



HARVEST TIME

OZARKS FOOD HARVEST - THE FOOD BANK | NEWSLETTER FROM THE O'REILLY CENTER FOR HUNGER RELIEF



"I understand what it's like to be homeless and not have anything to eat. The pantry helps provide nutritious healthy food for me and my children, and that takes a lot of my stress away."

- Kristen, receives food assistance at Nevada Community Outreach Center

HEALTHY FOODS ARE A NECESSITY FOR FOOD INSECURE FAMILIES

For many years, Kirsten has had difficulties providing healthy, nourishing food for her growing children. She's dealt with homelessness, couch-surfing, and hunger. Several months ago, when she had nowhere else to turn, Kirsten and her kids started living in the emergency shelter at Nevada Community Outreach Center.

"I've really been blessed to have this all available. That I was able to stay in the shelter and volunteer here and have food when my family needs it," she shared.

Kirsten has Type 2 diabetes, so eating nutritious food is extremely important to her health. Before she had consistent access to fresh vegetables, lean meats and whole grains, she struggled to keep her blood sugar under control. Having access to nutritious foods helps her maintain a healthier lifestyle.

For the food-insecure community, keeping healthy food in the house can be a challenge. Meat, fresh vegetables and fruit aren't always in the budget for individuals who barely have enough money left for groceries after their bills are paid. They tend to rely on processed foods—which are foods that have been taken apart and put back together using a combination of sugar, salt, oil and other additives. These are often cheaper and much more convenient to prepare for people

who have limited access to a stove or oven. Unfortunately, they are typically not as healthy.

Health and hunger go hand in hand. According to the American Journal of Medicine, nearly 1 in 3 adults with a chronic disease has problems paying for food, medicine or both.

"People tend to eat what's cheap. Processed foods can cause a lot of health issues," said Sarah Riley, assistant director at Nevada Community Outreach Center.

Several years ago, the center started placing a greater emphasis on healthy eating. Staff and volunteers began serving more vegetables and fruits with meals in the soup kitchen and encouraging food pantry shoppers to pick up healthy items. And, thanks to Healthy Nevada—an organization committed to improving health in the community—the center started a garden that's right next door.

"They get so excited about the garden and getting fresh produce. They can't wait to enjoy all of the veggies that we have in the spring and summer months," said Sarah.

Eating healthy foods can help reduce the risk of diabetes, hypertension, cancer and heart disease. Kirsten is grateful for all that the food pantry and soup kitchen provide for her family.

"I've eaten out of trash cans, I've had people hand me leftovers after they've left restaurants.

I understand what it's like to be homeless and not have anything to eat," she shared. "The pantry helps provide nutritious, healthy food for me and my children, and that takes a lot of my stress away."

Most of the food Nevada Community Outreach serves comes from Ozarks Food Harvest. The Food Bank delivers a variety of fresh, nutritious foods for the soup kitchen and pantry each month.

"If we didn't have Ozarks Food Harvest, we would not have nearly as much food for everyone." Said Sarah. "We serve about 400 families a month, and we want to give them as much as they need."

Thanks to places like Nevada Community Outreach Center, food-insecure families can rely less on processed foods and more on nutritious ones to fill their stomachs. At Ozarks Food Harvest, we believe food should do more than just curb hunger—it should also nourish, strengthen and heal the body. Thank you for supporting us as we distribute healthy foods to those people who need them the most.



Study students and faculty were awarded with a traveling Food Fight trophy for collecting more than 4,000 meals.

STUDENTS SUPPORT HUNGER RELIEF DURING FOOD FIGHT

This year's annual Food Fight competition with Springfield Public Schools broke a new record! In January, students collected food and funds to help provide 66,700 meals for families facing hunger in southwest Missouri.

Many schools got competitive with penny wars, classroom competitions and other creative fundraisers, but one school in particular went above and beyond with its fundraising efforts.

Study Alternative, a school that offers an alternative education setting and addresses the academic and personal growth of students to help them become responsible members of the community, raised more than 4,000 meals this year.

At Study, preparation for Food Fight begins in the fall. Students spend the semester preparing for their annual Empty Bowls fundraising event, which takes place during Food Fight. They craft

ceramic bowls, design a logo and print it on t-shirts and organize the logistics for the event. On the day of Empty Bowls, parents, students and people from the community stop by the school and make a donation, enjoy soup and bread and receive a handmade bowl.

"Participation in this year's Food Fight was a collaborative effort from all staff and students at Study Alternative Center because everyone in this building believes strongly in the need to support food security in our community," said Amy Garton, teacher and Food Fight coordinator at Study.

To many of the students, participating in Food Fight isn't just a school assignment. It's a way to help their friends and classmates who have experienced hunger.

Unfortunately, many Study students are familiar with the issue of food insecurity. The

school has a food pantry that serves about 130 people each month.

"With the addition of a refrigerator and freezer, the pantry at Study has been able to provide a variety of protein-rich meal options. Students are able to shop for their families, and parents are welcome to access the pantry directly if needed," said Amy.

Heartfelt thanks to Study and many other students and teachers who participated in this year's Food Fight competition, thousands of people across the Ozarks—including those who utilize Study's pantry—know where their next meal is coming from.

DINE OUT FOR HUNGER

From Jan. 19-25, more than 20 restaurants in the Springfield and Branson area offered menu specials to customers, with a portion of proceeds benefiting Ozarks Food Harvest. For every special menu item purchased, SGC Foodservice provided a financial match.

Thanks to so many generous customers, sponsors and restaurant partners, the inaugural Dine Out for Hunger event raised more than \$44,800. Special thanks to sponsors Barker Phillips Jackson, Carroll Business Systems, Coca-Cola/Dr. Pepper Ozarks Bottling Company, Commerce Bank, Fellers and KY3.

Donations from this event came at a crucial time for Ozarks Food Harvest. Gifts to The Food Bank tend to slow down in January after the holidays, but people facing hunger need support all year long. Nearly 180,000 meals were provided for hungry children, families and seniors through Dine Out for Hunger this year.

Angel Kim, owner of ReRico and The Hill in

Springfield, was excited to support Ozarks Food Harvest through the campaign. Throughout the week, the restaurants generously donated a portion of their sales to The Food Bank.

"We enjoyed participating in Dine Out for Hunger for many reasons. We know Ozarks Food Harvest will properly use the funds generated to provide meals for so many families around the Ozarks. We were also happy to see many new faces in our restaurants," he shared.

Partnerships with area restaurants and other organizations are vital to the health of The Food Bank. These local businesses help their own customers learn more about Ozarks Food Harvest and the reality of hunger in the community.

"This inaugural campaign was a win-win for the community and local restaurants," said Denise Gibson, director of development and communication at Ozarks Food Harvest. "We're extremely grateful for each and every

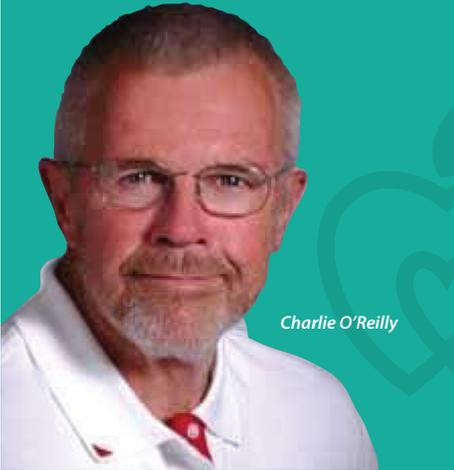
restaurant and customer that participated to help put food on the table for someone struggling with hunger."

We partner with many organizations across the Ozarks throughout the year. Learn more about our upcoming partnerships and how to get involved at ozarksfoodharvest.org/community-partnerships.



Dine Out for Hunger helped provide nearly 180,000 meals.

Charlie's CORNER



Charlie O'Reilly



Ozarks Food Harvest is always looking for new ways to reduce child hunger.

HOW YOU CAN IMPACT CHILD HUNGER

As many citizens struggle in our community, I want to shine a light on those who often struggle in silence: children. Across the nation, reports show that households with children are far more likely to be food insecure than households without. Nearly 50,000 children across southwest Missouri alone are at-risk of going to bed hungry tonight.

Ozarks Food Harvest works continuously to address child hunger through its services and programs such as the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and the *Weekend Backpack Program*. While school is suspended during the COVID-19 situation, CACFP sites have transitioned to SFSP sites to ensure children still have access to food. The *Weekend Backpack Program* continues to distribute to all participating schools which are utilizing a drive-thru system or home delivery.

I'm writing today to ask for your help to make sure children continue to receive the nutrition they need at the most vital stage in their life. We want kids to focus on learning, not wondering where their next meal will come from.

This September, our legislators in Washington D.C. will debate the Child Nutrition Reauthorization bill which provides funding for SFSP and CACFP. These programs cover the gaps in child feeding programs by providing after-school meals and summer meals; essentials for children when they're not in school.

Children in rural areas often can't access a summer or after-school feeding program due to transportation issues or a lack of programs in their community. If child feeding program guidelines were modified, organizations like Ozarks Food Harvest would be able to distribute through a mobile meal truck or their *Weekend*

Backpack Program to make sure those hard-to-reach children aren't forgotten.

That's why we're asking Congress to simplify and streamline these programs so more children have something to eat before they go to bed at night.

The staff at Ozarks Food Harvest recently shared a story with me from a client named Amy. She's a single mom raising three children. "I've been buying food every week for my household, but my children are getting older and eat a lot more," she said. "It just isn't enough, and it's hard to afford it. I'm starting to make a choice between lights and food. It's very tough."

Simplifying and streamlining child nutrition programs will allow parents like Amy to not have to make the choice between keeping the lights on and keeping their child's belly full. Investing in our nation's children, and their future, is something we can all get behind.

I urge you to call or email Sen. Roy Blunt, Sen. Josh Hawley and Rep. Billy Long (see website information below). Ask them to support child nutrition programs that help provide more than 125,000 meals to children in southwest Missouri each year. It's folks like you that will help us *Transform Hunger into Hope*.

If you are able, please consider making a gift to support children served by The Food Bank.

Visit ozarksfoodharvest.org or give Bart a call to learn more about how you can help advocate for child hunger in our community.

Sen. Josh Hawley: hawley.senate.gov

Sen. Roy Blunt: blunt.senate.gov

Rep. Billy Long: long.house.gov

UPCOMING EVENTS

Special events are an important part of engaging the community and encouraging others to participate in the fight against hunger. Unfortunately, many of our upcoming events have been cancelled or postponed due to the COVID-19 situation.

There are still many ways to support The Food Bank. Consider hosting a virtual fundraiser through Facebook or Mightycause (mightycause.com). If you receive the coronavirus stimulus check but are not in need, consider donating it to Ozarks Food Harvest. We also encourage you to reach out to your employer and ask if they will match your contributions.

We know the COVID-19 situation is causing an increase in food insecurity. Unfortunately, many families who were living paycheck to paycheck have been pushed beyond their limits. If you are able, we encourage you to think about ways to help our hungry neighbors. Your support may inspire others to do the same!

STAMP OUT HUNGER

May 9

Help Stamp Out Hunger in the Ozarks by filling a bag with nonperishable food items and leaving it on your front porch for a letter carrier to pick up on May 11. Most-needed items include peanut butter, canned meats and beans. This campaign has helped provide more than 1.1 million meals in the Ozarks since 2014.

RED NOSE DAY

May 21

Join Ozarks Food Harvest and Feeding America in the fight to end child poverty by purchasing a red nose at your local Walgreens store. The event will also include a special night of programming on NBC. Since 2015, Red Nose Day has helped provide 204,000 meals in southwest Missouri.

HUNGERTHON

September 2020

Stay tuned for more information!

OZARKS FOOD HARVEST'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Ozarks Food Harvest has been closely monitoring the evolving COVID-19 spread. We are constantly looking for and following best practices recommended by the CDC, Springfield-Greene County Health Department and Feeding America.

As the situation continues to change daily, we remain committed to providing safe, nutritious food to anyone that needs it. Ozarks Food Harvest provides an essential service in providing nourishing food that is critical to maintaining good health. The people that access our pantries and feeding programs may be hit the hardest by this pandemic, and we have made it a priority to reach community members in need of food assistance.



We're continuing to support our hunger-relief partners.

The health and safety of our staff, food pantries and feeding sites, the people we serve and our volunteers are extremely important to us. The Food Bank already has strict food safety and sanitation guides in place that are followed on a daily basis, and at this time, we are doubling our efforts to keep our staff, volunteers and the food we distribute safe.

We are continuing to work closely with our network of 270 hunger-relief partners to provide food across our 28-county service area. Businesses across the Ozarks are rapidly closing and laying off workers as the pandemic spreads. Many parents, especially single mothers, face the unenviable choice of caring for their children or earning enough money to feed them. Those lucky enough to keep their jobs are living paycheck to paycheck. This leaves more people than ever in need of food assistance. Our pantries have requested more food, and we are providing them with as much as possible.

To meet this growing demand, Ozarks Food Harvest will be purchasing additional food, hiring temporary workers and hosting additional *Mobile Food Pantries*. Today, I'm asking for your help as we navigate these changes and continue to take care of our food-insecure neighbors. For every dollar donated, The Food Bank can provide \$10 worth of groceries to people in need. You can trust that your donation will make a



Bart Brown,
President/CEO

BART'S *Hope Note*

difference in the coming weeks and months. Donations can be made securely online at ozarksfoodharvest.org/donate. You can also call 417-865-3411 to make a donation over the phone.

If you have already donated to help our hungry neighbors during this difficult and uncertain time, thank you. Your commitment to serving the community is greatly appreciated, and any additional support you can offer would be sincerely valued, too.

In the weeks and months ahead, stay tuned to our website and social media channels to learn more what we're doing in the midst of COVID-19. Together, we will continue to *Transform Hunger into Hope*.

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR DONOR-ADVISED FUND

I would like to remind you that Ozarks Food Harvest is eligible to accept gifts from donor-advised funds.

We know you have a lot of choices to make when it comes to designating your charitable gift. By recommending a gift to Ozarks Food Harvest, you have the ability to make a life-changing donation to support food-insecure families in the Ozarks. With 1 in 5 children and 1 in 7 adults in the Ozarks facing hunger, your generosity has the potential to change so many lives.

As a reminder, every dollar donated to Ozarks Food Harvest helps provide \$10 worth of groceries for people in southwest Missouri. In 2019, The Food Bank provided 18.5 million meals to more than 261,000 people each year, and every donation makes a difference.

Your gift will help people like Charles, who has trouble making ends meet. "I can barely make it on food stamps, so I have to go to the pantry to sustain myself for the month," he shared.

Remember, you can set your donor-advised fund account to make automatic recurring grants in the amount and frequency of your choice. This is a great way to make your charitable giving more convenient. Talk to your charitable sponsor to learn more.

You can provide more meals—and hope—by naming Ozarks Food Harvest as the successor beneficiary of your donor-advised fund account.

Thank you for your consideration—and thank you to those who already contribute to Ozarks Food Harvest through a donor-advised fund. Because of you, someone will eat today.



Denise Gibson,
Development Director

From DENISE'S DESK

SPECIAL THANKS TO THESE FRIENDS OF THE FOOD BANK

PRIME CHILI COOK-OFF HELPS PROVIDE WEEKEND MEALS

Special thanks to Prime Inc. for raising more than \$21,000 for The Food Bank's *Weekend Backpack Program* during its annual Chili Cook-Off and silent auction. Dozens of people entered their recipes into the competition, and the winners were chosen by employees and a panel of judges. Congrats to winners Chris Round, Brenda Behnke, Catherine Owensby, and Laura Slaughter.

OPAL FOODS MAKES ANNUAL EGG DONATION

Thousands of families in the Ozarks will receive fresh eggs just in time for Easter, thanks to Opal Foods, a franchisee of Eggland's Best. The company donated 280,000 eggs for people facing hunger. Eggs are a frequently-requested item by The Food Bank's hunger-relief partners, so this gift is greatly appreciated. Since 2008, Opal Foods has donated nearly 2.8 million eggs.



Eggs provide key nutrients for food-insecure families.

S.L. GIMBEL FOUNDATION SUPPORTS WEEKEND BACKPACK PROGRAM

The S.L. Gimbel Foundation recently granted Ozarks Food Harvest \$15,000 to support at-risk children on the weekends. This generous donation will provide nutritious food items for more than 3,250 food bags. The Foundation has brought hope to thousands of children with its generosity to Ozarks Food Harvest since 2018. The Food Bank and schools participating in the *Weekend Backpack Program* are grateful for the S.L. Gimbel Foundation's continued kindness.



The S.L. Gimbel Foundation helps support local children.

VITAL FARMS

The Food Bank is grateful for the tremendous impact Vital Farms is making in the Ozarks! In 2019, the company donated more than 2.5 million pounds of eggs. Eggs provide essential nutrients, and hungry families can incorporate them into meals in a variety of ways. We're extremely grateful for this generosity.



Vital Farms donated more than 2.5 million eggs in 2019.

CHECK OUT HUNGER

Thank you to the stores and customers that participated in the 2019 Check Out Hunger campaign. Funds for more than 171,300 meals were raised as customers were asked to add a \$1, \$3 or \$5 donation to their bills at the register during November and December. Check Out Hunger has helped provide 2.7 million meals since 1998.



Check Out Hunger supporters helped provide more than 171,300 meals.

CBCO DONATES \$2,000 FROM LIFEPOINTS LIFT PROGRAM

Special thanks to the Community Blood Center of the Ozarks for its recent gift to The Food Bank. After donating blood, LifePoints Lift donors can choose to make an impact in the community by donating their accumulated points to one of CBCO's partner organizations. That's double the impact for people who need help in the community. Since 2003, CBCO has donated more than \$40,000 to Ozarks Food Harvest. We're so thankful for this partnership that benefits so many in the community!

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Eddie Hicks, Compliance Manager
Steve Roberts, Operations Manager
Marcus Seal, Volunteer Center Supervisor

Due to growth and limited space in the newsletter, all warehouse and transportation associates on the Operations team are now listed online at ozarksfoodharvest.org.

HUNGER HERO NEWS

FEEDING FAMILIES ACROSS THE OZARKS

“I think we all gain so much from giving ourselves to helping others. Volunteering provides a sense of purpose knowing that what we do helps others. Making a difference is a great feeling.”

- Tom Carson, Ozarks Food Harvest Volunteer



Ozarks Food Harvest volunteer Kirk places labels on canned corn.

WHY VOLUNTEERS MATTER

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month, and we want to take a moment to recognize the important work volunteers do for The Food Bank.

Last year, more than 3,850 volunteers gave time at Ozarks Food Harvest. That's 3,850 people that helped a hungry family put a meal on the table; 3,850 people who learned about the issue of hunger; 3,850 people who generously sacrificed their own time to support neighbors in need.

A volunteer's gift of time means so much to The Food Bank. Just one volunteer helps provide more than 100 meals every hour. Over the course of 2019, volunteers helped provide a total of 3.3 million meals.

“Time is precious. These individuals choose how and where they want to spend their

time,” said Bart Brown, president and CEO of Ozarks Food Harvest. “We're humbled that our volunteers choose to spend part of their day with us in an effort to serve the community.”

We're inspired by every volunteer who walks through our doors. From students to retirees, all of our volunteers do so much to help hungry families in southwest Missouri.

To all of you who have volunteered at Ozarks Food Harvest, thank you. Thank you for spending time with us. Thank you for lending a hand for neighbors in need.

At the time this newsletter went to the printer, the volunteer program was suspended due to COVID-19 concerns. When the volunteer program resumes, updates will be posted at ozarksfoodharvest.org/volunteer.



Ozarks Food Harvest is thankful for each and every volunteer.

Check out what volunteers have to say about their time at Ozarks Food Harvest

“Volunteering gives me the opportunity to interact with a wonderful group of people. I find that each day when I return home, I feel more positive about the the rest of the day.”

- Melody Pierson

“It makes us feel like we're accomplishing something for the community, and it's something that's really needed.”

- Trudy Bowen

“It's good to see that the people needing the food are the ones getting it.”

- Gale Clithero

6 Transform Hunger into Hope by volunteering to help your neighbors in need. Sign up at ozarksfoodharvest.org/volunteer.



Glean Team volunteers help plant and harvest produce.

Volunteer with the Glean Team

Warmer temperatures and sunny skies have finally reached the Ozarks. Want to enjoy the beautiful weather while making an impact in the fight against hunger this spring and summer? Volunteer with the Ozarks Food Harvest Glean Team!

Dig in the dirt, plant seeds, maintain high tunnels, nurture plants and harvest vegetables to provide healthy food for people in need. The Glean Team works at Ozarks Food Harvest's garden in Rogersville and in area partner gardens throughout the growing season.

"The Glean Team harvested and picked up over 45,000 pounds of farm fresh produce last year," said Alexa Poindexter, Full Circle Gardens manager. "Bringing such nutritious

food out of the field and into our pantries is incredibly rewarding for all of us."

We need your help to provide fresh, healthy vegetables for people in need. At the time this newsletter went to the printer, the volunteer program was suspended due to COVID-19 concerns. When the program resumes, updates will be posted at ozarksfoodharvest.org/volunteer.

We hope to have you join us in the garden this summer! To sign up with the Glean Team, visit ozarksfoodharvest.org/volunteer and select "gardening" as an interest in your application. Youth are also welcome to join the Glean Team with an adult throughout the year.

Little Caesars makes big impact during Food Fight

Each year during Food Fight, area businesses partner with Springfield Public Schools to help them collect food and funds. Little Caesars Pizza locations across the Ozarks have been partnering and fighting hunger with The Food Bank since 2014.

This year, six locations collected \$1,208 to help provide 4,832 meals. Each participating location also offered free crazy bread to anyone who donated food or funds during the two-week fundraiser in January.

"We really appreciate how the local pantries and *Weekend Backpack Program* directly benefit our community. We have a lot of fun each year making this a competition between our local stores to see who can raise the most money for their

school partner. We cannot wait to partner again next year and hope to make an even bigger impact for this great organization," said Amy Clotfelter, owner and operator of several local Little Caesars locations.

Over the past seven years, Little Caesars has raised nearly \$7,000 for Ozarks Food Harvest. That's nearly 28,000 meals for families facing hunger in the Ozarks!

Caring, compassionate partners like Little Caesars help bring so much hope to food insecure children, families and seniors in the Ozarks. Are you part of an organization that may want to host a food or fund drive? Email sbyrd@ozarksfoodharvest.org for more info.

FOOD & FUND DRIVES

Below is a list of Food & Fund Drives that have provided 300+ meals from Jan. 1 – March 19, 2020.

Southern Missouri Women Lawyers — 5,680	Greater Springfield Board of Realtors — 1,933	Spring Branch Kombucha — 615
O'Reilly Auto Parts — 3,797	McCormick Gives — 1,856	Do Outdoors, Inc. — 613
MSU Meyer Library — 2,884	Ron's Last Call — 1,256	Grant Avenue Freewill Baptist Church — 512
Legacy Bank — 2,700	Arrowpoint Solar — 1,068	Springfield Lutheran School — 365
Drury University - Lambda Chi Alpha — 2,243	Youngblood Auto Group — 800	

Thank you so much to our ongoing food and fund drive hosts.

VOLUNTEERS

Below is a list of Individuals and Groups who have donated 20+ hours of time from Jan. 1 – Feb. 29, 2020.

INDIVIDUALS

Cole Armer	Cindy Hawdon
James Blackwell	Kirk Hawkins
Charles Bowen	Fabio Heredia
Trudy Bowen	Andrew Hickerson
Morgan Brader	Sarah Jones
Kim Burton	Donald Landon
Karla Carroll	Justin Larese
Tom Carson	George Lawrence
Kalim Choudhury	Loren Limas
Gale Clithero	Colton Maggard
Sharon Cook	Ann Marsh
Amanda Davis	Terrence McKeel
Eileen Deal	Timothy Moore
Gary DeHaven	Jenna Morelock
Collin Dibben	Melvie Mosier
Kris Dreesen	Melody Pierson
Arlene Eichler	Alexandra Pool
Elizabeth English	Taylor Rivera
Chyanne Flessner	Deborah Rumpf
Gerald Green	Warren Satterfield
Jonathan Griswold	Alexander Scranton
Braydon Grone	Jeffrey Scranton
Kamron Hanson	Leah Sing

GROUPS

Central Bank of the Ozarks
 Community Learning Center
 Datema House
 F & H Food Equipment Company
 Faith for Life - Campbell UMC
 Flowers Family
 Good Samaritan - Step Ahead Program
 Greene County Youth Academy Evening Program
 Grooms Office Environments
 Hope Church
 Ignite Youth
 King's Way UMC
 Logan-Rogersville H.S. CLICK Academy
 Logan-Rogersville H.S. FFA
 Luka & Family
 MSU Athletics
 MSU Base Program
 MSU Delta Zeta Sorority
 MSU Pi Theta Epsilon
 Netsmart
 Noah & Friend
 OTC Honors Program
 Parkview Leadership School
 "Peritoneal Dialysis Packers" at CoxHealth
 PT Students
 Rotary Club of Springfield North
 Scher Family
 Springfield Lutheran School
 Springfield Student Leadership Summit
 SPS Central High School Key Club
 St. Agnes School
 Wesley UMC

Thank you to all of our amazing volunteers for their gifts of time.



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(417) 865-3411
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