

FEEDING MONTANA

News from Montana Food Bank Network

mfbn.org



I'd be devastated without the Food Bank...

Thank you for the meals you provide

Hi, my name is Cynthia and I am thankful for the way the food at the shelter here has helped me. I've been receiving meals, but now that I'm moving into an apartment, I'll be able to get a food box and cook for myself.

I came here from Hawaii. I was working on a cruise ship and was on my way to work when I was attacked by eight guys with a baseball bat leaving me disabled. They thought I had money, but all I had was 43 cents in my pocket. I was beaten up badly. I've had a couple of surgeries, but now I have trouble standing for long periods of time.

I have three kids. Two of them are in the military. That attack on me upset them a lot. There have been so many people who have shown me

"I just want to say thank you for showing compassion to those of us who are just surviving out here." — CYNTHIA



compassion—especially this place. It has been a wonderful resource and a shelter. Without it, I would have been lost.

Helping others helps me forget my own problems

When the Food Bank trucks arrive, I help unload the boxes for the pantry. While I'm here, I try to work through my own pain by helping others. If I didn't smile, I'd cry. My mother was a nurse and she always taught me to have compassion. A few days ago I saw a guy sitting on the porch looking hungry and cold. I asked him when he had last eaten, and he said, "four days ago." The Food Bank truck had just arrived, so I took him to get a blanket and some food. Helping him made me forget my own problems.

The homeless people who get food here would be devastated without the Food Bank. And the people who bring it are really kind. I just want to say thank you for showing compassion to those of us who are just surviving out here.

Cynthia is getting help from the Food Bank while she looks for a job.

INSIDE

30 years of fighting hunger together

Generosity that brings joy



PAGE 2

My kids don't wake up hungry



PAGE 3

Volunteers who make a difference



PAGE 3

A WORD OF GRATITUDE

FROM GAYLE GIFFORD



Gayle Gifford
Chief Executive Officer
Montana Food Bank
Network

The holidays are an especially wonderful time of year when so many families take stock of their own blessings and extend that out to others. I've worked in hunger relief for many years now, but it still brings tears to my eyes to see the outreach of affection and compassion from so many donors at this time of year.

At the Montana Food Bank Network, your generosity brings such joy to the people we serve. Because of your generosity, we're helping our partner agencies provide turkeys and other holiday meal items in addition to their emergency food box distributions to people like Cynthia and Maurice. For families who are struggling, every day has its stress—whether it's hoping their car starts or that their kids don't get sick. That's why we're working extra hard to ensure that at-risk families can share a holiday meal together.

Your generosity brings such joy to the people we serve.

Addressing the issues of childhood hunger

We know that hunger doesn't end with the holidays, and we're also working to continue to address issues such as childhood hunger in the coming year. We recently received a grant from the Ford Motor Company Fund to help us expand our Backpack and school pantry programs, which are so important to the rural areas of Montana where the school is a hub for local communities.

Whether it's donating funds, volunteering or contributing to a food drive, thank you for giving from your heart this season and bringing food and joy to families who are struggling all across Montana.

With gratitude,

Gayle Gifford, Chief Executive Officer
Montana Food Bank Network

Generous partnership helps expand Backpack program

Every year Montana Food Bank Network's Backpack Program provides weekend nutrition for at risk students throughout the state. As childhood hunger increases, our generous donors ensure that the Backpack program grows to meet those needs. The 2012-2013 school year saw a 30 percent increase in the number of students served, and this year we're seeing an increasing trend in participation.

Generous donations and strategic partnerships have enabled MFBN to create a plan for the school year that will strengthen the existing program and expand into the underserved areas of our state. A new initiative with the Ford Motor Company Fund and Montana's Ford dealerships has provided funds and operating expenses, and an outstanding opportunity for partnership in communities. By connecting schools, food pantries and local businesses, MFBN is helping communities get involved in helping those who are struggling in their own neighborhoods.

BackPack has proven to be an ideal way to reach chronically hungry children in all types of communities. That's why the MFBN is committed to expanding this program to all areas of need in order to fulfill its mission to end child hunger in Montana.



Hungry in Montana Report engages community members

In 2012 the Montana Food Bank Network completed our biannual survey of food pantry clients across our state. In that year, a record number of visits—over 1,200,000—were made to Montana food pantries because of lack of sufficient income to provide for the basic necessities of life.

In order to increase hunger awareness at the local level, we recently held Community Engagement meetings to share those results with representatives from our service providers, government, schools, faith communities and businesses. These meetings were the first step for enacting the specific recommendations of the report that require working together on a local, state and national level to most effectively ensure food security for hungry Montanans.

To read the report and learn more about the increasing need for hunger relief in our state, visit www.mfbn.org/research-and-reports

Thank you for giving to the Food Bank...

It gives me hope that you care

Hi, I'm Maurice and I just want to say I have a heart of gratitude for the people who support this Food Bank. The food means my kids' bellies are full and they're not waking up hungry. And that means more to me than you can know.

I learned what it was like to be hungry when I was a teenager. When my family was on their last dollar, a soup kitchen saved our lives and gave us hope. I didn't make good choices when I was young. I dropped out of high school and got into drugs and alcohol. I was sleeping under bridges, hungry, cold and full of despair. I ended up in a lot of trouble.

Everything changed for me when I had kids of my own. I never had a father, but I learned to be a father. Right now I'm working at two restaurants as a cook. I also have

a small business to help youths who have been in prison. And I want to go back to college.

I want a better life for my kids

We've had a hard time finding a place to live and in the middle of the month the money runs short.

"The food means my kids' bellies are full and they're not waking up hungry."
—MAURICE

I had never used the food pantry until now. The food is good. They have poultry, fish, canned goods

and peanut butter. My son loves the fruit platter. A full belly can do a lot of good for a person.

I'm really proud of my kids. I want them to stay in school and have a better life than I did. I know many people in this nation are going hungry, it's so amazing to me that people give to this Food Bank out of the goodness of their hearts. That's really unbelievable. It gives me hope that you care. Thank you.

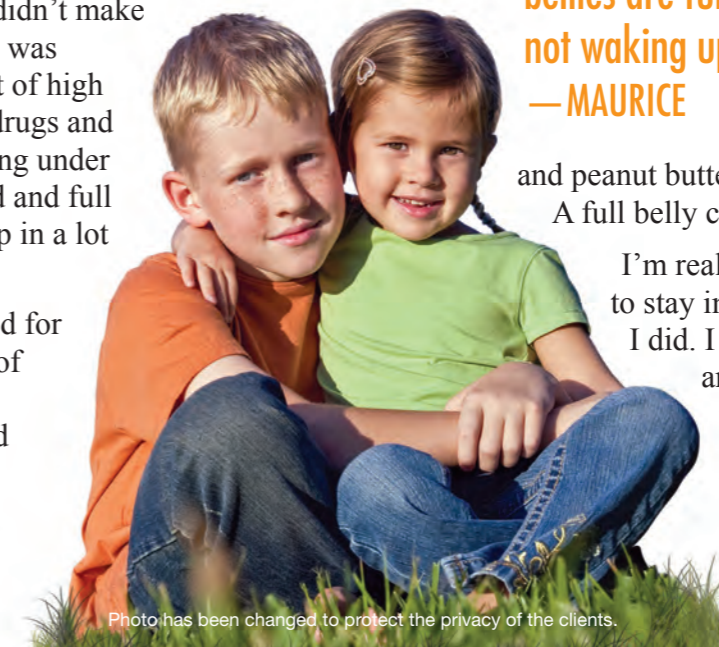


Photo has been changed to protect the privacy of the clients.

Volunteer Spotlight

MDSC completes 1,000 hours of service

Congratulations to the Missoula Developmental Service Corporation (MDSC) for completing their 1,000th hour of volunteering at the Food Bank! Since they began volunteering in December of 2011, the MDSC staff and clients have earned a reputation for working hard and a special place in the hearts of our staff. Three times a week they come in to work in our food repackaging room, bagging bulk food into smaller, family-sized portions. We appreciate their great attitudes and remarkable work ethic. Thank you, MDSC!



MDSC volunteers repackage bulk food for distribution.

Camp Mak-a-Dream makes a difference

Thank you to the more than 100 volunteers from Camp Mak-a-Dream who helped us with numerous warehouse tasks. Over half of the volunteers who helped out are currently battling or are recovering from brain tumors. Volunteers came from all over the United States and brought with them positive spirits and a great sense of humor. We were grateful for and humbled by their service.



Camp Mak-a-Dream volunteers help to fight hunger.

To find out how you or your organization can volunteer to help us break the cycle of hunger in Montana, please contact Katie Lane, Volunteer Coordinator, at (406) 721-3825, ext. 252, or klane@mfbn.org

Thank you for your generosity this holiday season

The holidays bring out the best in everybody in so many different ways—from families who in their own good conscience can't celebrate the holidays adequately unless they know they've helped someone else, to the influx of volunteers who help us sort and pack food for special holiday meals. Your gifts bring food and hope to those who might otherwise go hungry this holiday season.

Winter also brings an increased demand for food that makes it such a critical time for the Montana Food Bank Network. Low income families have increased financial demands as they contend with high utility costs, cars breaking down and more family illness due to the winter weather. Even as we're collecting turkeys to provide a special holiday meal to these

families, we're also focused on the long term, working hard to meet that daily increased demand for food from our partner agencies.

Your consistent and generous support is what makes it possible for us to reach out with food and compassion to the one in seven Montanans who struggle with hunger. Would you help us get ready for this season by sending in your gift today? You can use the enclosed form or give a gift online at mfnb.org. Thank you for your faithful partnership with us over these past 30 years.



Visit us on Facebook at
facebook.com/feedmontana

AND



Follow us on Twitter
@mfnb to see the work you support
and spread the word about Montana
Food Bank Network!

#GIVINGTUESDAY[™] A day to give back

Black Friday and Cyber Monday may be about getting the best holiday shopping deals, but #GivingTuesday is the day that really matters—it's about giving hope. #GivingTuesday

is an online movement designed to create a national day of giving following Thanksgiving. You can create a new tradition with your family this Thanksgiving and make a difference in the lives of hungry families across our state. Visit mfnb.org to donate and be sure to spread the word on Facebook, Twitter and other social media sites you use.

Congratulations to our 2013 Hunger's Hope Award Recipients

At our 30-year anniversary Gala on Thursday, November 14th we will be recognizing some very special friends and organizations who make a difference in the lives of those who struggle with hunger in our state.

MAZON is a national nonprofit which has supported our work to strengthen anti-hunger policy and eliminate barriers for those struggling to put food on the table. **Dan Weinberg of the Angora Ridge Foundation**, has been a generous supporter of our Whitefish BackPack program which provides weekend food to 175 at-risk children. Volunteer, **Jerry Long**, contributed nearly 600 hours of time in the last two years, and won our hearts with his positive attitude. **Cheryl and Karahan Balli of Studio Pandora** have raised over \$21,000 for MFBN in the past four years through donations of their custom-designed jewelry. And **Mayor John Engen**, former Missoula Food Bank Board President will receive our Lifetime Achievement Award for his years of service helping to end hunger in Montana.

Thank you to each of these recipients for their extraordinary commitment and generosity to fighting hunger across our state. You inspire us!

MY HOLIDAY DONATION

YES, Gayle, I want to bring food and hope to hungry families this holiday season.

Here's my gift of: \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 Other \$ _____

I commit to a monthly gift of \$ _____. My first gift is enclosed.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

Please make your check payable to:

MONTANA FOOD BANK NETWORK

P.O. Box 17830, Missoula, MT 59808-7830

Your donation is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. We will send a receipt for your records.

FEEDING
AMERICA



Please charge my gift on my credit card:

VISA MC AMEX DISC

CARD NUMBER _____

EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____

TELEPHONE # _____

My email address is: _____

@ _____

To charge your gift by phone, please call (800) 809-4752 or give online at mfnb.org

Your gifts change lives!

11N/13 23287-635