



Creating a Hunger-Free Community

Pantry Times

August 2020

You Support Our Neighbors Through Thick and Thin

Jan couldn't believe it when she found herself coming to Helena Food Share for the first time last month. As she waited in line for her first food box she was fighting back tears. She struggled to look up as she whispered, "Thank you. I never thought I'd be here."

Ashamed and embarrassed, she was assured by staff and volunteers that she was welcome and that Helena Food Share was there to help. Jan finally had the



In January, Marcy's husband passed away. The two had built their lives together, raised a family, and bought a home. With

her husband gone, so was half of her income. Soon after that, the economic upheaval from the COVID-19 pandemic put a strain on some of her other retirement income.

In five short months, Marcy went from living independently

to struggling to find money for monthly bills and food. She called Helena Food Share for the first time to ask for help. Marcy asked timidly, "I hate to bother you, but I wondered if I could get a little help with food? I don't want to take what someone else might need."

Because of you, we assured Marcy we had food for her and for everyone who needs it. You and your generosity is what makes this possible for Marcy, for Jan, and for everyone in our area who is struggling. Thanks for being there for our neighbors through thick and thin. You are what makes Helena a great place to live.

In large part due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Helena Food Share is providing an average of 64% more food per month since March of 2020.

courage to look up and explained that her husband is a diabetic and had recently spent time in the hospital. The monthly co-pay for his medication was \$250. In order to keep up with the mounting bills they were down to eating only one meal a day. She came to Helena Food Share because a friend told her she'd receive "good food with a smile."

Thanks to you, Jan and her husband got help. She left that day with nutritious food and her

head held high, understanding that our community was here for her, that she wasn't in this alone.

So much has changed this year. While the world seems to be spiraling, there is something right here in Helena that is rock solid – and that is the generosity of community members like you. Your gifts made a difference, right here in our community for thousands of families, seniors, children, veterans, and adults who are facing hunger.

Paying It Forward: Estate Planning

Candie Cain Believes in Giving Back



Met Candie Cain, a longtime volunteer, donor, and now, board member at Helena Food Share, and learn why she's decided to make a gift to Helena Food Share in her will:

"I was fortunate to grow up without experiencing hunger. When I first realized that there were people in my own

community who were struggling with hunger, I was stunned. I remember well when two former colleagues of mine told me that they had used the services of Helena Food Share; I would have never guessed. Hunger can be such an invisible issue. But that awareness has never left me - we have neighbors right here in the greater Helena area who may not know where their next meal is coming from. **When I consider that 1 in 5 children here experience hunger on a regular basis, it takes me to my knees.**

This is why I became a volunteer and then joined the Board of Directors of Helena Food Share, and why I have made arrangements to leave a gift to Helena Food Share in my estate planning. No one should be hungry in our community, and

like many people, including Helena Food Share in my estate plans may be the most significant financial donation I can give to Helena Food Share. This kind of philanthropy is meaningful to me, and feels good too!"

Giving to Helena Food Share through estate planning assures that your caring and compassion for people facing hunger in our community continues.

If you would like to learn more about how to add Helena Food Share to your will, or have questions about how to make a planned gift, please call our Development Director, Liz Harrison, at (406) 443-3663, ext. 104.

Pantry Times

August 2020

Pantry Times is a publication of Helena Food Share.

Contact Us: (406) 443-3663
To Volunteer: ext. 106
To Donate: ext. 104
To Get Help: ext. 110

Our Pantries:
1616 Lewis Street, Helena
50 Prickley Pear, East Helena
Office: 1437 Helena Avenue
HelenaFoodShare.org



"I come to Helena Food Share because I can't afford fresh veggies. The produce here is amazing. Thanks to all the gardeners who bring in food they grow. My husband and I are gardeners so I know how much work it is. Thank you."

—Helena Food Share customer

Extending Your Generosity Beyond the Growing Season...

When COVID-19 hit the United States, food banks across the country, including Helena Food Share, experienced challenges with being able to get food. Food for purchase was scarce, and with less available in the grocery stores, less was available for Grocery Rescue. Being able to rely on our own garden as one of many local food sources has become more important than ever.

Unfortunately, as gardeners in Montana know, our growing season is short. One solution? A high tunnel to protect our crops from late fall and early spring weather, extending our growing season and improving the yield of the crops. The high tunnel means an extended harvest for a variety of food including tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and lettuce.

Your donations keep the garden growing and the fresh food coming. With the high tunnel, customers have more access to



The Helena Food Share garden is both a food source for those in need and a learning tool. Staff and volunteers share the how-to and the benefits of growing and depending on your own food.

fresh foods for a longer period of time. All are welcome to step into the garden, ask questions, learn tips for gardening indoors and out, and in big or little spaces, and to take fresh fruits and vegetables. Together, we are learning the importance and basics of growing and depending on our own food.

You know what they say, “give a person a zucchini and they’ll eat for a day, teach a person to grow zucchini and they and the whole neighborhood will eat all year long!”

Look what your donations do each month!

An average of 225,614 lbs of food shared with



An average of 1,122 households



That's more than 188,000 meals for our neighbors in need

Double Your Gift!

Town Pump Matching Fund Drive starts Sept. 1st!

Be a Friend in Deed! Make a donation to **Helena Food Share** between **September 1st and November 30th** and help us earn a dollar-for-dollar match from the Town Pump Charitable Foundation. **They will match up to \$40,000.** Donations can be made directly to Helena Food Share.

Another way to help is to donate during November at any Town Pump location in Helena and East Helena. All contributions will be directed to Helena Food Share.



Thank you to Town Pump and its employees for helping create a hunger-free community.



*Creating a Hunger-Free
Community*

PO Box 943, Helena, MT 59624

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
HELENA, MT 59601
PERMIT NO. 266

Pantry Times

HelenaFoodShare.org

Rising to the Challenge Helena's Businesses are Feeding Kids

One in every five children in Helena doesn't know when or where they will get their next meal. To help, Helena Food Share provides more than 1,100 elementary students with a Kid Pack each week of the school year. Kid Packs are a special pack of kid-friendly foods that provide a source of weekend nutrition during the school year for kids at risk of hunger. Each Kid Pack costs \$4.85, putting the annual cost of the program at over \$200,000 annually.

Helena Food Share seeks business partners to ensure each child in our community has the nutrition they need to learn, grow, and play. We are asking you to join our growing community of business partners as a Kid Pack Challenger! This is a fun way to engage staff, co-workers, and customers in raising money to provide local kids with the nutrition they need. Kid Pack Challengers donate at least \$1,000 to the Kid Pack program through charitable gifts made by the business, the employees, or both!

For more information email giving@helenafoodshare.org or call (406) 443-3663.



Kid Packs contain a variety of items such as milk, juice, low-sugar granola bars, cereal, oatmeal, easy mac, pop-top meals in a can, fruit cups, peanut butter, Kamut, and pudding cups.

Thank you to these and past Kid Pack Challengers!

