

FOOD FORTHOUGHT

LATE WINTER / EARLY SPRING 2023



MEET WAYNE

In mid-November, Wayne arrived at KLF shortly after the building had officially closed for the day. “I am so sorry I am late. I had a pantry appointment scheduled for an hour ago, but I had to take 3 different buses to get here,” Wayne shared, quite flustered. “I haven’t been here since 2019, but I just hit a rough patch this month. I was hoping to get some food and a turkey for Thanksgiving.” Staff pulled together a food order for Wayne and let him know about KLF’s delivery program, so he didn’t have to worry about the bus next time. “That is great – without transportation, it can be so hard to get the smallest task done.”



MEET GORDON

Gordon stopped by KLF to give both a food and monetary donation. As he made his donation, Gordon shared, “I just wanted to thank you for helping me. In 2020, I found myself in need. I didn’t really know where to go or how to get help. When I called KLF, you guys helped with no questions asked. I’ll never forget that and just wanted to give back now that I can.”



MEET CONNIE

Connie was standing in the parking lot outside KLF when a staff member noticed her. When asked if she needed help, Connie burst into tears. “I am so embarrassed,” Connie whispered. “I can’t feed my kids. My car insurance and tag renewal were due this month, and there is nothing left to buy groceries.” Connie shared that she utilized KLF once in 2015 and felt that she would never have to ask for help again. It was very difficult for her to visit KLF, but she didn’t know what else to do. Once she received some groceries, Connie was still teary-eyed, but this time with relief.



While the client stories featured above are true, their names and images have been changed for anonymity.

A NOTE FROM JEN

In January 2023, KLF welcomed Chris Burns as its new Board president.

While new to this leadership role, Chris has been on the Board of Directors and Finance Committee since 2015. Chris is Vice President, Assistant Director of Research at Greenleaf Trust and serves on the Portage City Council. In his final year on the Board of Directors, Chris Burns' extensive knowledge and community experience will be quite beneficial to the KLF leadership team.

— Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director

Q: During your time on the KLF Board of Directors, there have been many changes and unusual circumstances facing the organization. How do you feel KLF has managed these uncertain times?

A: Every non-profit has a core mission, but how that mission is achieved must bend and flex with local, national, and even global climates. During the beginning of my term on the board, there was a great deal of growth. This included our freezer and cooler expansion, opening of the Douglass Community Association pantry, and a new partnership with the USDA. Each decision was made after careful analysis and with feedback from donors, community members, volunteers, clients, and the Board of Directors. These actions, unknowingly, prepared KLF for the challenges it would experience during the pandemic when there wasn't much time for long-term planning. The early days of the pandemic were all about action, making sure that KLF was accessible to community members who needed a little extra



Chris Burns and his wife, Lauren, volunteer at the annual Letter Carriers' food drive.

help. Since that time, KLF has been focused on finding ways to weather the tumultuous waters of supply chain issues, sharply increasing food costs, and high demand for service. There is still a lot of work to be done; however, KLF is so fortunate to be in a deeply generous community who has stood by its side throughout the years.

Q: What are some of your goals as KLF Board President during the upcoming year?

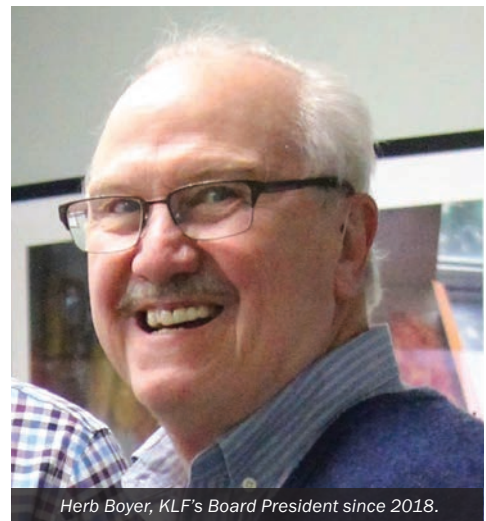
A: One of my main goals is board succession planning, including recruitment and training. KLF has seven dedicated board members who will be reaching the end of their term in 2023 or 2024. It is crucial that we recruit and prepare others to take their place and help steward this important community asset. Additionally, with KLF's food costs increasing by nearly 130% in the past two years, strategic planning and sustainability will continue to be top of the agenda during board and committee meetings.

Q: If someone would like to learn more about joining the KLF Board of Directors, what should they do?

A: Reach out to Executive Director, Jennifer Johnson, at jennifer@kzoolf.org to schedule a tour and discussion about what board involvement entails. Speaking from experience, being a KLF board member can be a very rewarding experience.

Thank You, Herb!

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to **Herb Boyer**, who has served as KLF's Board President for the past five years. When he stepped into this role in 2018, Herb never expected to lead the Board for as long as he did. However, he stayed at the helm to provide consistency and support during the uncertainty of the past few years. Herb plans to continue as a board member until his term has ended. We appreciate you, Herb!



Herb Boyer, KLF's Board President since 2018.

TOP 25 Food Drives

(by poundage)



OCTOBER 1, 2022 – JANUARY 31, 2023

Kalamazoo Central High School	22,208
Lake Effect	6,113
Byce & Associates, Inc	1,949
St. Monica Catholic Church	1,556
Open Doors Kalamazoo	1,406
Western Michigan University Athletics	1,308
Linden Grove Middle School	1,174
The Refinery	1,009
Oakland Hills Condominiums	911
Westwood Christian Reformed Church	839
Genemarkers	820
KPS Professional Support Services	799
Milwood Elementary School	692
Interkal	689
Loy Norrix High School	661
Edward Rose & Sons	632
Greenleaf Hospitality Group	625
Edison Neighborhood Association	588
Kreis Enderle	571
Third Christian Reformed Church	565
Rollerworld	537
Anytime Fitness - Portage	535
Fabri-Kal	497
Mint Dispensary	494
Southern Heights Christian Reformed Church	425



Need A Meeting Space?

We built our space at 901 Portage Street with our community partners in mind. If you are looking for a space for your next meeting or small-scale event, let's chat! We've hosted meetings for local groups and corporations, including Stryker, Pfizer, and the Junior League. Several companies have held client mixers in our warehouse, which is a great way to connect your clients with causes you support.

For more information on space availability and amenities, please contact **Greta Faworski** by phone at **269-488-2617 x208** or via email at Greta@kzoolf.org.



SAVE THE DATE!

The National Association of Letter Carriers' Food Drive will be held on **Saturday, May 13, 2023.**

This event is a great volunteer opportunity for groups and families. If you want to be notified when volunteer sign-up is released, please email Ray Kuerth at ray@kzoolf.org.

MONTHLY GIVING COUPONS

GIVING COUPON:
MARCH
COUPON #226

Your support
keeps KLF marching
on and on.

Donation Amount

\$ _____

FOOD WISH LIST:
Cereal

GIVING COUPON:
APRIL
COUPON #227

Your gift showers hope to
those in need this spring!
Thank you!

Donation Amount

\$ _____

FOOD WISH LIST:
Baking Items
(flour, sugar, cooking oil)



THANK YOU!
All Volunteers, Donors, and
Community Partners for Your Steadfast
Generosity and Dedication!



We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.

— Franklin D. Roosevelt

From the smallest preschooler to high school seniors ready for graduation, the young people of our community truly showed their generous side during the recent holiday season. We thank them for their efforts and kindness! Additionally, we would like to thank the many adults that provided guidance and helped with coordination of these successful food and fund drives.

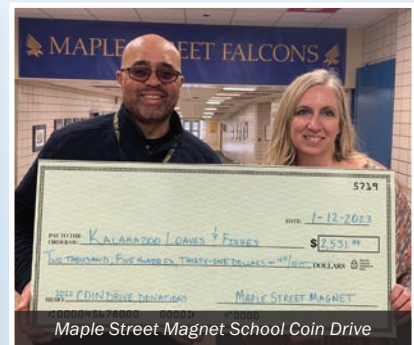


- Arcadia Elementary**
- Gilden Woods Early Care & Preschool**
- Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan**
- Greenwood Elementary**
- Kalamazoo Central High School**
- Kalamazoo Junior Symphony Society**
- Learning Village Preschool**
- Linden Grove Middle School**
- Loy Norrix High School**
- Maple Street Middle School**
- Milestone CDC**
- Milwood Elementary School**
- Northglade Montessori School**
- Portage North Middle School**
- Small World Learning Center**
- Sprout Childcare**
- St. Monica School**
- St. Thomas More Catholic Student Parish**
- Winchell Elementary School**

And several individual children and teens who donated personally of their time or treasure.

This list represents activity between October 1, 2022 through January 31, 2023.

We apologize for any unintentional errors or omissions.





Promoting a Hunger-Free Community Since 1982

901 PORTAGE STREET
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN 49001-3005

FOOD REQUEST LINE: 269/343-3663
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WWW.KZOO.LF.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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

FOOD INFLATION WOES

We've all been impacted by increasing food prices over the past year. For households who already have stretched budgets, these increases can be devastating and have major impact on the ability to secure adequate nutrition. Below are some sobering statistics on food inflation and its impact on families and charitable food organizations.

- In 2022, food prices increased by 11.8%, outpacing overall inflation which was 7.1%.
- Many household staples increased in 2022 — milk (14.7%), bread (15.7%), eggs (60%), chicken (12%), produce (9.7%), and butter (31%).
- In 2023, food inflation is expected to be around 7%; lower but still well above historical rates.
- Food prices are impacted by many unpredictable factors — weather, disease, supply chain, global conflict — which make them harder to regulate than other industries.



- In 2022, KLF registered 2,007 new households — the highest for any given year in its history.
- Between December 2021 and December 2022, KLF's service numbers increased by 62%.
- KLF is expecting to spend approximately \$1.6 million on food this year; 187% higher than two years ago.

Sources: Economic Research Services, USDA; Trading Economics; US Bureau of Labor Statistics

LATE WINTER/EARLY SPRING 2023

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Kristen Heggie, On-Call Program Coordinator	221	Bryant Strong, Warehouse Assistant	217
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Holly Hulfish, Office Manager	224	Allison Triplett, Program Assistant	221
Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director	213	Nadina Williams-Barrett, Program Manager	218
Larry Kelly, Program & Delivery Assistant	219		

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