

You Keep Elderly Neighbors *Healthy at Home*



Vincent grew up east of the Kankakee River and moved to Porter County a few years back. This great-grandfather says his modest social security income is barely enough to keep him from losing his \$300-a-month apartment. After paying rent, he often doesn't have enough left for the basics, let alone anything extra.

Last December, Vincent visited the Porter County Aging and Community Service — a recently added partner site of the Food Bank — to apply for help. He was enrolled in the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana's senior box program, and each month since has received a large box of nutritious meal essentials to help him make ends meet. Thanks to gifts like yours, we are making sure over 1,300 low-income seniors like Vincent don't go hungry.

"I feel lucky that I learned about this program. It sure fills a need. When I come, Judy here always helps me to my car with the box of food — I get out of breath pretty quick these days."

Feeding America found that Indiana ranks 8th in the country for senior hunger, and that elderly neighbors facing food insecurity are

- ♥ 60% more likely to experience depression;
- ♥ Over 50% more likely to report a heart attack or develop asthma; and
- ♥ 40% more likely to report an experience of congestive heart failure.

Names and photos have been changed to respect our clients' privacy.

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www.foodbanknwi.org

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

From its new food distribution center in Merrillville, the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana is expanding services to people of all ages, with new programs on the horizon designed to help keep Vincent, and neighbors across the Region, from experiencing hunger in the first place. ♥

The Power of ONE

This issue's stories remind me of the amazing difference one event, one person, one decision, can make in people's lives.

ONE EVENT ... it's scary to think that a weather emergency or utility outage can jeopardize your food supply overnight. I'm so grateful that when a catastrophe strikes, generous Food Bank donations like yours are there to ensure that hunger is one worry that can be taken off a family's plate immediately!

ONE PERSON ... too many times to count, customers checking out at Strack & Van Til this past holiday season said YES to adding a few extra cents to their grocery bill to help hungry kids and families around Northwest Indiana. Each person did a tiny bit, but it added up to more than \$165,000 for folks in need. Amazing!

ONE DECISION ... this one's yours to make, as the need continues. Please return the reply coupon with your very best gift. We'll use it to relieve hunger for the individuals who need us most this spring. Your support will also help us bring long-term hunger prevention programs to fruition.

You have the power to make another difference today.
Thank you!



Steve Beekman
Executive Director

PANTRY SPOTLIGHT

You Keep Folks in Lake Station from Going Hungry!

In this historic city founded as a train depot in 1837, an estimated 1,700 of its 12,000 residents are living in poverty. Nearly half of those are children or seniors.

After Lake Station's city-run food pantry closed in 2015, members of the First Baptist Church of Lake Station stepped up to make sure neighbors wouldn't go hungry.

With help from your generosity to the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana, this tiny church community began welcoming folks in need, with a twice-a-month food distribution that today serves close to 150 individuals.

Director Cathy Smith says their visitors are mostly families and seniors. "One lady has to walk. Another rides her bike. They are very, very grateful for the food," Cathy says. "We get thank-you cards and little handmade items from people at Christmas. They tell us this pantry has the best quality and selection. Each visitor receives a large box with basics, and they can choose their own fresh foods, dairy, and meats."

Last spring, the church food pantry helped distribute extra donations when homes on the west end of town were flooded and families had to move out for a time.

Your growing generosity can help the Food Bank root itself even more deeply in our communities and neighborhoods where poverty is the greatest. **Thank you for making a gift this spring!** ♥



You help families like this one.



Thank you, Strack & Van Til Shoppers... YOU BROKE YOUR OWN RECORD!

The Food Bank of Northwest Indiana is grateful to Strack & Van Til for its hugely successful “Checkout Challenge” during the 2018 holidays. Countless customers rounded up their bill to the next highest dollar, making this our largest Challenge yet!

“The \$165,020 raised was a new record,” Food Bank Executive Director Steve Beekman noted. “Every Strack & Van Til store, employee, and customer played a role in this amazing effort ... which totals

nearly \$900,000 over the past 10 years. It’s because of them that almost 2.7 million meals since 2008 have been served to families in need across Lake and Porter counties.”

“Dimes and pennies added up to an incredible impact,” said Jeff Strack, CEO and President of Strack & Van Til. “We’re fortunate to play a part in connecting our customers and the community to such a worthy organization.” ♥

Catastrophes Highlight Need for Your Generosity

FIRE ... DANGEROUS COLD ... THE LONGEST FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN IN HISTORY.

These past months, various disasters and crises left countless Northwest Indiana residents in a new and difficult situation, with many turning to the Food Bank for the first time.

The longest government shutdown in our history shed light on the stress and worry faced by thousands of households already living paycheck-to-paycheck in our communities, leaving many of our neighbors uncertain about how they would pay their bills and feed their families.

Debilitating cold kept other neighbors without transportation from reaching the grocery store. When harsh weather caused schools to close, some children who rely on free/reduced lunches for critical nutrition had to go without. And a 25-unit apartment fire left dozens of families in serious need.



Thankfully, your gifts to the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana helped ensure no one went hungry.

Additional funds from Feeding America and other caring supporters allowed the Food Bank to go above and beyond to bridge the gap during this season of hardship.

Without thousands of good friends like you, delivering meal assistance to seniors, hosting Mobile Markets for families, and stocking the shelves at over 100 area pantry partners — both on a regular schedule and at a moment’s notice following a disaster — wouldn’t be possible.

Every day, someone faces a crisis that won’t make headlines, but is nonetheless devastating to them. Our mission is, and always has been, to ensure they



have the nutrition they need. Feeding hungry neighbors isn’t something we do just after catastrophic events ... it’s been our day-in-day-out top priority since 1982. When hardship strikes, any one of us can find ourselves in crisis. And when that happens, the Food Bank will be there to help.

Thank you for helping us be there for all in need! ♥

Mark Your 2019 Calendar!

THE *soirée* AN EVENT TO FIGHT HUNGER

Sunday, June 9 • 3pm

The Aquarium
6918 Oak Avenue, Gary

The Food Bank's signature fundraising event, showcasing the best of the Region! Includes "dinner by the bite," drinks, live entertainment, silent auction, raffles, and more.

RIBBON CUTTING AND OPEN HOUSE
Thursday 5/16 • 9am
Food Bank of NWI
6490 Broadway
Merrillville

RIDE THE REGION MOTORCYCLE RALLY
Saturday 9/7
Food Bank of NWI
6490 Broadway
Merrillville

HUNGER ACTION MONTH FOOD DISTRIBUTION
Saturday 9/14
Food Bank of NWI
6490 Broadway
Merrillville

FIGHT HUNGER. GET FIT. EXERCISE & WELLNESS EXPO
Saturday 9/21
Food Bank of NWI
6490 Broadway
Merrillville

HUNGER HIKE
Saturday 9/28
Oak Ridge Prairie
301 S. Colfax St.
Griffith

Increasing Fresh Foods Means Healthier Meals



Thanks to donor generosity and the Food Bank's recent move, storage space for fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy, and frozen meats has grown by 500%. This expanded capacity means your gift can help us distribute thousands more pounds of produce and high-protein beef, pork, and poultry to hungry children and adults every month.

New and returning corporate donors are already on board. Fresh food donations increased by 300,000 pounds during the first six months at our new location compared with the previous year, many thanks to Bill's Produce, Pleasant View Dairy, Imperfect Produce, Meijer's, and others.

WE COULDN'T BE MORE GRATEFUL! ❤️

MISSION

To alleviate hunger by acquiring and distributing food to people in need, promoting solutions that advance self-sufficiency and hunger relief, and leading our region in the fight against hunger.

♥️ **I want to be one who makes a difference ... here's my gift to help feed more hungry children and adults across the Region this spring!**

19NLI

\$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$ _____

Please direct \$ _____ of the above gift to the *Fighting Hunger, Building Hope Campaign*.

For more information about donating, visit foodbanknwi.org

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

I would like more information about:

- Volunteering Donating food or hosting a food drive
- Giving a gift to Food Bank of Northwest Indiana through my will
- Receiving occasional email updates

My email is _____

I would like to pledge a monthly gift of \$ _____.
My first gift is enclosed.

Charge my gift to: VISA MC Discover AMEX

CARD NO. _____

EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____

Please make your check payable to:

Food Bank of Northwest Indiana
6490 Broadway, Merrillville, IN 46410

Please call 219.980.1777, ext. 311, to charge your gift by phone, or visit www.foodbanknwi.org to make a gift online.

Your gift is tax-deductible as allowed by law.