

LOCAL IMPACT

## Basics can make holidays festive

Gift can connect you  
to someone who needs  
to know you care.

**By Tina Osso**  
Executive Director,  
Shared Harvest Foodbank

It is this time of year that most of us celebrate holidays – and most of those holidays center around a festive meal with lots of family and friends. We connect with each other, sharing good food, stories of things past and hopes for the future and laughing at the same old jokes that are part of the traditions we have developed over the years, handed down from generation to generation.

I can't help but be reminded of a story from one of the families who turn to our network of food pantries to get a few bags of food to help them get by. On this particular day, the food pantry had not only food, but also laundry detergent and toilet paper. Not very festive by any stretch of the imagination.

But the mother came out of that pantry with the biggest smile on her face, saying it felt like Christmas to her since she got laundry detergent and toilet paper, in addition to the groceries she needed to help feed her family until her next paycheck. She was so grateful for this simple supply of what most of us take for

**Osso** continued on **B6**

### ALSO INSIDE

» After experiencing kindness of community, woman glad to give back, **B6**



Tina Osso is executive director of Shared Harvest Food Bank.

GREG LYNCH / STAFF

## Osso

continued from B1

granted. Imagine thinking of laundry detergent and toilet paper as a Christmas present.

Unless you've been there yourself, it is hard to under-

stand how hunger and poverty affects every day living. The stress of not being able to have clean clothes or a supply of some very basic toiletries adds to the disconnect- edness and disenfranchise- ment poor and low-income people feel, which is just exacerbated during what

should be a festive time of year.

So, as you sit down to share a meal during this holiday season, please know that your gift through the Journal-News Community Food Relief Campaign connects you to people who need to know someone cares and is

willing to help in a very tangible way.

**Hunger is not a choice, but giving is.**

Tina Osso is the executive director of Shared Harvest Foodbank. Contact her at 513-874-0114 or tina@sharedharvest.org.