



WINTER 2024 FEEDING HOPE NEWS



MERCER COUNTY FOOD BANK

For those of you who missed the breaking news, Community Food Warehouse of Mercer County has officially become Mercer County Food Bank. With the same mission to provide supplemental food to those who are hungry and to raise awareness of hunger throughout Mercer County MCFB is ready to take on 2024!

FLOW of FOOD >>>



WHERE IS IT STORED?

With us! We are the food bank for Mercer County.



WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

- Growers
- Manufacturers
- Retailers
- Distributors
- Community Food Drives

HOW CAN I HELP?

Volunteer your time, host a food drive, or make a food or monetary donation.



WHERE DOES IT GO?

- Food Pantries
- Residential Programs
- Soup Kitchens
- Homeless Shelters
- Youth Programs
- Senior Programs

WHO IS IT FOR?

Our hungry friends and neighbors facing food insecurity.



THIS ISSUE

Rebranding + Flow of Food

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Volunteer Groups

Holiday Celebrations

LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BOARD MEMBERS

Jennifer Winchester
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Vice President

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Susan Ference

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Bernie Harry

Rev. Glenn Hink

Michael A. Joanow, ESQ.

Tifinie LaComb

Gwen Martino

Russell Penn

Madge Tamber

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year from all of us at Mercer County Food Bank, formally Community Food Warehouse of Mercer County! Because of your unwavering support to feed our friends and neighbors, the food bank achieved a milestone in the last quarter of 2023 – feeding Mercer County residents for 40 years.

In 1983, two of the largest employers in Mercer County closed their doors, leaving hundreds of once thriving families scrambling to make ends meet.

The food bank was born from this emergent need to provide emergency food assistance to families who were left struggling by these closures, and in its first year of operation, distributed 34,104 pounds of food with the help of eight member agencies.

Over the next four decades the food bank remained steadfast in its mission to provide supplemental food to our neighbors in need and expanded its capacity. This growth includes a network of more than 30 member agencies and six direct food distribution programs.

Presently, more than 13,000 residents, including more than 3,500 children in Mercer County don't know where their next meal will come from.

Looking back, it seems unconceivable that the food bank whose design was meant to be temporary would remain serving our community today at its highest capacity in history — distributing more than 2.6 million pounds of food in one year's time.

Simply put, the food bank could not have continued to grow and meet the needs of our community without your generosity and commitment to our mission.

We humbly ask that you continue to keep our neighbors facing hunger in the forefront of your mind as more families than ever before are relying on our services to help fill their plates.

With gratitude,

Rebecca Page
Executive Director



MCFB CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF FEEDING PEOPLE



An Evening Amongst the Stars

On October 7, 2023, Mercer County Food Bank celebrated its 40th anniversary by hosting a Hollywood themed gala fundraiser. With the support of our community, we were not only able to meet, but exceed our goal of raising \$40,000 to continue the fight against hunger here in Mercer County. Please take a look at the evenings highlights, which include honorees and the wonderful people who joined with us to make the night a success.



HONOREES FOR THE EVENING:

Michael Wright

Mark Longietti

Jim Sheasley
{in memorium}

Shenango Valley
Charitable Fund



Thank you to our 40th Anniversary Gala Sponsors

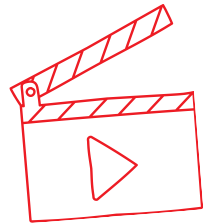
ACTION!

Giant Eagle
Jenny Kennedy

Aetna Medicare Solutions
Reynolds Services, Inc
New Deal Club

Camera

Quota Club of Hermitage
PHN Charitable Foundation
Samuel, Son & Co.



Lights

Amerihealth Caritas
Aqua Pennsylvania
First National Bank
Wheatland Tube

Huntington
JCL Energy
Joy Cone Co.
Quanex
SCP Group
Ben Bissett Chevrolet
Joanow Legal Group
Gilbert's Risk Solutions
HBK CPA's & Consultants
Black, Bashor, & Porsch, LLP

McGonigle Ambulance Service
McGonigle Funeral Home
Reinhardt's Insurance
Sunbelt Solomon
Walberg Family Pharmacies

GOOD NEWS AT THE FOOD BANK

Good News Fund

We express our gratitude for the Sharon Herald for their continued support through the Good News Fund. Since 1992 the Good News Fund has raised over \$300,000 to purchase turkeys for families in need during the holiday season. The dedication of the staff and the financial support of the readers means many of our neighbors won't have to choose between a roof over their heads or enough food to feed their families. Because of the nearly \$15,000 raised this year MCFB was able to secure 275 turkeys from D'Onofrio's Food Center. These turkeys provided our food insecure friends a joyous holiday season with enough food for today and through this food hope for tomorrow.



MilitaryShare Holiday Resource Fair



MCFB held a special holiday edition of its MilitaryShare program. With the support of various agencies including Aware, Community Foundation, First Energy, Wabtec, Mercer County Veterans Affairs, Shenango Valley Urban League, Butler County VA, CareerLink, Youngstown Blue Coats, Parke Wentling's office, PNG Soldier & Family Readiness Specialist Erica Croyle and the Erie Vet Clinic we were able to serve 331 veteran households for a total of 998 individuals. Those who attended received food, toys, resources, and winter attire. A special shoutout to Primary Health Network who partnered with us for this special event, set up a mobile flu shot clinic and provided personal hygiene products for our veterans in need.

Donation Shout Outs

Special thank you goes out to the following organizations and businesses who stopped in throughout the months of November and December to show their support of our various programs.



Shenango Valley Corvette Club



Shenango Valley Charitable Fund



CCL Container



Buhl Community Band



Sharon Tube



Gerasimek Tree & Stump Removal

FOOD DRIVE SHOUT OUTS

MLK said it best "Life's most persistent and urgent question is: "What are we doing for others?" Thank you to the various businesses and organizations who answered that question and provided the means for MCFB to continue meeting the growing need for food assistance throughout the County.



Farrell Elementary School



Wabtec



Tractors & Tinsel Drive Thru Parade



Rahab Grooming



NLMK



Shenango Valley Chamber of Commerce



Hunters Sharing the Harvest



Diversified Family Services



West Hill Elementary



Thanks to Diehl Chevrolet of Hermitage for another successful year of **Truck-Full of Hope**. The outpouring of support from both the dealership and those who took time to donate netted a total food drive collection of 2,287 pounds of food to help feed those in need throughout the county!

Welcome New Agencies



Good Shepherd Church
3613 Sharon Rd. West Middlesex
(724) 528-3539



Oasis Center
840 Highland Rd. Sharon
724-981-1731

Mercer County Food Bank is on the Move!



Pulse Radio



HopeCat Monster Mash



Quota of Hermitage Bring Your Own Game and Style Show Fundraiser



Phoenix Awards

Holiday Fun in the City

A huge thank you to both the City of Sharon and the City of Hermitage for allowing MCFB to join in the holiday fun. MCFB had the opportunity to participate in the City of Hermitage's Light up Night Parade and the City of Sharon's Scarecrow and Holiday Window Display contests. MCFB also joined in the ribbon cutting for Small Business Saturday in Sharon. THANK YOU to all who took the time to vote we captured third in both contests!



Myron the Carrot Pumpkin decked out for the City of Sharon Scarecrow Contest



City of Hermitage Light up Night Parade
(Joined by Hickory High School Boys Basketball Team)



City of Sharon Small Business Saturday



City of Sharon Holiday Window Contest



SHINE THE SPOTLIGHT



Staff: Alexis Spence-Locke, Development Director

What inspired you to work for the food bank: I have always had a strong desire to want to help others and coming from a non-profit background, I knew how much those within our community needed us. So when I saw the position become available I seized the opportunity and applied. Looking back, I couldn't have made a better decision.

What is your favorite part of your job: I love meeting new people and knowing what we do makes a difference not only in the lives of our friends and neighbors, but our community as a whole.

What do you do outside of work: When I'm not at work I am a wife and mother to two daughters, Camryne & Aubree. So at any time you can find me on the sideline of a football game assisting with cheer, helping to lead a girl scout meeting, or at the Buhl Club waiting for dance or swim to start/finish.

Do you have any creative talents/special interests: I love to craft, cook, and coupon!

Favorite Food: Hibachi • *Favorite Movie:* *Save the Last Dance*

Volunteer: Jennifer Urban

How long have you been volunteering at MCFB? 4 months

What inspired you to volunteer at the food bank? As a person new to the county, I thought it would be a great way to get connected to the community and serve those with a need.

What is your favorite part of volunteering? The variety of opportunities to be involved at the warehouse and out in the community.

What do you do outside of volunteering? I work for a non-profit organization as a Scholarship Coordinator, from home. Being able to come and volunteer provides me with some much needed socialization!

Do you have any creative talents/ special interests: I am an active pickleball player with the Buhl Park group. I play doubles and recently won metals with both my male and female partners. We laugh a ton and burn all those dark chocolate and caramel calories! Win, win!

Favorite Food: Dark chocolate with caramel



Helping HANDS

Thank you to all our volunteer groups!



Bail USA



Mercer County State Bank



FactSet



Linde



Seven Seas Pools & Spas



Primary Health Network



Sharon Tube



Rotary Club

Student Spotlight



**Sharon Middle School
Students for Charity**



**West Middlesex High School
Family & Consumer Science Class**



**Sharon High School
Spanish Club**



**Sharpville High School
Teens that Care Club**



**Hickory High School Girls
Basketball Team
+ Board Member, Matt Fabian**



**Sharon High School
Interact Club**

Holiday Fun at the Food Bank

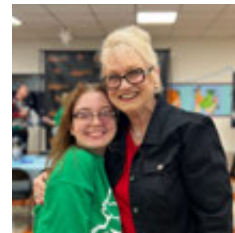
Here at the food bank, we never miss an opportunity to celebrate those who give of themselves day in, and day out be it of their time, talent, or treasure. A huge thank you to not only the staff, and our board of directors, but most importantly our volunteers. We hope you all know what you do NEVER goes unnoticed and that these small celebrations could never amount to the gratitude we have for each and everyone of you both pictured and not. MCFB could not think of a better group of people to close out such a successful 40 years with.



Coffee, Cocoa, and Cookies with Volunteers



Holiday Breakfast with MCFB Board



Staff Christmas Party



40th Anniversary Cake

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MERCER COUNTY FOOD BANK

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