



# Pantry Times

helenafoodshare.org | SPRING 2018

## Help for the Hard Times

YOU make sure there's food for the kids when they need it

Randy and Mallory never thought their family would end up at Helena Food Share. Six years ago, after Randy returned from a deployment with the National Guard, he started searching for work. Mallory was pregnant with the couple's fourth child. The family's bank account was dwindling and the children had to eat.

After months on the job hunt, the couple decided it was time to ask for help. While Randy was still out searching for work, Mallory and her children came to Helena Food Share. The atmosphere was totally different than Mallory expected.

"In my mind I was thinking of the black and white photos from the Great Depression," Mallory says. "When I got to the pantry, it's like everything turned to color. There was a great camaraderie among customers and volunteers. It's a wonderful place."

Mallory recalls other customers and volunteers offering to help with her children or assist with her shopping at the pantry. She remembers her oldest daughter enjoying their shopping trips at Helena Food Share.

"I know we went there because we needed food, but it always seemed like a happy place," Ellie, Randy and Mallory's 14 year-



old daughter, recalls. "The peanut butter was my favorite thing. And everyone was so nice to us."

When volunteers and staff would see Mallory and her children come to

mean we could have birthday cake and dinner for the children," Mallory says. "We didn't have to choose whether we could celebrate or feed the kids. That's what Helena Food Share gave us, kindness, hope, and the food we needed to get by."

Mallory and Randy both soon enrolled in college. Randy also found work to support the family. The family's trips to the pantry grew further apart until, eventually, they no longer needed help from Helena Food Share.

"This is an incredible community," Randy says. "That we could get help when we were down on our luck and needed to feed our kids, that's wonderful. We try to give back now in any way we can."

The family looks back on their time of need with a mix of gratitude and humility.

"Helena Food Share was there when we needed it and we will always be

grateful for that," Mallory says. "You never know when you'll need help in life. We were so blessed to get food when we needed it." 🍌

**"This is an incredible community," Randy says. "We are grateful that we could get help when we were down on our luck and needed to feed our kids."**

-Randy, Former Helena Food Share Customer

the pantry they would grab a larger jar of peanut butter from the back to feed the growing family. The gesture was just one way Helena Food Share helpers gave Mallory an extra helping of hope during hard times.

"Our trips to Helena Food Share

# FAST FACTS

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ABOUT

## THE FOOD PANTRY



On average  
**1,590**

families receive food from  
Helena Food Share each month



**64%**

of customers visit the  
pantry only once per year



**40-50**

families get food from our  
East Helena Pantry each month



**71%**

of customers report receiving  
income, but still 90% live at  
or near the federal poverty line

# Passionate for Healthy Families

Thank you for joining Melanie in providing food

A 36-year-career in public health ignited Melanie Reynold's passion for healthy families. Melanie says her years of serving as the Director of the Lewis and Clark County Public Health Department have given her perspective on creating strong communities.



"I see firsthand the relationship between food security and health," Melanie says. "There's a stress that people experience when they don't know where their next meal is coming from and they're hungry. I see a real intersection between hunger and overall health and I see Helena Food Share meeting that need."

It was that realization that led Melanie

to join the Helena Food Share Board of Directors in January. Melanie says she chose carefully when she considered which organization to lend her time and talents.

"Why do I donate to Helena Food Share? Because I feel my dollars are really serving my neighbors here in our community," Melanie explains.

**"I see a real intersection between hunger and overall health and I see Helena Food Share meeting that need."**

-Melanie, Helena Food Share Donor

"One thing customers say is they're treated really respectfully at Helena Food Share," Melanie says. "That's very important to me."

In her role as a Helena Food Share Board Member, Melanie looks forward to finding more ways to connect customers to healthy food, recipes, nutrition classes and gardening demonstrations.

For Melanie, all of Helena Food Share's efforts to provide nutritious options for customers reflect one simple truth- "If you don't have access to healthy food, it's really hard to live a healthy life." 🍎

## How to Make the Most of Your 2018 Charitable Gifts

In light of recent tax reform, you may be wondering how you and your finances will be affected. There is good news! There are many ways you can benefit financially and continue to make a big difference for local families in need.

### Tax beneficial ways to donate in 2018:

- Donate appreciated stock and eliminate capital gains tax.
- Name Helena Food Share as a beneficiary of retirement plan assets, which when given to non-profit organizations tax-free.
- Give from your IRA (if you are age 70½ or older) to help you fulfill your required minimum distribution and avoid additional tax.

For more information visit [helenafoodshare.org](http://helenafoodshare.org), or contact Daneal at [Daneal@helenafoodshare.org](mailto:Daneal@helenafoodshare.org), or call (406) 443-3663 ext 104.

# Rescuing Groceries, Growing Healthy Food

Like you, Joe does what it takes to feed his neighbors

When he's digging in the dirt and a child comes up, hoping to pick a strawberry or simply ask what he's doing, those are the moments Joe Wodnik especially enjoys.

As the summer approaches, Joe will spend more time in the Helena Food Share garden, preparing for another harvest and a chance to offer healthy fruits and vegetables to customers. Joe has been volunteering at Helena Food Share for nearly four years, joining the ranks after retiring from a career at the Department of Justice.

Last summer, Joe helped revitalized Helena Food Share's garden. He worked alongside volunteer and green thumb Sally Bostrom to get the beds in order and a new drip irrigation system in place. While they worked, curious customers and children often wandered into the garden.

"It's a great way to meet customers," Joe says. "Kids get to see where food comes from and pick a carrot if they want."



Some customers offered tips and tricks and others pointed out Joe's gardening mistakes, he recalls with a laugh.

**"Kids get to see where food comes from and pick a carrot if they want."**  
-Joe, Helena Food Share Volunteer

Joe also volunteers as a Grocery Rescue driver. On Tuesdays, Joe arrives at the Helena Food Share pantry at 8 a.m. sharp to grab the keys to a truck and hit the road. Joe winds around town, gathering food from each Helena grocery store. The food collected from Grocery Rescue is perfectly edible, but no longer saleable at grocery stores. Volunteers, like Joe, pick the food up and transport it back to Helena Food Share to distribute to customers. Grocery Rescue food accounts for 40% of the food Helena Food Share distributes.

"I like being of service," Joe explains, "And the pays is just perfect."

Donating his time to feed folks in need is the least he can do, Joe says. It's the other volunteers and the customers that inspire him to keep serving.

"It's remarkable how generous Helena is," Joe says. "I've met people who give a lot because they say, 'I've used Helena Food Share before.' They had a need for a time and now that they're back on their feet, they give generously." 🍌

## Nutrition Initiative, a Fresh Approach

Spring is in the air and Helena Food Share is getting fresh! Fresh food that is. Helena Food Share is continuing our Nutrition Initiative to increase the healthy food available to our customers.

At Helena Food Share, we believe nutritious food is a building block for healthy communities. We work hard to offer nutritious food and produce.

We are offering cooking classes

and partner with the MSU Extension Office to participate in the Harvest of the Month. Each month, Helena Food Share will feature a Montana specialty crop. Recipe cards and information about Harvest of the Month foods will be available at the pantry. Our friend Kim Lloyd, from the MSU Extension Office, will offer samples of each Harvest of the Month dish to customers to encourage making healthy food choices.





## Pantry Times

### Contact Us

Phone 406.443.3663

Email [info@helenafoodshare.org](mailto:info@helenafoodshare.org)

 Find us on Facebook!

 Follow us on Instagram!

### Learn more

Get a "behind-the-scenes" tour the second Tuesday of each month, and enjoy lunch with us! Call or email us to sign up for a tour.



Montana Nonprofit Association



- ▶ Gallon-sized Ziploc bags for Emergency Snack Packs
- ▶ Rototiller
- ▶ Manual Post Driver
- ▶ Seeds for HFS garden
- ▶ White Card Stock Paper (8 1/2 x 11)
- ▶ EZ Popup Tent
- ▶ Vacuum
- ▶ Capital Transit bus tokens for customers
- ▶ Help with recycling fees

Please contact Hannah for more information, call 443-3663 x 105. Thank you!

## Upcoming Events

- ▶ **April 18** Harvest of the Month Samples in the Pantry with Kim Lloyd, 1616 Lewis Street, 12:30 p.m. -until they run out!
- ▶ **May 3 & 4** Greater Helena Gives, 24-hour give-a-thon at [helenafoodshare.org](http://helenafoodshare.org) or [greaterhelenagives.org](http://greaterhelenagives.org) (search for Helena Food Share)
- ▶ **May 12** Stamp Out Hunger, Citywide Food Drive, letter carriers will collect food donations (see below for more details)
- ▶ **May 16** Harvest of the Month Samples in the Pantry with Kim Lloyd, 1616 Lewis Street, 12:30 p.m. -until they run out!
- ▶ **May 23 & 34** Senior Commodity Distribution, 1616 Lewis Street, 8 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
- ▶ **June 8** HFS Lot Party, Join us for a free BBQ with live music, cooking demo, face painting and more. Open and FREE for all. 1616 Lewis Street, 11:00 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- ▶ **June 20** Harvest of the Month Samples in the Pantry with Kim Lloyd, 1616 Lewis Street 12:30 p.m. -until they run out!
- ▶ **June 27 & 28** Senior Farmer's Market Coupons Distribution 1616 Lewis Street, 8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
- ▶ **Wednesdays in June** "Fresh is Best" Food Drives, Alternating Grocery Stores (Safeway, Van's, Super 1, Albertsons)



### We need YOU to help Stamp Out Hunger on Saturday, May 12!

Join local letter carriers in the annual food drive to help our neighbors facing hunger. Simply put your food near your mailbox on May 12 and your letter carrier will pick it up when they deliver

mail. Check your mailbox before the food drive for a special Stamp Out Hunger envelope. Enclose a financial gift and mail it back, no postage necessary! All contributions will be used to feed families facing hunger right here in the Helena area.

*Thank you, for helping Stamp Out Hunger!*