

# FOOD FORTHOUGHT

FEBRUARY 2019/MARCH 2019

“Ninety percent of us could never go to these stores and purchase these items off the shelf.”

## MEET FRANK

**WHEN FRANK RETIRED**, he knew he wouldn't be able to sit still for long. Because there was a need, he became certified as a nursing assistant and now works as a home caregiver to fellow seniors in the community.

Frank's part-time work allows him to help people and keep busy, but it is also a necessity for his family. His wife struggles with several worsening medical conditions, and the extra income is essential to help with daily expenses. Frank states, "Social security may seem like a lot at first, but its not, really, after you add the cost of medical co-pays and the other necessities of life."

After learning about his situation, one of Frank's co-workers suggested Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes (KLF). She had visited KLF pantries years ago following a divorce that left her raising four kids on her own with very few resources. The help she received made a tremendous difference in her life, and she told Frank to give KLF a call.

When Frank first visited a pantry, he was immediately struck by the kindness of the volunteers and how much they respect the clients. He also was surprised at the variety in the pantry, especially some of the perishable items donated by local grocery stores. "Ninety percent of us could never go to these stores and purchase these items off the shelf," says Frank. Access to this healthy food is so important.

"Being able to get support from the pantries allows families to use their limited money for other things like bills, medical expenses, shoes for their children, or winter coats."

Although Frank's experience with Loaves & Fishes helps him on a personal level, his caring personality naturally leads him to think about how KLF helps others. "Life is complicated," reflects Frank, "There are a lot of people tired of the struggle. Tired of struggling to have enough for the landlord, to keep the car running, to meet their children's needs, trying to stretch resources. Loaves & Fishes is not here to judge; only to show compassion. They are here to lift the load and get you through."



There's still time to get tickets for the **February 14<sup>th</sup> Kalamazoo Wings' Pink Ice Game!** A portion of ticket sales and the evening's Chuck-A-Puck event will benefit KLF to fight hunger.

For tickets, visit:  
[go.kwings.com/Loaveskzoo](http://go.kwings.com/Loaveskzoo)



ON SALE NOW

\*Client's name changed to protect anonymity.

## - A NOTE FROM JEN - MEET MARTHA BETKE

Martha has been on the KLF Board for over five years and currently serves as the Vice-President. Her leadership and insight have been invaluable, so we sat down with her to reflect on her experiences with KLF and hunger in the community. - *Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director*

**Q: How has your perception of hunger changed since joining the KLF Board?**

**A:** I was surprised to learn the enormity of the problem of hunger in our community. In all honesty, I looked at hunger through somewhat judgmental eyes before I really listened and learned about the many unique situations surrounding someone who is food insecure. There are so many life circumstances, often outside of one's control, that can bring someone to hunger and can keep them there. Being on the KLF Board has really changed my way of thinking.

**Q: What changes have you seen at KLF since your time on the Board?**

**A:** KLF is truly fortunate to have staff and volunteers who are deeply dedicated to the mission. They are constantly evaluating programs and assessing the needs of the community to make sure that resources are used most effectively. From opening school-based pantries to serving as the lead agency in the Kalamazoo County Hunger-Free Community Coalition, they never stop trying to improve.

**Q: If you met someone facing hunger, what is one thing you would tell them about KLF?**

**A:** You are always welcome here no matter what your situation or background.

**Q: Tackling hunger can be an overwhelming task. What would you recommend to someone hoping to make a difference in their community?**

**A:** One of my favorite quotes is, "There are no problems – only opportunities." We each can do a small part to make a big difference. Just get started.



Martha Betke, KLF Board of Directors Vice-President.

## KNOW THE STATS BE AN ADVOCATE.

As we enter the coldest months of the year, here are a few statistics to show the effect of “energy poverty” on low income Americans.

- 31% of all U.S. households have trouble paying energy bills
- 1 in 5 households in the United States reduce or forgo food, medicine, and other necessities to pay energy bills
  - o Of the these households, 40% have at least 1 child in the home
- More than 10% of households keep their homes at unhealthy or unsafe temperatures
- Percentage of Income Spent on Energy Bills For Homes Below 50% of Federal Poverty Level in Kalamazoo County
  - o Percent of Income Spent on Energy: 32.1%
  - o Estimated Annual Energy Costs: \$2,293.16

SEE HOW YOU CAN BE AN ADVOCATE FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING  
THE EFFECTS OF POVERTY AT [KZOOOLF.ORG](http://KZOOOLF.ORG)



**MONTHLY GIVING COUPONS**

GIVING COUPON:  
**FEBRUARY**  
COUPON #184

Give from the heart!  
Your generosity will help your neighbors in need.

Donation Amount  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send your contribution by February 15th.

Food Wish List: Rice

GIVING COUPON:  
**MARCH**  
COUPON #185

Spring has sprung!  
Celebrate by fighting local hunger with a donation.

Donation Amount  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send your contribution by March 15th.

Food Wish List: Canned Fruit

## THANK YOU FOR FIGHTING LOCAL HUNGER

We're so grateful for your support throughout 2018.

We hope you'll join us this year to continue to fight hunger in Kalamazoo County.



# WELCOME, EMILY

We are fortunate to have **Emily Turner Hollman** joining our Board of Directors this year. Emily is the Executive Vice-President for the OnStaff Group and has a long history with Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes through the OnStaff Dollar Drive-Thru annual fundraiser. She has also served as a member of our Services Committee prior to joining the Board. Welcome, Emily!

# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: BELL'S BREWERY INC.

If you live in or around Kalamazoo, Michigan then you're likely familiar with Bell's Brewery. Whether you've enjoyed one (or many) of their delicious brews, shared a plate of appetizers with friends at their Eccentric Café, or attended a few of their fabulously fun events, then you know that the people behind the brand deeply value the community that helped give the business life.

Bell's staff members have been donating their time and talents to fight hunger alongside KLF since 2010. Their monetary donations help put food on pantry shelves and the time spent doing hands-on work in our warehouse makes them part of our loyal family of volunteers. The business generates hunger awareness in a unique way in Kalamazoo County through its annual Snow Jog.

Held this year on January 12th, Bell's Snow Jog helped kick off Kalamazoo Beer Week in a big way. The 5k-ish route includes 11 downtown Kalamazoo stops, fun challenges and, of course, Bell's iconic brews at each location. The event typically sells out before most folks can sign up, and 100% of the proceeds benefit Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes (\$23,000 to date!). "We love partnering with KLF because we know our goods and services are going to a greater cause," said Bell's Events Manager Liz Glaab.

Bell's makes a point of interacting with their fans. They shy away from traditional advertising avenues to focus their time and support on community sponsorships and on getting elbows deep in the planning and execution of their events. The company is also genuinely committed to taking care of our planet by reducing waste, conserving water, going "greener" where they can, and even picking up trash along M-96 outside of Comstock.

Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes looks forward to working alongside Bell's Brewery each year to fight hunger. We're already getting our sneakers ready for next year's Snow Jog. Cheers!



Bell's Brewery Inc. employees donating their time to sort food donations in KLF's warehouse.

## - THE TOP 10 -

FOOD DRIVES SEPT. - DEC. 2018

**KALAMAZOO CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL**

11,009 POUNDS

**KZOO PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMIN. BUILDING**

8,936 POUNDS

**DENOYER CHEVROLET, DENOYER FORD  
AND METRO TOYOTA**

2,784 POUNDS

**DIMPLEX THERMAL SOLUTIONS**

2,726 POUNDS

**PARCHMENT ROCKET FOOTBALL**

1,816 POUNDS

**SCHUPAN & SONS, INC.**

1,501 POUNDS

**AEROTEC**

1,318 POUNDS

**PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL**

1,296 POUNDS

**EDISON NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**

1,077 POUNDS

**RICHLAND FIRE ASSOCIATION**

1,032 POUNDS

## THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

KLF has kept a keen eye on the impact of the government shutdown and SNAP benefits. Thousands in Kalamazoo County rely on the SNAP program to help put food on their table and feed their families. Even if the government reopens in February (the month benefits are currently secured through), the process of reissuing benefits would most likely not occur until March.

In addition to supporting families through the regular Grocery Pantry Program, KLF is putting together a series of emergency mobile food distributions throughout February and March. These distributions will occur at several locations and will be open to anyone. No appointment will be necessary. KLF will make a schedule of distribution sites available online soon.

If you are interested in volunteering at additional food distributions, please contact Andrea Macklin by phone at 269-488-2617 x209 or by email at [andrea@kzoolf.org](mailto:andrea@kzoolf.org).

If you or someone you know is federal employee who has lost wages due to the shutdown and is in need of food, please know that you are welcome at KLF. Contact our NEED Food line at 269-343-3663 or stop by our administrative office at 901 Portage Street in Kalamazoo.

## GIVING AS A COUPLE

Swap your regular movie night for the chance to work together on issues that are important to you. Your efforts will benefit those you are serving and will allow your relationship to grow.



### KEEP IT FRESH

Jazz up your date routine and volunteer together in the community. It will keep your relationship fresh, positive and meaningful and will allow you to unite around shared values.



### GET HEALTHY

Volunteering and giving to others has been proven to decrease stress and improve overall health. Staying active, making a difference, and spending quality time together has never been easier!



### LEARN AND GROW

Couples often have different interests and giving styles. Working together to establish charitable giving goals encourages couples to communicate and learn about each other and the community.



### LEAVE YOUR LEGACY

Planning for the future isn't always easy. It can be very rewarding and reassuring, however, for couples to discuss and establish the legacy they wish to leave and how they want to be remembered.



Help the young people in your life understand difficult social issues. Here are some great picture books addressing hunger, poverty, and homelessness:

“Maddi’s Fridge”  
by Lois Brandt

“Still A Family: A Story of Homelessness”  
by Brenda Reeves Sturgis

“Seedfolks”  
by Paul Fleischman

“Last Stop on Market Street”  
by Matt de la Pena

“Those Shoes”  
by Maribeth Boelts

“The Hard-Times Jar”  
by Ethel Footman Smothers and  
John Holyfield

# FOOD PROCUREMENT AT A GLANCE

In addition to community food drives and donations from grocery stores and farmers, Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes purchased 27% of the food that stocked pantry shelves last fiscal year. The amount of food that must be purchased varies each year and has been as high as 40%. While KLF also secures a portion of food from the Charitable Food Network (i.e. Feeding America), the Network can be volatile, making consistent food options unpredictable. Here are a few strategies that KLF uses to plan ahead to ensure their pantries are stocked with nutritious and in-demand food.



**Communicate with vendors.** Forecasting shortages or overabundances of products with vendors is critical. We also keep an eye on unseasonal weather patterns, like droughts, to know how crops and food prices may be affected.

**Keep an eye on price trends.** We also take advantage of lower pricing by purchasing in bulk when possible.

**Utilize storage capacity.** Our warehouse space allows us to purchase food at lower prices and distribute that food over a longer period of time to avoid buying product at higher prices.

**Stay nimble.** We adjust our buying patterns to avoid higher priced items, and we look for lower priced substitutes. For example, peaches might be expensive, but we may be able to secure mandarin oranges at a lower retail price.

# TRIBUTES

Generous donations made to KLF in someone's HONOR. Donations made 11/1/18 - 12/31/18.

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For corrections, mailing database updates or to receive our newsletter via email, please contact KLF's Development and Communications Coordinator, Katie Munson-Paauwe, at 269.488.2617 ext. 206 or Katie@kzoolf.org.



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### Our Mission

Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes will feed hungry people and engage our community in the fight to end hunger.

### Our Values

- Respect
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Stewardship & Accountability
- Integrity
- Collaboration
- Urgency
- Service

KALAMAZOO LOAVES & FISHES' 2019  
*Community Celebration*  
THURSDAY, MARCH 21<sup>ST</sup> | 6:30-8 PM  
AT THE FETZER CENTER  
2350 BUSINESS COURT WMU CAMPUS  
  
WE HOPE YOU'LL JOIN US  
PLEASE RSVP TO KATIE AT  
269.488.2617 EXT. 206 OR KATIE@KZOOOLF.ORG  
  
FEBRUARY 2019/MARCH 2019

#### CONNECT WITH US



KALAMAZOO LOAVES & FISHES IS A



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Joan Atwell, Call Center Coordinator  
Bill Brown, Warehouse Assistant  
Paul Bushek, On-Call Warehouse Staff  
Art Cole, Program Director  
Carol Cormack, Office Coordinator  
Rebecca De Los Santos, Human Services Coordinator  
Greta Faworski, Resource Development Director  
Linda Fuhlbrugge Fox, Program Manager  
Lizbeth Fuentes Rosas, Program Coordinator

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