SEPTEMBER BEGINS TRANSITION TIME

September days are the beginning of a transition for many households. Kids have now returned to school, maybe for a month or so depending on where they live. The fees associated with getting kids in school hit low-income families particularly hard. This is a time of additional challenges unique to this time of year. Backyard gardens have probably started to get pretty thin except for late vegetables. Many people are starting to plan for fall activities which include getting the house ready for bad weather coming all too soon. Whether someone has adequate resources or not, changes will be happening for all of us.

Our food bank is no exception to this seasonal effect. We will be working to implement school-based feeding assistance programs with partners who have stepped up to help address this circumstance in their communities. Volunteer programs for students to come to our warehouse to help get food ready to distribute kick into high gear; love those students! We couldn’t do it without them. Supplies of local produce are beginning to dwindle. We must look farther away from home to try and secure this precious, more expensive commodity.

I personally love this time of year. June and October are probably my two favorite months. I love the outdoors. For me, June represents the new beginning of growth and beauty at its peak. October represents a time for wrapping up the season of growth with new anticipation as I finalize another year and nature changes everything right in front of me.

Many who don’t get to experience the calm offered by nature can only think about overcoming the next obstacle to feed their families. We need to share what we can and provide some renewed hope so they can also look forward to life without crisis.

Have a great season,

Tim Kean
President & CEO
It’s a whole different world if you have never been affected by hunger in your community, according to Carly Nichols, director of volunteers for Community & Family Services (CFS).

The Community & Family Center is the largest food pantry in Jay County, serving 350-400 families every month. The size of one’s family determines how much food they receive, but according to Carly, no one leaves CFS without a cart full of food.

“If people came to the food pantry I think they would really see and be touched by the widespread problem that is huge in this country. Even though CFS can’t handle everything, we can still try and make sure individuals in Jay County are not hungry,” Carly said.

The pantry is very similar to shopping at a store. Volunteers walk the guests through the pantry and help them select each item.

For the past four years, she has been encouraging people to not just seek help at Jay County’s biggest food pantry, but also volunteer to help others.

Carly has seen the volunteers come through and really band together to help make a difference.

“When the volunteers all get together everybody jokes around and it becomes a brother-sister feeling.” Tony Philpott, longtime volunteer said. “We all just get along and we know we all have the same motivation and purpose: to help the people coming in here and serve them in any way we can.”

Tony continues to dedicate his time because the pantry is well organized. “It seems small to some people but to the individuals going through, it’s big.” Tony said. “It gives them dignity.”

In addition to the food pantry, CFS has a thrift shop available for clients and residents of Jay County to utilize. The thrift shop sells household items for half the retail value of items at Walmart. Plus everything is donated. However, no food is sold in the thrift shop.

Both the pantry and the thrift shop are open from 9 a.m. to noon, Tuesday-Thursday, in Portland. Those seeking food assistance come once every 30 days. However, people can stop in the thrift shop as often as they wish.

For more information about the food pantry and/or thrift stop, please contact Carly Nichols at 260-729-9318.

Tony Philpott faced challenges that would change his life forever in 2006. He suffered from a heart attack, leaving him disabled and forcing him to be on a fixed income through Social Security.

Tony found it challenging to ask for help. Finally, getting the courage, Tony put his pride aside a year later and visited the local food pantry, Community and Family Services (CFS) in Portland, Indiana.

“There were months that I survived by eating one meal a day. I thought the food pantry was just for people that did not have any money. To my surprise they helped me,” said Tony.

He had no idea that CFS would be so accommodating. They asked him what he needed and not necessarily what he wanted. Tony will never forget how much CFS helped him.

“I pictured walking in and someone just handing me a box of food, with a block of cheese and a gallon of milk. I had no idea it would be so welcoming,” Tony said.

I still get the same feeling of acceptance after four years of being a CFS client.

Some people may feel that asking for help is an embarrassment or they may be scared. Individuals can just ask for help, or explore the options to see what their community has to offer. Most people would be surprised by the number of ways that organizations in their community would be willing to help.
The Barclays

A compassionate heart with a focus on ending hunger has always been Nan Barclay’s adamant belief. “I am my brother’s keeper and everyone should have the right to be fed. In this country how do we not feed our children and families who are hungry? This is inexcusable,” Nan said.

John and Nan Barclay have been volunteering at Park Place Food Pantry for more than a decade. John, the first of the two to volunteer at the food pantry, began to volunteer shortly after his retirement. He had no prior food pantry experience, but he knew that Park Place was a good place to put his extra time after his retirement.

“When I first started volunteering the pantry was housed in the church and three years ago it moved into the community center,” said John.

Nan also became involved after her retirement. She would listen to John’s stories, and she knew she wanted to be a part of the food pantry because they needed help.

Moving to the Park Place Community Center has been one of the biggest changes the Barclays have experienced throughout the years of volunteering. This allowed the pantry to accommodate more food and feed more people reasonably and efficiently.

When most individuals volunteer at a food pantry for the first time, they are amazed at the scope of need. They have never realized how many people need help.

However, Nan has always been aware of the importance of food pantries since she’s a retired social worker. She took clients to food pantries and dealt with elderly women who did not always have enough food to last until the end of the month. As a social worker, Nan cared deeply about an individual’s well-being and became concerned about a couple of clients. “I would ask if I could look in their cupboards. They didn’t want to say no, but they were embarrassed. When I opened the cupboards I would find two cans of soup,” Nan said. “That was the first time I realized that anyone could have food insecurities.”

After nearly a decade of volunteering they still get the same feeling each week as they did the very first time they volunteered. They always feel humbled and grateful for the things they have, and they also feel that the pantry is helping the community. Although it still doesn’t meet the food needs of individuals they serve by any stretch of the imagination, it still helps, according to the Barclays.

Every week the two share with one another about how it’s one of the happiest places to be.

“We serve with gratefulness and the neighbors come with gratefulness. Gratefulness brings out the good in people,” Nan said.

She is always left in shock when the neighbors (individuals they serve) call one another once they see what the pantry has available for that week.

“‘The neighbors really appreciate and care about each other. It really shows in the winter when someone may have extra space in their vehicle and gives someone a ride,” said John.

The Barclays love to volunteer at Park Place. The idea of giving back leaves them with great satisfaction. More than half of the volunteers are retired which gives the Barclays the opportunity to work with individuals who have common interests. They love working with such uplifting people who enjoy what they are doing.

“We all encourage one another and care about one another,” said John.

“Joe Womack, our leader, is phenomenal and he leads by example. He would not ask anybody to do anything that he would not do himself,” said Nan. “He is very humble and hardworking.”

Not only do the Barclays volunteer at the church’s food pantry, they also worship at Park Place Church of God which is a major factor in why they choose to volunteer there. It is also an opportunity to work with people who attend church with them, and they get to know their peers better on a different level and setting.

“Our church is very servant-oriented and we see the community. We want to be a part of the community and the food pantry is just one example of the outcomes,” said Nan.

This volunteerism has left an impact on their children as well. The Barclays’ children also volunteer at food pantries at their churches and in their communities.

The Barclays would like for everyone to be sensitive about the hunger needs in the community and the world. According to them, a lot of people have never given themselves the opportunity to think about hunger. If they did, they may volunteer and even provide resources.
The Midas Drive Out Hunger campaign is designed to help fight hunger in every corner of the country. Jack Surface has been the owner of Muncie Midas for more than 34 years. He is very passionate about the Drive Out Hunger campaign and about alleviating hunger. He was first involved by participating in Old National Bank’s “100 Men Who Cook” annual fundraiser, and Second Harvest was honored to be the recipient of the annual fundraiser in 2013.

Jack had an extremely positive reaction to this campaign because he wants to be involved and make a difference in the community. The Midas store in Muncie has raised funding for 2,832 meals for people in need so far.

Midas has a fun game for their customers during this campaign. If a customer donates $1, they can spin a wheel and possibly win a variety of discounts at Midas. A food donation bin is located in the customer waiting area for those who wish to contribute food items. All donations (food and monetary) will go to Second Harvest Food Bank.

Besides the Midas store in Muncie located at 1901 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. there is one in Anderson, located at 2208 East 8th St.

Visit the closest store near you to help Midas Drive Out Hunger benefiting Second Harvest Food Bank.

DIRECTIONS TO SECOND HARVEST

A. Coming from Riggin Road in Muncie, go North on Old SR 3. Prepare to make a left turn between the guard rails before the overpass. Watch for the Second Harvest sign 1/2 mile north.

B. There is no entrance from US 35/67/3 although you will see our complex as you drive by. Exit toward BSU and take the first right. Look for our sign.

Take the road around to the site. The entrance is located in the back of the complex in Building #4.