't have a pantry or may have a pantry that's struggling and can't keep up with the demand.

It's apparent that this is a needed service when we come into a community on distribution days and hundreds of people are waiting in line. At a recent distribution, people were lined up a block and a half deep, waiting for us to get set up and start distributing. Being on the front line, we see how people are struggling. We see the desperation in their eyes and we know this is the right thing to do. We bring a little bit of hope to them and help provide the most basic of needs, food.

At our very first distribution a male high school student came up to us after going

through the line with his mother. He thanked us for helping his family and told us how much he appreciated being able to come and get food and that he was really going to enjoy the pizza. That was a defining moment in showing us just how important a mobile pantry is.

In each community where we operate a mobile pantry, we work with local people who we call our Community Champions. They help us find a location to distribute, they coordinate volunteers to assist at distribution and they help spread the word about our arrival. We couldn't do this without the dedicated community volunteers who so graciously give of their time to make this happen.

In addition to adding mobile pantries to our programs, we've added produce distributions as well. We do this through our existing pantry partners as well as

additional new agencies. A delivery is arranged, a distribution location mapped out and volunteers are secured. We then notify the local newspaper asking them to announce the distribution. Our produce partners open up and distribute what we have brought them. Most report running out of produce in less than two hours. The average amount of produce per distribution is between 2,000 and 3,000 pounds of product. Agencies are reporting great success with the produce distributions because fresh produce is something their clients often will not buy at the grocery store because of cost.

Of course we couldn't possibly have mobile pantries or produce distributions without the support of you, our generous friends and partners. Thank you for helping the [Kansas Food Bank](#) meet the growing need for food in our communities!

## Thank you, Cargill!

**Feed your family. Help feed another.**

Your purchase of a Honeysuckle White® turkey supports our \$250,000 donation to Feeding America®. That's enough to feed two million people, like the Scotts.

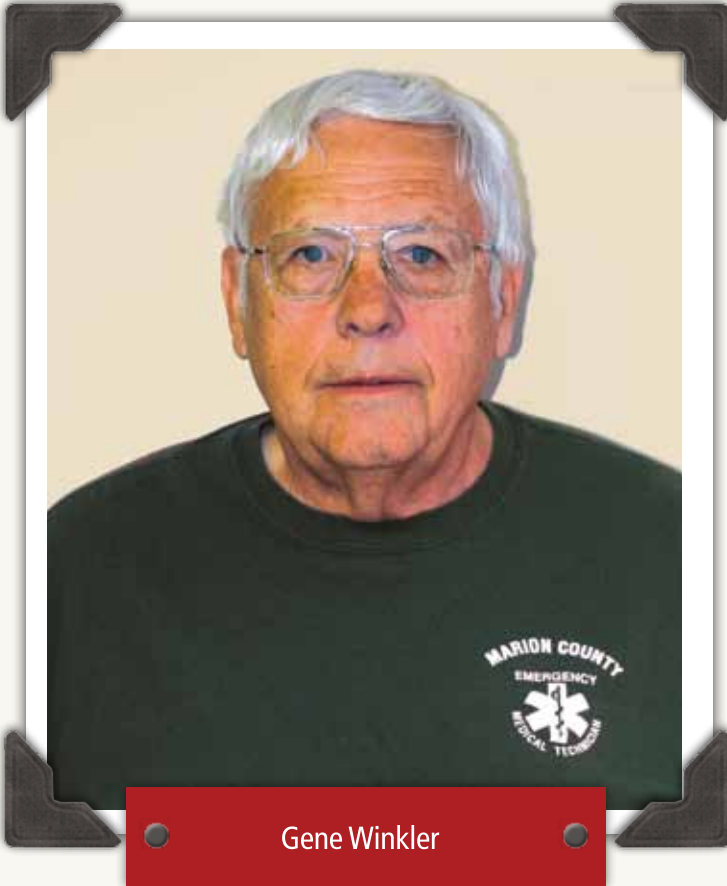
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Buy a turkey, help feed a family in need.

# A DEDICATED COMMUNITY SERVANT



Gene Winkler

Gene Winkler brings new meaning to the term 'active' retiree. The 69-year-old stays incredibly busy volunteering with several organizations. He still has a hand in his video production business in downtown Marion. And, Gene continues to work as a volunteer EMT where he's dedicated his time and talents for the last 39 years.

If you'd like to volunteer at the Kansas Food Bank, contact Larry Gunkel at [lgunkel@kansasfoodbank.org](mailto:lgunkel@kansasfoodbank.org).

Given his go-getter attitude it's not surprising that Gene jumped all over the chance to coordinate the [Kansas Food Bank](#)'s first-ever rural mobile pantry effort in his hometown of Marion. A mobile pantry is a Food Bank truck that delivers food directly to people in need, rather than through a hunger-relief

agency like a food pantry.

Gene coordinated all of the logistics to get a food truck from Wichita to Marion. He assembled a crew to help distribute the food. And, Gene found a local church that was willing to donate parking space from which to hand out the supplies.

The inaugural mobile pantry was a huge success - more than 15,000 pounds of food was distributed to 224 families in need.

"We are lucky to have so many great volunteers here in Marion," he shares humbly. "If we didn't have more caring people that donate time and money, this mobile pantry would not have happened."

Gene continues to help carry out the Kansas Food Bank mission by making monthly trips to the Food Bank to pick up food to feed Marion residents in need.

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**“This (mobile pantry) has helped a lot of families that don't have anywhere else to go for assistance.”**

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"This (mobile pantry) has helped a lot of families that do not have anywhere else to go for assistance," Gene says. "When I run into children that thank us for bringing them food, it's all worth it," he says with a smile.

We're so grateful to Gene and everyone involved in the mobile pantry effort. Mobile pantries are a quick and easy way for us to extend our reach to counties that are underserved and to get food to people in need.

# YOU'VE HELPED THIS FAMILY GET BACK ON ITS FEET

For the first time in a long time, Keisha and her family have many reasons to celebrate this holiday season.

The mother of three is expecting a baby in December. Keisha, who works hard to create a better future for her family, is just weeks away from finishing a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program so she can get a good job to support her family.

Another piece of good news – Keisha's husband is working again. And his company will soon send him back to school for more training that will lead to a salary increase.

It looks like the holidays will be a little brighter for Keisha and her family this year. But things weren't always going so well for them.

For a while, Keisha and her husband found it hard to make ends meet – to pay the rent and bills and still have money to feed their family. In order to make it through, they relied on help from family members and a [Kansas Food Bank](#) hunger-relief partner in Hugoton, Kansas called Project Hope.

Thanks to your support, which allows Project Hope to provide food to families in need, Keisha and her family were able to get through the difficult days.

"Project Hope has helped me, my family, and my friends so much," Keisha says with a grateful heart. To you, she adds, "Thank you so much. This helps our community so much."

Keisha is committed to giving back to her community however she can, because she's grateful for all she's received. She often donates her children's clothes back to Project Hope, and she volunteers some of her time to help out as well.

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“Thank you  
so much.”

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Keisha with her  
youngest daughter

On behalf of thousands of other families like Keisha's who will have a better holiday season thanks to your generosity, the Kansas Food Bank extends our deepest gratitude.

# YOUR COMPASSION HELPS FAMILIES PUT FOOD ON THE TABLE



Crystal, a single mom of three children, moved to Wichita four years ago. She was drawn to the community because of the low cost of living. But, even Wichita's affordability isn't enough to offset Crystal's limited budget, and she struggles to feed her family.

Crystal's income is limited to a small amount of child support and some supplemental assistance. She's so grateful for what she receives, but it barely covers rent, bills and food for two weeks of every month.

"The last week of the month is really hard," says Crystal.

Thankfully, Crystal has found help at Catholic Charities, a [Kansas Food Bank](#) hunger-relief partner in Wichita. She says without their assistance – made possible in part because of your generosity – she wouldn't be able to afford to keep her family fed and clothed.

"I come to the food pantry so my kids can have 'luxuries' like shoes," Crystal says with eyes full of gratitude.

The Catholic Charities food pantry serves thousands of individuals in need each month. Thanks to the compassion of friends like you, they're able to distribute enough food – bread, meat, produce, peanut butter, canned soup and cereal – to last each person three days.

Crystal says it puts her mind at ease to know her kids won't go hungry, especially during the holidays.

“I'm so grateful.””

"It's a huge stress relief knowing that I don't have to worry about food," she says. "I can't stand to see my kids go hungry."

You're giving Crystal and her family a much-needed helping hand and elevating their spirits during the holidays. Thank you for sharing your compassion with hungry neighbors in need.

"There are a lot of people who need help," says Crystal. I appreciate you a lot. I'm so grateful...this is needed!"



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[www.kansasfoodbank.org](http://www.kansasfoodbank.org)



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