

# harvest gatherings

## Our Mission:

To find, rescue and distribute food to people living in poverty through an efficient network, uniting the public and private sectors;  
To raise awareness of the impact of poverty.

### Inside this Edition

Notes from our director	2
BackPack serving more kids this fall	3
Stories from the field	3
Federal and state cuts a topic for local pantries	4-5
A unique way to run a Holiday Aid project	5
Kroger asks you to Check-Out Hunger	6
Why people enjoy helping Shared Harvest	6
Honorariums	7
JournalNews Food Relief campaign begins	7

## Hunger... suffering we all pay for

A new report shows nearly 49 million American households faced hunger at some point during 2010... an increase of 12 million over 2007 when the current Great Recession began.

The report from the Center for American Progress does not focus on statistics alone. It looks at how the growing poverty rate in America is something all of us pay for in one way or another.

The report is based on the federal Food Security Module developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which shows people who are food insecure are likely to visit soup kitchens or food pantries, cut back on food portions or food categories or face uncertainty over when their next meal will be.

Overall, the study shows hunger cost America \$167 billion in 2010. That breaks down to a cost to every citizen of \$542 per year.

"I think this report gives us a rather startling view of how much each of us really pays because of our failure to eradicate hunger," said Shared Harvest Executive Director Tina Osso. "The impact on our health care system, schools and employers is a problem we must address, sooner rather than later."

The news was not good for the Buckeye State, with Ohio and Illinois seeing the biggest increases in the cost of hunger of all midwest states.

The Hunger in America Report identifies several ways we pay the price for poverty, such as lost economic

productivity, the rising cost of poor educational outcomes, avoidable health care costs and the cost of charity to keep families fed.

### HEALTH ISSUES

The medical research examined for the study showed an increased likelihood of people who are hungry or do not eat a healthy diet experiencing a host of medical problems. These include iron deficiency, headaches, stomach aches, more frequent colds and health impairments that limit physical activity. That can lead to more hospitalizations and longer hospital stays.

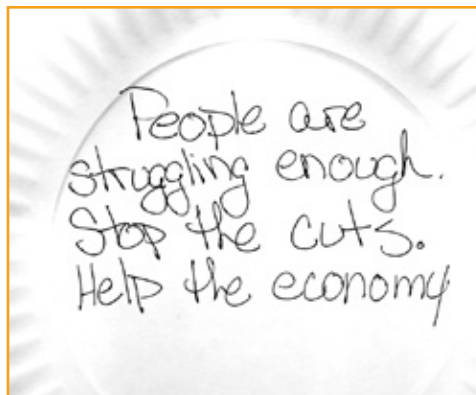
### EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

Children suffering from hunger are more likely to face problems in school. The study found they are 50% more likely to miss days of school, twice as likely to be suspended and 50% more likely to

have to repeat a grade. In addition to the greater threat of dropping out of school, these students have a greater likelihood of having limited employment opportunities, poorer judgment and job performance.

### THE COST OF CHARITY

The cost of the charitable network that provides food to needy families is the final piece of the puzzle. The study found the cost of charity to feed hungry families was nearly \$18 billion in 2010, \$5 billion higher than the cost prior to the recession in 2007.



State and federal lawmakers can expect to see paper plates like these - written on empty plates by people waiting in our ever-increasing food pantry lines.



www.sharedharvest.org  
800-352-3663



Written and edited by Bob Long

## Notes from our director

On my way to work recently, I developed a plan in my head for my day. First I would do this, then I would do that... we all have those plans in our heads I suspect. The day started as I had planned: check and respond to emails, organize the stuff I needed for an upcoming meeting, make sure all of our pick-ups and deliveries of food donations were happening as scheduled... the day was humming along as planned.

Then the phone rang. It was a colleague in Columbus calling because she did not know who else to call. It seems a man had called the 800 Medicare hotline she manages and was despondent. He told her he suffered from seizures, had no food, no medication and no way to get anywhere. Then he told her he just did not want to live anymore, and hung up the phone. She tried to call him back, but there was no answer. She tried to find a local suicide prevention line since he had called from Middletown, but a quick 'Google' search did not provide what she needed. Feeling an imminent crisis in this man's life, she called me as the only local person she knew.

She gave me the quick story. I found the man listed in our online central registration database our larger pantries use, but the information on record was almost a year old. I called the Community Counseling & Crisis hotline, they took the information I had and would call their mobile crisis response team if I could verify a current address. I called our partner pantry; Family Services of Middletown (the pantry he had visited last December) gave them the information and asked if they could dispatch someone to the address on record to verify this man still lived there.

Then I waited, trying to focus on tasks I had planned to do on my drive into work. But I waited, looking at the phone, watching the clock then finally, a call from my colleague in Columbus. The man called her back; he hung up because he was having a seizure. His seizures are

caused by an injury he received in a car accident two years ago. An accident that took his wife and son from him.

Here is a man in his mid-fifties, who suffered a tremendous loss that also rendered him unable to work, trying to make ends meet on disability. He had no family to turn to in his time of crisis, but his phone call engaged four organizations to help him immediately. Once we had his current address, the Community Crisis & Counseling mobile unit was dispatched to help him; my colleague in Columbus helped him acquire the medication he needs for his seizures; Family Services of Middletown delivered a weeks' worth of food to him; and contacted the local St. Vincent DePaul who will visit him weekly providing the human contact we all need. All of this happened within two hours of his call. He had tears in his eyes when he looked in the boxes of food saying he had not eaten for two days.

I am thankful we live in a community of such caring folks, these angels in the outfield. I often say Shared Harvest gives more than food for today; we give hope for a better tomorrow. The truth is we are just a part of a highly dedicated group of people working in charities that all play such an important role in giving that hope for a better tomorrow. For this man, his cry for help with food was the catalyst to connect him to all the angels that will stand with him now.

So, as you gather around your holiday tables laden with food, count your blessings. Enjoy your family and friends, tell your favorite holiday stories. In the middle of your celebrations, please take a moment to remember this story. And if you have enough to share, please consider making a holiday contribution to Shared Harvest. For every \$1 you give, we can provide 8 meals to someone in need of a little food, and a little hope.



**Tina Osso**  
Executive Director

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### DECEMBER EVENTS WHERE YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

**Check-Out Hunger campaign  
at local Kroger stores**

**Hamilton JournalNews Food  
Relief campaign**

**Holiday Aid Food Drives  
at your work or in your  
community**

**The Nothing Campaign  
[www.nothing.org/ohio](http://www.nothing.org/ohio)**

**Whole Foods Market  
"Grab and Give" Food Drive**

## BackPack ... a Godsend for struggling families

What impresses you most about meeting Jason Isbel is how many times he thanks the people who are helping his family deal with unemployment.

While Jason and his wife Lori look for work, they express appreciation for the help they receive from Shared Harvest Foodbank's BackPack program, and to Butler County Success liaison Gina Stitsinger, who assists them with the issues they face.

Fifth grader Dylan and second grader Austin receive weekly BackPacks of food at Heritage Elementary in the Lakota School District, while their youngest brother, Ian, is in the program at Creekside Early Childhood Center.

"It helps us tremendously," Jason explained. "The boys bring the food home in their book bag, and we go through it. They'll eat what they want then, and we'll set canned goods aside for later in the weekend."

More and more at-risk children in Butler, Warren and Miami Counties are getting weekend snacks and ready-to-fix meals from the popular Shared Harvest program. When BackPack got started in mid-October, nearly 14-hundred elementary children were initially enrolled, up from 800 at the start of the 2010-11 school year.



*Jason Isbel, sons Austin, Dylan and wife Lori show local media the kinds of things the kids receive in their weekly BackPacks.*

"We always begin in mid-October, so liaisons with Butler County Success, teachers, school nurses and administrators have time to identify children who may not have adequate food on weekends," said Chuck Osso, Shared Harvest's Agency Relations Director.

BackPack is available in every public school district in Butler County, except New Miami, as well as in the Kings and Lebanon School Districts in Warren County.

The Piqua School District in Miami County was added to BackPack this fall.

The program always grows throughout the school year, as more students are identified as needing help. Shared Harvest relies on a network of volunteers to either pack the weekly bags of food or deliver them to the various elementary buildings.

"So many people love to be associated with BackPack because they know they're helping children in need have an opportunity to perform better in school," said Shared Harvest

Executive Director Tina Osso.

***If you'd like to volunteer, contact Shared Harvest's Special Projects Manager Holli Curry at (800)- 352-3663.***

## From the front lines... people who turn to our pantries

Shared Harvest's SNAP Outreach Program helps people learn if they qualify and can apply for food stamps or other supports. In each newsletter, we tell you a story from one of our SNAP Outreach workers. Our thanks to Kathy Dart for this story.

While I was doing SNAP Outreach work at one of our local pantries, I met a woman who had never used a food pantry before. You can usually spot new people because they have a lost look on their face that says: "what do I do?" She came to me to apply for food stamps and found out she was eligible.

She had a family of six, which included four kids. Like so many others these days, her husband lost his job after 20 years. The only income in the house is from mom, who works in a small local grocery store, and the oldest son who works at an auto parts store. Neither of

them makes a lot of money and the family is behind on many of its bills.

I gave her information about other programs she could apply for, such as HEAP, especially since they have to pay for fuel oil to heat their home in winter, on top of regular utilities.

The woman was shocked when I told her the amount she could possibly receive upon approval of SNAP benefits. With four growing kids in the family and bills piling up, hopefully that will free up cash for other things her family really needs.

## Agency conference looks at major issues facing pantries

“We face a perfect storm - an environment where Ohioans lack the basic nutrition they need to be productive at work and school and to live healthy lives.”

*Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, Exec. Director  
Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks*

We hear the constant buzz from Washington and Columbus about the need to downsize government. People who attended Shared Harvest Foodbank’s annual Partner Agency Conference this fall learned the realities of what that means for programs aiding people who live in poverty.

It was a chance for people working on the frontlines to learn more about how government cuts will impact the emergency food network and what pantries and foodbanks must do to generate more donations and volunteers.

### **The Budget Picture = Bleak**

Pina Jean Barcus has been with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services for 26 years. She admits one of her biggest concerns right now is what will happen to a major federal program many seniors rely on - The Commodity Supplemental Food Program. Barcus says deficit reduction talks have left the future of the program

very much in doubt.

The executive director of the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks warned those attending the conference that practically every hunger program that uses federal funds faces major cuts.

Lisa Hamler-Fugitt says those cuts come at a time when Ohio ranks 6th in the nation for high hunger rates and 10th in hunger rates for adults 50+.

Hamler-Fugitt is concerned about the real rate of unemployment in Ohio since many people have been out of work for more than two years and aren’t counted in monthly employment statistics. She also worries about the growing number of college students facing long-term loan debt.

Hamler-Fugitt says Ohio faces a “perfect storm” with gas and food prices, unemployment and need on the increase while the amount of food available from federal programs and food manufacturers is declining.

### **Building new food supplies**

Food pantries and soup kitchens need to find new, innovative ways to serve more food to more people. Mitzi Baum of Feeding America made that suggestion to local agencies.

She says food resources are drying up and so are donations, forcing foodbanks to purchase more food. Baum feels it’s critical to increase the amount of food generated locally and stresses pantries are a key ingredient in hunger relief.

Baum says pantries and soup kitchens need to think differently and come up with better ways to serve clients, such as expanding their hours of operation, allowing people to shop more often or finding ways to serve more people.

Baum also believes more pantries need to become CHOICE Pantries where shoppers can choose the items that are best for their families.

*Below left: More than 100 of Shared Harvest’s partners attended the annual conference at Miami University’s Voice of America Campus in West Chester. Center: Maurice Maxwell and Sharon Byrd were among speakers who discussed the benefit of CHOICE food pantries. Below right: Mitzi Baum of Feeding America shared her thoughts with pantry leaders about how to improve efficiency.*



**CHOICE - a conference topic**

One of the issues discussed at Shared Harvest's Agency Conference was the desire to create more CHOICE food pantries where people can select their own grocery items. For some agencies, the problem is having enough space to allow that.

The head of Family Services of Middletown opened Butler County's first choice pantry seven years ago, a move that was essential because of the downsizing of AK Steel.

Maurice Maxwell feels the CHOICE pantry gives clients a more normal shopping experience, and using volunteer greeters to assist them creates a nurturing and dignified environment.

Sharyn Lower-Burd of First Methodist Pantry in Troy agrees CHOICE pantries are perfect for people who've lost a job and are at a pantry for the first time.

Sherry Loschi wishes her New Path Pantry in Tipp City could become a CHOICE pantry. She says much of her space is used to store food, and there simply isn't enough room to allow people to shop. She's hoping for a larger space someday.

**Holiday Aid - teaching children to be generous**

How do you teach pre-school children about the importance of helping other people?

Jodi Dunlap of Daysprings Montessori School in Fairfield has found the perfect method. For the past 14 years, her school has been part of Shared Harvest Foodbank's Holiday Aid project, encourage children ages 3 to 6 to bring canned food donations to school.

"We start in early November to tie in with the season of giving," Jodi explained. "We put a large turkey mural on the wall, and the children can add feathers to the turkey each time they bring in canned food donations."

Children who have been going to Daysprings Montessori more than one year know when the turkey goes up on the wall, the holiday campaign is about to begin.

"It has become quite a tradition at our school," Jodi said. "I tell a story that explains how some kids are hungry and don't have enough food to eat. It's a real positive experience showing them how they can help people in need."

The turkey on the mural starts out featherless. Soon, brown and orange feathers are added as each donation comes in.

"We also make sure the children get to see the Shared Harvest truck when it arrives to pick up all of the food we've collected, and they get very excited about it," Dunlap added.

Daysprings Montessori is just one of many schools, church groups, businesses or other civic organizations that regularly participate in Shared Harvest's annual Holiday Aid project in November and December.

In 2010, Holiday Aid campaigns resulted in nearly 60,000 pounds of food being donated.

It's not too late to participate. **Visit our foodbank website at [www.sharedharvest.org](http://www.sharedharvest.org)**, click on the pull-down menu labeled Give Help, and follow the links to how to conduct a food drive.

**If you're group has an interesting story to tell us about a unique Holiday Aid campaign, contact Tina Osso by e-mail at [tina@sharedharvest.org](mailto:tina@sharedharvest.org).**



*Left: Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks Director Lisa Hamler-Fugate talks about the impact of state and federal budget cuts on agencies attending the annual conference.*

*Right: This turkey at Daysprings Montessori in Fairfield is used to encourage children to donate to the annual Holiday Aid Campaign. A feather is added each time a child brings a food donation.*



## You can “check-out” hunger at Kroger Stores

When you shop at your local Kroger store during the holidays, you’ll have a chance to help a family in need each time the cashier rings up a purchase.

Kroger is urging customers to “Check-Out Hunger” by using the convenient plaques posted on the side of each cash register, such as the one pictured on the right.

Each time you tear off one of the \$1, \$3 or \$5 coupons from the plaque, the cashier scans it and adds it to your bill that day.

A total of 18 Kroger stores in Butler, Warren and Preble Counties launched the sixth annual “Check-Out Hunger” campaign November 11, and you can contribute to the project anytime between now and January 2.

“This is just one of the many ways Kroger assists us throughout the year,” said Shared Harvest Executive Director Tina Osso. “They not only do their part to fight hunger, but they educate and encourage customers to be generous as well.”

This project has resulted in more than \$59,000 in contributions since it began in 2006. But Kroger also has donated more than \$200,000 through its “Bringing Hope to the Table” campaign each spring plus hundreds of thousands of pounds of food rescued each year through the Retail Pick-Up Program at its local stores.

For each dollar you donate, Shared Harvest can provide eight meals for a family in need.



## Volunteering: a chance to give back ... and learn about hunger

From people working in the medical profession to church groups or avid motorcycle riders, Shared Harvest Foodbank attracts a wide array of volunteers who want to help people in need.

Ethicon Endo-Surgery in Blue Ash wants its employees to give back to the community. So it offers them time off during the workday when they find a cause they want to support. Shared Harvest has had several groups from the company offer their time to volunteer.

Sandy Lanham was among 18 Ethicon volunteers that divided its time between packing boxes of food for seniors in the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and assembling bags for the Backpack project.

“For us to have the ability to contribute and help people who need these programs is key for all of us,” said volunteer Sandy Lanham of Ethicon Endo-Surgery. “It’s a great team-building event for us too.”

Lanham says she personally

wanted to assist seniors. “We realize it’s supplemental to other food they have during the month, but for some, it potentially could be all they have.”

The Fairfield Harley Davidson chapter has enthusiastically volunteered one Saturday a month to help children through the Backpack program. The motorcycle enthusiasts normally bring 15 to 20 volunteers to help pack bags, and often they finish 14 to 17-hundred in one day.

“We all decided we could give up one Saturday a month and come to Shared Harvest, and we have a lot of fun doing this as a group,” said volunteer Robbin Bratfish. “We enjoy doing this because we know it helps children.”

The group got involved because Chuck Osso belongs to the Harley group and oversees Backpack for the foodbank.

If you have a group that wants to help with Backpack, CSFP or other projects, **contact Shared Harvest’s Special Projects Manager Holli Curry at (800) 352-3663.**



*Above: Volunteers from Ethicon Endo-Surgery work to assemble boxes of food for seniors in the Commodity Supplemental Food Program.*

*Below: The Fairfield Harley Chapter comes to Shared Harvest one Saturday a month to help pack bags of food for the Backpack Program.*



## Honorariums by donors... Thanks to our food donors

### In Memory:

Of: My son Scott  
By: *Donald Ayers*

Of: Richard Brune  
By: *Rose Brune*

Of: Diane Wourms  
By: *Deborah Bischof & EMTEC*

Of: Corbin Cornett Sr.  
By: *Margaret Cornett*

Of: Paul R. White  
By: *Faye Crosby*

Of: Robert G. "Bob" Davis  
By: *Mark Cox*

Of: Flo & George Sisson  
By: *John & Gwen DeLong*

Of: Janice Huelsbeck  
By: *Don & Mary Kay Fischer*

Of: Barb Murphy  
By: *Ron Murphy*

Of: George Onyett  
By: *Darlene Onyett*

Of: My mother & sister  
By: *Debby Perkins*

Of: Bob Reimer  
By: *Charlotte Reimer*

Of: Gretchen Brosier  
By: *Gerri & Tim Roberts*

Of: Rev. Edward Wilson  
By: *Harry & Peggy Schmidt*

Of: Tom Stallman  
By: *Judy Stallman*

Of: Frances J. Thomas  
By: *Hugh & Grace Thompson*

Of: Joanne Bunnell  
By: *Connie Wetz*

### In Honor:

Of: David Burkart's birthday  
By: *Bob & Julia Angst*

Of: Beverly Proctor's birthday  
By: *Dee Ayers*

Of: Grace Stephens' 90th birthday  
By: *Ellen Campbell*

Of: John & Lisette Roth  
By: *Richard & Mary Griss*

Of: Heather Doria  
By: *Lee Liddle*

Of: John R. Lowery  
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Of: Harry Schwab, Nomia & Lula Bell  
Martindill  
By: *William Martindill*

Of: The marriage of Brad & Ashlie Farr  
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Of: Father Ronald Haft's good works  
By: *M. Dean Peters & Nancy Pfirman*

Of: Cathy  
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Of: John & Rachel Laughlin  
By: *Kim Sagers*

Of: Shaun Sanders  
By: *Allen Sanders*

Of: Mary Maye at Christmas  
By: *Bob & Patty Wheeler*

Of: My three daughters & grandchildren  
- for the present & future  
By: *Barb Young*

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Monster's  
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OneMain Financial  
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## JournalNews Food Relief underway for 2011

The Hamilton JournalNews is in the midst of its 8th annual Food Relief Campaign to benefit Shared Harvest Foodbank.

The project started Sunday, November 13 and continues through New Year's Day, as readers of the daily paper are urged to make financial donations to the foodbank. The goal this year is to exceed the \$23,585 in contributions received in 2010.

The newspaper keeps subscribers and online readers updated with the progress of the drive by posting weekly donation totals

on the Sunday edition. The 2011 campaign kicked off with 93 gifts totalling \$3,107 for the first week of the drive.

Cox Ohio donates over \$45,000 worth of print and online ads to promote JournalNews Food Relief, and a separate drive is held urging company employees to do their part to assist struggling families in southwest Ohio.

Hamilton JournalNews Food Relief continues to remind its readers that **"HUNGER IS NOT A CHOICE... GIVING IS"**.

**Hamilton JournalNews**

**FOOD RELIEF**

PO Box 421545

Middletown, OH 45042-1545

[www.journal-news.com/foodrelief](http://www.journal-news.com/foodrelief)

## Foodbank Staff

Gloria Bateman	SNAP Outreach
Brandon Butz	BackPack Associate
Steve Cox	CSFP Director
Rick Devine	Driver
Holli Curry	Special Projects Manager
Kathy Dart	SNAP Outreach
Tracy Estes	Warehouse Manager
Bridget Jones	HarvestCorps
Debbie Houston	Food Production
Bob Long	Communication Specialist
Jack Mairn	Food Procurement Specialist
Lisa McNamara	SNAP Outreach
Chuck Osso	Agency Relations Director
Tina Osso	Executive Director
Darrell Sandlin	Business Director
Mary Stamper	Warehouse
Sam Taylor	Kroger Project Manager
Gary Thomas	Warehouse
Gerald Tucker	Operations Manager
Mike Williams	Driver

## Hour Exchange - a way you can help!

Shared Harvest Foodbank relies on volunteers to supplement the work of paid staff in getting food to people in need.

But we're just one of many charitable organizations that would struggle without the aid of

people who enjoy helping others. In addition, many individuals find they could also

use help with difficult tasks.

A new program in Butler County offers a unique concept in volunteering where people can receive services while also offering services in return.

The project is called SHARE - Service Hours and

Resource Exchange. It's a free group service exchange where members perform services for other members and record their hours in a "timebank." The hours are then used to receive desired services from other people who

participate in the exchange. SHARE is designed to help build new relationships

among individuals and groups.

By participating, you can do something that is different from your normal work, while learning and practicing new skills. You'll meet people you otherwise would never have met and get needed help from others.

**To join SHARE:**  
**Visit: [www.sharetimebank.org](http://www.sharetimebank.org)**  
**or**  
**Email: [info@sharetimebank.org](mailto:info@sharetimebank.org)**

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