

# foodCONNECTION

SPRING 2020



## A Hit to the Heartland and Home

Bailey and her husband had just bought a house. Her 7-year-old son was in a good school, and Bailey is on track to graduate in December with a bachelor's degree in Accounting. **They were feeling like their life was going well – until coronavirus hit the Heartland. Within a couple of weeks, everything changed.**

The company where her husband worked for the past three years laid off about a third of their workforce, and Bailey's part-time job as a gymnastics instructor ended because "you can't very well help kids with gymnastics from far away." Her son's school has closed, perhaps for the rest of the school year.

"We haven't even made our first house payment yet, and all this happened," she said. "We're kind of like, 'Well, we've closed and moved. We'll just have to make it work.'"

Because of their situation, Bailey visited a Covid-19 Response Mobile food distribution for the first time recently.

**"They were very efficient," she said of the volunteers. "I pulled up, and maybe 10 minutes later we were through the line and ready to go back home. Everything they put in the box were things that we would eat."**

Especially the box of Paw Patrol gummy snacks. The Paw Patrol cartoon is her son's favorite. He said, "Mom, they must have known I was coming," Bailey said.

**Bailey's family is one of many newly in need since the Covid-19 outbreak forced temporary layoffs at businesses throughout southeast Missouri.**

**If you would like to help us feed the many families like Bailey's, please donate online or mail a check to PO Box 190, Sikeston, MO 63801. Please flag your donation for Covid-19 Response.**

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**Mission**

To end hunger and leverage the power of food to build healthy communities.

**Special Thanks to  
These Donors**

Missouri Foundation for Health	\$198,720
Tyson Foods	\$52,500
Feeding America	\$50,000
Midwest Sterilization Co. Inc.	\$15,000
Drury Southwest	\$10,000
Kroger, Poplar Bluff	\$3,000
Walmart, Sikeston	\$2,000
PepsiCo	\$1,689
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**When It Comes to Disasters, We're Ready to Respond**

At Southeast Missouri Food Bank, we are ready to be on the frontlines when disaster strikes. Our employees are trained in disaster response, and we have a seat at the table during local disaster meetings. Our network of agencies has been through disaster workshops to prepare for disaster response. Due to COVID-19, these disaster training efforts have been employed in full force.

In most disaster situations, partnerships are in place with food banks throughout Missouri and neighboring states to help share resources, staff, and supplies. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 crisis has gripped not just the nation, but most of the world. Food banks nationwide need help, and we are facing the same situation; incredible increases in food assistance needs, but fewer resources to go around. Our food acquisition and transportation costs are rising.

Our focus during COVID-19 has been increased food to our network of agencies, increased partner mobile food distributions, and COVID-19 drive-thru response mobiles targeting individuals laid off or facing reduced work hours.

In just our first two weeks of response, Good Neighbor Pantry saw 200 new clients needing food assistance. We serve an average of 150 a week most weeks. At our mobile distributions, we have frequently run out of food and distributed over 300 food boxes in 30 minutes.

While you may not think of your food bank as a responder during a disaster, for many we are a primary food source during hard times. Thanks to your generous donations we are able to feed hungry neighbors year-round as well as those displaced by floods, tornadoes and other disasters like COVID-19.

There are many worries for our neighbors during this difficult time. We want to make sure putting food on the table isn't one of them. Our disaster response has been activated. We are helping communities now and will continue to do so.

**Joseph Keys**  
CEO of Southeast Missouri Food Bank



*Thank You to our Donors!*



**Greenway-Aldean Gator Giveaway  
Helps Feed Kids in Need**

We are incredibly grateful to Greenway Equipment and Jason Aldean for the \$55,400 we received from the recent John Deere Gator giveaway. Proceeds from the promotion benefit the weekend backpack program.



**Tyson Grant Funds Mobile Food Pantries**

Tyson recently awarded us a \$50,000 grant for Mobile Food Pantries in Stoddard, Scott and Dunklin Counties. The grant will allow the food bank to provide 24 mobile food pantries throughout these counties from June 2020 through May 2021.



## Mobile Food Pantries Help Mother and Daughter Give and Receive

The love of volunteering can start at any age. For Layla, it started her senior year in high school at Scott County Central near Morley when she noticed an increased need for food assistance at the school.

When the school started having more mobile food pantries in its gym, Layla jumped at the opportunity to help.

**“It makes you feel good,” she said of volunteering.**

Despite recovering from minor foot surgery and missing her basketball game, Layla still managed to volunteer at the school’s mobile food pantry. Layla and her mother, Angel, also receive food from the mobile pantries. Angel refers to it as a “give and return.”

Angel, who is disabled, receives a disability check each month, but it’s not enough to cover all of their needs. That’s why mother and daughter are thankful for the mobile food pantries held at the school. The food they receive helps them have full meals.

“Instead of just one item at dinner, you can actually have more food groups. You can actually eat like a person who cares,” Angel said.

“Families in our district are so reliant on these pantries that they call the school to see when we are having our next one,” said Pam Glasener, Scott County Central teacher and Future Business Leaders of America coordinator. The club has held fundraisers to host mobile food pantries.

As Angel looked around the gymnasium for her daughter, she mentioned how thankful she is for the volunteers who help distribute the food.

**“The volunteers are amazing,” she said. “They give their time and effort. I’m proud my daughter is able to participate in something she enjoys.”**

**“Instead of just one item at dinner, you can actually have more food groups. You can actually eat like a person who cares.”**

- ANGEL

## Save the Date



### Fight Hunger, Spark Change

APRIL 13 – MAY 11

Join Walmart and Sam’s Club in its Fight Hunger. Spark Change campaign to raise money for our food bank, build awareness of hunger in Southeast Missouri, and help local families in need. Get

involved by donating at the register (\$1 helps provide 4 meals) or purchase participating products. You can donate online at [walmart.com/fighthunger](http://walmart.com/fighthunger). Be sure to select your local food bank.



### 9th Annual Golf Classic

MONDAY, AUGUST 31

Join us for our golf tournament at Dalhousie in Cape Girardeau. This four-person scramble includes lunch and refreshments with a 12:30 shotgun start. Contact Lisa Church at [lchurch@semofoodbank.org](mailto:lchurch@semofoodbank.org)

to sign up or be a sponsor. Hurry, the roster fills up fast. Proceeds benefit children’s hunger relief programs.



## Food Pantries Fill the Void When You Have Nothing

Even though life has been rough as of late for Darrell Parks, he believes in karma and passing around good to people to get it back in return.

Parks, originally from St. Louis, now lives in Poplar Bluff and has been homeless for the last four years.

Life on the streets has been hard, and he makes money however he can. For travel, he either walks or rides a bicycle. He gets clothing and a few meals from various churches and missions. On days when food is scarce, he has resorted to eating food from dumpsters.

**"I know people look down upon you for it," Parks said.**

Once a month he visits the Bread Shed's mobile food pantry, pulling a red Radio Flyer wagon fitted with makeshift boarding to transport the food.

**"If it wasn't for things like this, there would be some very rough days," Parks said.**

Sleeping in the park and various places around Poplar Bluff isn't ideal, but he makes it work. He currently is helping someone fix their house and staying in the basement to keep out of the rain and cold.

**Despite his living conditions, Parks remains in good spirits and is thankful for the services Bread Shed and Southeast Missouri Food Bank offer.**

**"Some of us have nothing, so this is good. We appreciate it," Parks said.**

## How a Mom Protects Her Son from Hunger



Growing kids can eat you out of house and home. Amber, from New Madrid, knows this all too well.

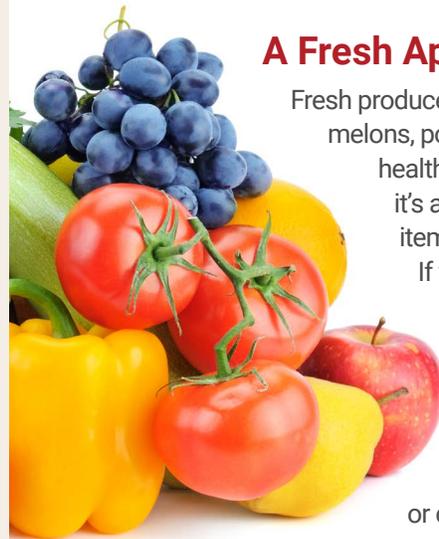
Amber and her son traveled from New Madrid to Lilbourn for a mobile food pantry at Life Changers Restoration Ministries.

This was her second time going there after learning about the mobile food pantry through Facebook. Amber said her son eats a lot, and even though she gets limited SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits, it isn't enough to buy the groceries they need.

**"(Hunger) is hard to describe, but if I had to, it would be a horrible feeling," she said.**

Amber is grateful for the work that the church and Southeast Missouri Food Bank do.

**"I appreciate everything they do," she said.**



## A Fresh Approach to Sharing

Fresh produce — tomatoes, zucchini, melons, potatoes — is one of the healthiest foods we can provide, but it's also one of the most difficult items for the food bank to acquire.

If you're a farmer or gardener, please remember the food bank as you're planting and harvesting over the next several months.

Contact Tara at [tmcguire@semofoodbank.org](mailto:tmcguire@semofoodbank.org) or call her at 573-471-1818.



Leave a legacy of more smiling faces and less hungry tummies. Ask us how to include Southeast Missouri Food Bank in your estate planning. Contact Lisa Church at (573) 471-1818.