



Sack Supper Sentinel

The Newsletter of Kids' Food Basket

Volume 8, Issue 1 • Spring 2011

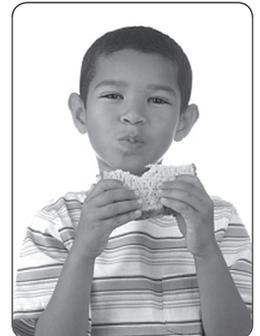
Attacking Childhood Hunger

MISSION STATEMENT:

We exist to ensure that children in our community don't go to bed hungry.

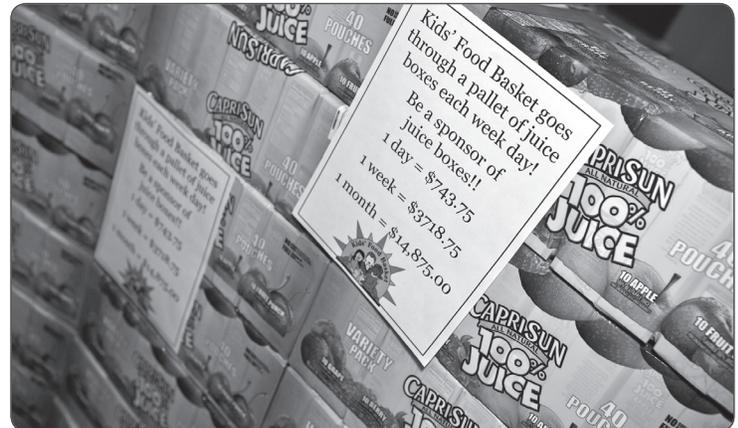
Childhood hunger hurts. It denies dignity, lessens human energy, erodes community stability and impairs the potential of children to achieve. **To break this cycle of hunger, Kids' Food Basket of Grand Rapids is committed to providing healthy, tasty, efficient and cost effective sack suppers to children who are nutritionally at-risk.**

As a community based volunteer organization, our volunteers, ages 5 to 95, come from all walks of life to give their time, talent and treasure to end hunger amongst our children. We seek to provide life sustaining meals to those in need and to silence the pain that hunger brings.



JuiceBall 2011

Talk about a birthday party! Tommy Fitzgerald threw his second annual JuiceBall birthday party to benefit Kids' Food Basket, and more than 2,200 people joined in the celebration. Sponsors and attendees raised enough money to purchase two semi truckloads of 100% fruit juice boxes; that's more than 288,000 juice boxes. With a three month supply of this important sack supper item at our fingertips, we could not be more excited. Happy Birthday, Tommy!



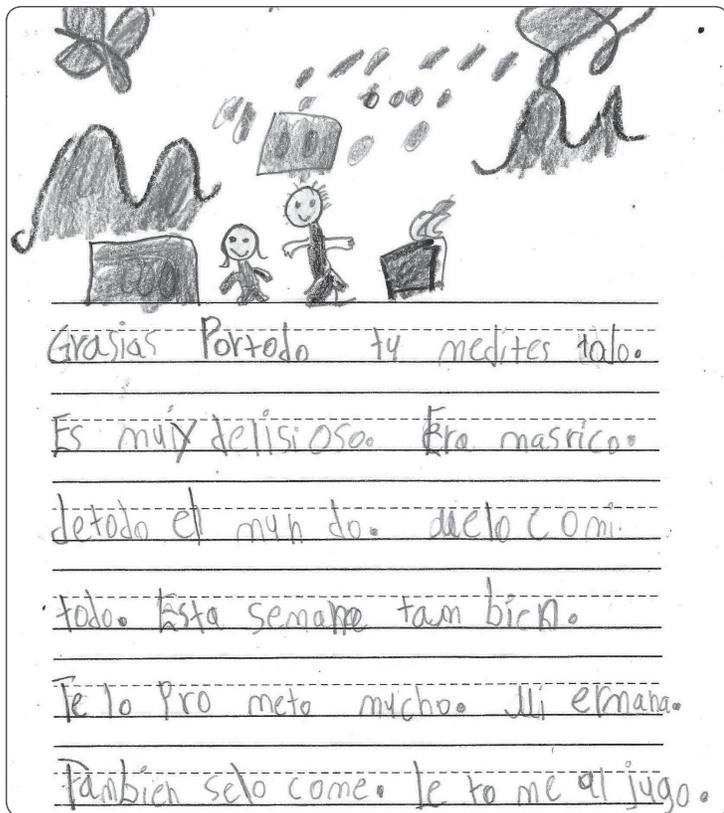
Feast for Kids

Feast for Kids is one of the most talked about meals in town. It is set to take place on Wednesday, May 11th. The American Culinary Federation of Greater Grand Rapids Chefs Association announced its winning chefs in February at its annual awards celebration, and among them was our very own Chef Kevin Vander Meer as Chef of the Year. Taking place at Noto's Old World Italian Dining, this multi-course meal is prepared by these chefs pro-bono with the help of local culinary students. Tickets are on sale now and an invitation is enclosed. Be sure to RSVP immediately as this event sells out annually.



Thank you BEARy much!

Many of you have noticed and asked about a new KFB vehicle that has been in service since November, as well as the mural painted on the side of the cooler when you walk into KFB. Friends of KFB, the VanderWeide family, chose to honor someone close to them while helping KFB achieve its mission. The Bear Mobile van, The Polar Bear cooler, along with a multi-year commitment to help us provide sack suppers was given in honor of this special someone who is affectionately referred to as "Bear." What an incredible community we live in and a wonderful gift! It is gifts like these that go beyond making sure lunch is not the last meal of the day; they inspire our staff and the KFB family. A big THANK YOU to everyone who has given the gift of a hunger-free community.



ABOVE: "Thank you for everything you gave me. It was delicious. It was the best in the whole world. I ate everything this week also, I promise you. My sister also eats it. I drank my juice."

February Sweatshirt Winner



Congratulations to Steven Kitchen, who won a KFB sweatshirt in February. Add your business card to the container next time you're on-site for a chance to win your very own KFB sweatshirt.

We operate solely on the generous support of individuals, corporations and foundations. As a friend of KFB we need your help building these valuable connections. If you are interested in introducing KFB as a possible recipient to your place of employment, faith community or foundation, please contact us for a Corporate Sponsorship Information Packet. From an Anti-Hunger Advocate (\$2,500) to the Brain Development Business (\$50,000), we have it all!

Kudos From Bridget

Bridget Clark Whitney, Kids' Food Basket Executive Director



Bridget Clark Whitney,
Executive Director

Poverty is the main cause of food insecurity and hunger. The official poverty threshold for a family of four (2 adults, 2 children) was \$22,162 in 2010. Last year, 18.6 million children in the U.S. lived in food insecure households (Share our Strength). **Here in Kent County, 33,006 children live in poverty** (U.S. Census). I find that number staggering ... and morally offensive.

Work is being done to fight this injustice.

Through our existence, KFB has truly become a catalyst of systemic change. What changes are we making? Recently two teachers from Sibley Elementary School shared with us how KFB meals provide security, dependability and of course, important nutrition. They told us about how necessary it is for their students to have an evening meal that they can count on. **At another school, a teacher told us that she would have students arriving at school in the morning shaking—shaking because they hadn't eaten since lunch the prior day. She no longer sees these students suffering these effects of daily hunger.**

As our Michigan economy continues to hurt, our demand at KFB continues to grow. You are making it possible for us to expand our services to reach more kids in need. As shown in "March to March" on the previous page, we are working—with YOUR help—to grow steadily and effectively. In fact, we are currently serving sack suppers to approximately 3,800 children each weekday at 28 different elementary schools. In providing these dinners, we know that we are taking care of our local children and preventing them from the irreparable effects of undernourishment. Furthermore, **we know that we are helping struggling families—maybe a parent can pay a bill or get a necessary prescription because his/her children are getting healthy evening meals each weekday. Thank you for engaging in our mission and for your strong commitment to attacking childhood hunger. You are making sure that our local kids do not go to bed hungry.**

With warm regards,

Bridget Clark Whitney
Executive Director

2010 in Review

We've had an outstanding start to 2011 at Kids' Food Basket, and it follows a year of significant growth in 2010. Below you will find some highlights of how we attacked childhood hunger in 2010. On behalf of the KFB Board of Directors and the KFB staff, we wish to extend sincere thanks to each and every KFB donor, volunteer, and friend for your advocacy in fighting childhood hunger and your support of Kids' Food Basket's mission. Your generosity and continued support have been critical to our success, allowing us to now provide 3,791 children with dinner each school day. Because you are invested in our mission, we continue to eradicate childhood hunger in Grand Rapids. We couldn't do it without you.

JANUARY

- Inaugural "JuiceBall" raises enough money for a semi truckload of juice boxes.
- Bridget Clark Whitney, executive director, is named one of twelve Independent Sector National Next Generation Fellows.



FEBRUARY-

APRIL

Kids Helping Kids life-size sack supper items tour schools, raising more than \$60,000 from area students.

MAY

- Feast For Kids fundraiser with the American Culinary Federation of Greater Grand Rapids Chefs. KFB sack supper recipients were guest performers.
- Hunger Takes Flight Celebration at Blandford Nature Center where 200+ sack

supper recipients released butterflies to symbolize their freedom from hunger.

JUNE

- Volunteer Appreciation Luau attended by more than 400 of our awesome volunteers
- KFB named Outstanding Volunteer Program of the Year at the Michigan Governor's Service Awards. Mary K. Hoodhood is a finalist for Lifetime Achievement and Kyle Barnhart is a finalist for Youth Volunteer.



JULY

KFB volunteers, board & committee dish out a special ice cream treat at summer park sites. During the summer KFB works through the parks and recreation program to distribute approximately 1,900 meals daily.



AUGUST

Mary K. Hoodhood is presented the Presidential Citizens Medal by President Obama in Washington, D.C.

SEPTEMBER

- Presidential Medal celebration at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel attracts more than 600 attendees.
- KFB moves in to its new location where fall sack supper production and delivery begins serving 3,000 kids daily.



OCTOBER

- Open houses attract more than 900 community members to the new location on Oak Industrial Drive.
- Bridget Clark Whitney named one of the 40 under 40 by Grand Rapids Business Journal

NOVEMBER

- Amway & KFB are named one of five finalists for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Partnership Award
- Young Nonprofit Professionals Awards
- Austin Roelofs, KFB program coordinator, is named a finalist for the Good to Great Award
- Christine Lentine, fund development/community outreach manager, is named a finalist for the Advocacy Award.
- Longtime KFB volunteer, Norm Ginebaugh, is named Humana Starlight Award winner for his work with KFB, Salvation Army and Northeast Community Outreach Ministries.



DECEMBER

KFB ended the year with more than 50% growth in sack suppers being served each day!

Youth Action Board

The Kids' Food Basket Youth Action Board (YAB) is recruiting high school students for the 2011-12 school year. YAB members work to plan and execute Kids Helping Kids projects and collections in their schools/district, and work as a whole group to plan the Kids Helping Kids Celebration as well as other Kids Helping Kids projects during the year. The YAB will enhance students' leadership, creative problem solving and critical thinking skills as they work to share the KFB story and issue of childhood hunger with their fellow students. Interested students should contact Kyle Barnhart (kyle@kidsfoodbasket.org), Youth Action Board Coordinator, for more information and an application.

March to March

From March of 2010 to March of 2011, we've had significant growth at KFB. How much you ask? Check out the comparison.

	2010	today	% growth
# of Sack Suppers daily	2,500	3,791	52%
# of volunteers daily	100	150	50%
Sq footage of space	4,000	9,500	120%
# of coolers	1	2	100%
# of sack supper assembly lines*	2	4	100%

*Assembly line tables were especially created for KFB by Amway's Operational Excellence Team (LEAN initiative).

Events for KFB

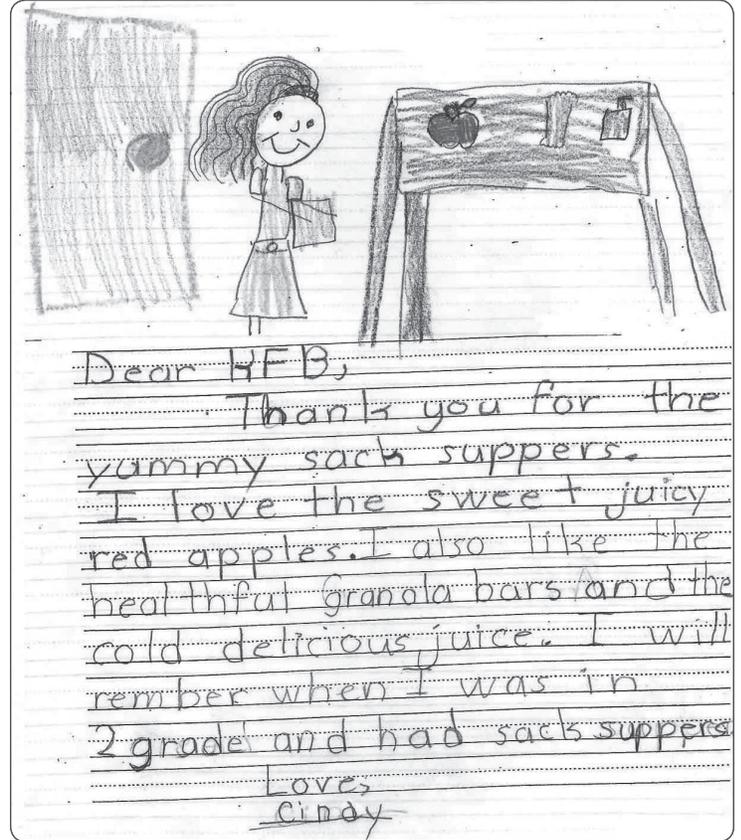
We are incredibly lucky to be beneficiaries of many fundraisers throughout the greater Grand Rapids area. If you are planning a fundraiser to benefit KFB, please let us know right away! We want to make sure we are doing everything we can to support your event. With enough notice we just might be able to arrange for our food mascots (juice box, sandwich, etc.) to attend! Please contact Tracy (tracy@kidsfoodbasket.org) to let us know.

Have dollars, will match



Every gift to Kids' Food Basket makes an impact and furthers the attack on childhood hunger. At the end of last year we were very fortunate to receive an anonymous matching gift for up to \$10,000. Supporters of KFB leveraged those funds and raised even more! In addition to gifts like this, another way to

achieve the same results is through company matching gifts. Ask your place of employment if they have such a program.



KFB Updates



Kathie Rademacher, manager of volunteer services

Get Involved in the Attack

We are up to an average of 150 volunteers at KFB each day. That's incredible. I'm always amazed at people's willingness to step up and help out. What awesome volunteers we have!!! Look for our annual Volunteer Appreciation invite in the May newsletter.

Considering the ever growing number of sack suppers being delivered each weekday we need your help with off-site projects. We need people to fill

this important spot especially with the assembly of Trail Mix. This healthy sack supper item takes time and effort of volunteers!

CONTACT: kathie@kidsfoodbasket.org or 616-235-4532



Tracy VanSolkema, fund development coordinator

KFB Donation Cards

The gift of a hunger-free community was a unique gift of choice for many this past holiday season. We are so grateful for the generosity of businesses and individuals that chose to give a holiday donation to KFB in lieu of gifts to their employees, friends and family. Through this giving spirit, Kids' Food Basket was able to provide over 23,300 meals to children in our community. I myself chose to give a KFB

Holiday Donation Card to my son's teacher, and to his delight she announced that it was one of her favorite gifts. KFB donation cards not only make great gifts for the holidays, but also for birthdays and other special occasions. If you are looking for a gift for that special someone who is difficult to buy for, contact Kids' Food Basket to make a donation on his or her behalf.

CONTACT: tracy@kidsfoodbasket.org or 616-235-4532



Christine Lentine, fund development and community outreach manager

Building Capacity with Success

Can you believe that a year ago we were at 1203 Butterworth and just beginning the hunt for a new home for Kids' Food Basket? It's been an incredible year, with the most exciting part being the increase in meals we are serving (from 2,700 to 3,791) and the increase in volunteers helping (from 100 to 150) EACH day!!! I'm pleased to report that we are within 10% of our goal to fund the expansion project.

We've had an incredible community of supporters that made this possible. THANK YOU for the in-kind donations and discounts on construction and design! THANK YOU for the incredible community support through corporations, faith communities and service groups. THANK YOU to numerous foundations for supporting this important project in our community. THANK YOU to the individuals who funded more than half the project! More space means more sack suppers and more sack suppers means more full tummies!

CONTACT: christine@kidsfoodbasket.org or 616-235-4532



Jane Berkey, operations manager

Ways To Help

Wow! What a fast and furious first-half of the school year! Operations has finally settled into its huge new area and feeling good about the potential for continued growth.

The enormous amount of food taken in over this past holiday season from food drives and individual donations was staggering – just under 40,000 lbs! This has allowed us to get to the impressive number of 3,791 sack suppers being provided to children at 28 sites. To all who contributed to this: BRAVO!

We still have some specific needs as we continue to tackle the challenge of childhood hunger in our area. One need in particular as we approach spring break is the sponsoring of the Break Bag: KFB sends home an extra bag of non-perishable items with our recipient students just before the break. Sponsor a break bag by collecting some or all of the items, assembling items off-site, collecting monetary donations to help purchase items, or doing all three.

There are endless possibilities to help out with food donations that go into the Sack Supper Program. Contact Jane about ways you, your family, faith community or group can help with this.

CONTACT: jane@kidsfoodbasket.org or 616-617-3318 (cell)



Austin Roelofs, program coordinator

Driving Out Hunger

Thank you to everyone who braved the snow and cold this winter to make sure every meal was delivered on time! It is no easy task to collectively deliver almost 3,800 meals each day, but you did it!

We are always looking for more drivers to deliver meals once per week or periodically as needed, especially on Fridays. Most deliveries happen around 2p.m. and take about one hour round trip. Also, if you'd rather help in the morning, we're in need of drivers to pick up empty bins at different schools so we can use them in the afternoon. Call Austin for more details. If you prefer driving in warmer weather, remember that summer is right around the corner, and I'll be scheduling drivers for our summer program in early May!

CONTACT: austin@kidsfoodbasket.org or 616-235-4532



Catrina Harvey, Kids Helping Kids program coordinator

Kids Helping Kids

It's not too late to start projects or fundraisers in your schools, youth groups, and sports clubs. Please feel free to contact me if you would like more information. We are currently planning our first annual Kids Helping Kids celebration for the end of the school year. Please look for more information on this event soon. We are calling on all high school students who may be interested in becoming a member of the Youth Action Board. If you enjoy starting projects in school and meeting new people, this is the place for you. Please contact me for more information about this opportunity. Also, if you are interested in having your students or youth group volunteer but cannot make it during the week, please call to make arrangements to come on a Saturday morning. I would love to work with your kids.

CONTACT: catrina@kidsfoodbasket.org or 616-350-6285 (cell)



Brad Littell, office manager

Supporting KFB

Just when we thought the renovations were over, something new will be appearing at Kids' Food Basket over the next couple of months courtesy of the Kendal College of Art and Design of FSU students. They are creating a memorial in remembrance of those no longer with us who gave time and/or financial support to Kids' Food Basket.

The students have collaborated, met with professors and are putting together a final sketch for staff to look at and approve! The textured mural will be painted onto smaller canvases that fit tightly together. Names of our volunteers and donors will be beautifully added throughout the mural that incorporates a tree, sapling and acorn, with a KFB sun.

Even though we are still in the planning stages, we are very excited for this project to begin. A HUGE thank you to the Kendal College students and Donna St. John for creating this amazing tribute. We also want to thank them for volunteering twice a month packing sack suppers. WAY TO GO!

CONTACT: brad@kidsfoodbasket.org or 616-235-4532

Kids' Food Basket is a partner in the Fifth Third River Bank Run (May 14) and GRACE Hunger Walk (May 7). If you'd like to run or walk for KFB, please contact Tracy.



Kids' Food Basket
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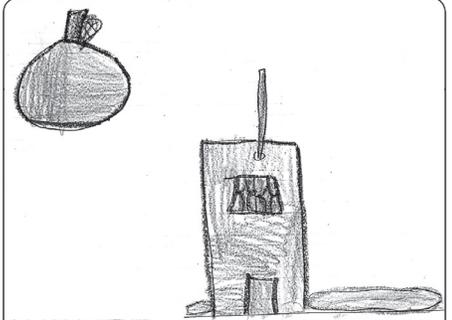
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Mary K. Hoodhood

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GO GREEN!

Save paper and valuable resources. Sign up to receive our newsletter online instead of by post.

Please email christine@kidsfoodbasket.org to make the switch!



Dear KFB,
Thank you! You feed my friends! You are nice! The zest juice boxes are great! I love apples. I love pickles too! I see you people love us and care!
Sincerely,
Hateigh