An excellent way to provide long-term support to our community is to name Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes as full or partial beneficiary of your life insurance policy. For more information, please contact your insurance agent.

Thanks to the generosity of the Kalamazoo Valley Plant Growers Cooperative and the Kalamazoo Valley Community College Food Innovation Center, KLF was able to hand out approximately 4,480 vegetable plants on May 14th to clients. The variety of donated plants ranged from okra and onions to strawberries and beets and were well-received by those struggling with food insecurity.

The effort is part of KLF’s Plant A Row program which aims to promote food security through gardening while also encouraging local growers and gardeners to donate their extra harvest to KLF to help get fresh food into the hands of those who may not have access to it. “My garden is sitting there ready, but I haven’t been able to afford plants,” said one KLF client at the plant pick-up. KLF will hand out plants through mid-June.

If you’d like to donate fresh produce from your garden, KLF accepts donations Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at 901 Portage Street in Kalamazoo.

KLF staff is reading Kathryn J. Edin & H. Luke Shaefer’s $2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America. This book is an account of poverty in America based on two decades of research and delivers new evidence and new ideas to our national debate on income inequality.

We will host several discussion groups later this summer. Dates will be posted on our website and social media pages. We look forward to hearing your review of the book!
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

FILLING THE FOOD GAP THIS SUMMER

70% of Kalamazoo Public School students qualify for free or reduced lunch programs.

48% of Kalamazoo County students rely on school breakfast and lunch programs to meet daily nutritional needs.

KLF sees a demand for services nearly double in July & August when school feeding programs are no longer available for local children.

For information on free summer meals for kids & teens, visit: kresa.org/meetup

901 PORTAGE STREET
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN  49001-3005

FOOD REQUEST LINE: 269/343-3663
P  269/488-2617  ·  F  269/343-3669
WWW.KZOOLF.ORG

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Staff / Business Office

269.488.2617
Joan Atwell, Call Center Coordinator
Cherise Buchanan, Volunteer Coordinator
Mary-Elizabeth Bell, Finance/Office Coordinator
Paul Bushek, Warehouse Assistant
Art Cole, Services Director
Joe Cook, Warehouse Assistant
Bob Dekker, Warehouse Assistant
Greta Faworski, Resource Development Director
Linda Fox, Call Center Coordinator
Joe Galaviz, Warehouse Assistant

EXT.
201
209
222
211
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208
201
211

Kathy Gernaat, Operations Director
Meg Gernaat, Marketing Coordinator
Dave Hafer, Warehouse Coordinator
Phyllis Hepp, Organizational Development Director
Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director
Deb Josephson, Services Coordinator
Marvin King, Food Procurement Specialist
Kim Hinds-Lepsy, Call Center Assistant
Jackie Smith, Pantry Coordinator
Mary Foley-Wilson, Accounting Coordinator
Laura Winther, Donor Database Coordinator

JUNE/JULY 2016
Trisha and her daughter sit patiently at Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes’ Melzer Pantry until it’s their turn to shop. When it’s her turn grab a grocery cart, Trisha flashes a warm smile and greets the KLF volunteer with a cheerful hello.

Most who encounter Trisha would never know she’s battling cancer. They wouldn’t suppose the woman sitting next to her in the pantry was a friend who drove her to get food that morning, and, judging by her demeanor, they certainly wouldn’t assume she was struggling to make ends meet.

She thanks KLF volunteers profusely for helping her shop and confesses that her cancer medications leave her with little appetite, but she makes every effort to excitedly chat about the meals she’ll prepare from the food on KLF’s shelves with her daughter.

“This has been really hard,” Trisha shares, “but this service is so helpful. Thank you.” It’s probably the twelfth time that she’s thanked a KLF volunteer since arriving that morning.

The high cost of medical bills and her ailing health has taken its toll. Like so many with stretched budgets, Trisha must allocate the funds she has to pay for necessities and, sometimes, that means reaching out to KLF to fill the food gap during the month.

Her eyes light up when she reaches the produce table. “I love tomatoes,” she shares. She places a few in her cart then turns around a moment later, after KLF volunteers encourage her to take as much as she can use, to grab a few more. “They’re one food I actually like to snack on,” she says as she tucks her second handful into a bag.

Before she leaves, she turns and thanks KLF volunteers one last time. “You have been so helpful. I’m so grateful for this service.”

Trisha is a true reminder that hunger does not discriminate. Skipping meals is detrimental to staying healthy and strong, and we’re thrilled we can provide a source of nutritious food to aide in her recovery and help her create lasting memories of cooking at home with her daughter.
For many families, summer months are packed with burgers and s’mores by campfire, lakeside lunches, and an abundance of fresh, seasonal produce. For an equal number of local families, summer months are the breaking point for already-stretched budgets. It surprises people to hear that summertime is when we see the highest need for food assistance. Over 48% of students in Kalamazoo County rely on free and reduced breakfast and lunch programs to meet their nutritional needs. For many kids, these may be the only meals they receive each day. When schools lock their doors for the summer, families no longer have access to school meals and, more often than not, don’t have the resources to replace them.

Missing meals - missing important calories - has a lasting, detrimental effect on growth and brain development. At KLF, we want to make sure that kids are given the best chance to succeed and regular access to food helps them do that. You can play an important role in keeping local children from going to bed hungry this summer by donating to our Food is Fuel Campaign for Kids. The need for our services nearly doubles during July and August, and with each dollar we receive, we can provide a child with enough food for three meals.

Thank you, in advance, for valuing the potential of our young people, and making sure they have adequate nutrition over the next few months. Your support provides peace of mind for thousands of parents and their children, and it makes all the difference in raising the strong, smart leaders of tomorrow. When you look at the children in your life, can you imagine them going without meals? Help us help local children.

NOTE FROM JEN

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT:
RAJZER’S FARM MARKET & GREENHOUSES

You could say that providing food to people is in Chris Rajzer’s blood. After his grandfather lost his Chicago grocery store during the Depression, he made his way to Michigan and took up farming to make ends meet. At the time, he probably didn’t imagine his grandson would follow in his footsteps, but today Rajzer’s Farm Market & Greenhouses proudly stands at 76301 M-51 Highway in Decatur.

Each year Rajzer’s Farm donates thousands of pounds of fresh produce to Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes. They grow 20 crops on 700 acres and always make sure to set aside a portion for KLF. “This is a hobby that got out of hand,” Chris Razjer said with a chuckle. “My wife and I started selling produce from a wagon in front of our house in 1977 and this is what it turned into.”

Rajzer confesses that he’s not one to wear his moral principles on his sleeve; he’d rather share his values through actions and feels strongly that giving to others is one of the best ways to celebrate life. During the farm’s busy season, he, his son, and their 40 employees make a concerted effort to clear as much produce from the field as possible. It allows his employees the opportunity to glean for those who may otherwise go hungry.

“I’m a believer that if you do good, good will come back to you,” Rajzer said. We want to thank Chris, his son Brian, and their employees for their support. Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes is able to provide more fresh produce to those experiencing hunger because of their commitment to doing good.
JOIN THE movement

GIVING COUPON: JUNE
COUPON #152
Consider making a Father’s Day donation in someone’s name.
Donation Amount $

Please send your contribution by June 17th.
Food Wish List: Healthy Snacks

GIVING COUPON: JULY
COUPON #153
Help ensure local kids have access to proper nutrition this summer.
Donation Amount $

Please send your contribution by July 15th.
Food Wish List: Canned Fruit

- OPEN CALL FOR VOLUNTEER -

RECEPTIONISTS

We currently have openings for Volunteer Receptionists
Mondays 8 a.m. - Noon
Tuesdays 8 a.m. - Noon
Fridays 8 a.m. - Noon

We’re also looking for dependable volunteers to sub (as your schedule allows) when regularly-scheduled volunteer receptionists are not able to cover shifts. Four-hour shifts Monday-Friday, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Please call Cherise Buchanan at 269-488-2617 ext. 209 or email her at cherise@kzoolf.org for further information.

ORIENTATION DATES
SATURDAY, JUNE 11
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29
SATURDAY, JULY 9
WEDNESDAY, JULY 20

RAISING A GLASS

Milk Means More and local Harding’s Market stores teamed up in May for the Great Michigan Milk Drive. Thanks to the generosity of shoppers, nearly $8,000 was raised to help KLF provide fresh milk to those experiencing hunger in our community. A matching donation will be made to families in Flint by the United Dairy Industry of Michigan farmers to help combat the effects of lead absorption by providing key nutrients.

“Children need a nutritious diet and full bellies to reach their full potential. We’re happy to partner with local businesses to make sure families are getting the help they need to raise healthy and strong kids,” Jennifer Johnson, KLF Executive Director, said.

MONTHLY GIVING COUPONS

SAVE THE DATE!

This Year’s Dollar Drive-Thru is:
WEDNESDAY, JULY 13TH
Every dollar donated during this 12-hour fundraiser provides a local child breakfast, lunch and dinner for one day.

Dollar Drive-Thru is Sponsored By

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Dollar Drive-Thru is Sponsored By
IN HONOR OF
Kalamazoo Central High School Class of 1954
The Ladies of the 80's
St. Luke's Church
Joan Hartman
Abigail & Tiana, Shooting Survivors of Feb. 20, 2016
John & Cheryl Westbrook
Susan Beute’s 73rd Birthday
Harvey Beute
Malcolm Kramer’s Birthday
Ronald & Jane Kramer
Jean Cox
Robert Cox
Ruth Drenth’s 90th Birthday
Ruth Drenth
Sue Glenn
Elaine & Jacque Hovenkamp
Juanita Goodwin’s Birthday
Howard & Robyn Robinson
Jason Heystek’s 40th Birthday
Gregory & Rachael Grover
Joe & Laura
Jane & Jeff Puvoigel
Robert R. & Norberta J. Renauld’s 66th Wedding Anniversary
Robert & Norberta Renauld
Tony & Judy Riccio
Jon Riccio
Dr. Josh Vander Weide
Anna Mae Miller

IN MEMORY OF
Isabel Best
Tucky & Chuck Elliott
Charles Bokar
Keith & Paula Aldridge
Patrecia Breen
Kay Baetsen
Jim Brooks
Julie Chenery
Mike Hamilton
Marilyn Burlington
Carol Grant
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Anna & Wayne Nicolen
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Alye DeVolder
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Alvin & Liddy Ivens
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Dr. & Mrs. John Laman
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Gordon Wiley
Jim Lawrence
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Erma Commissaris
Jane Leversee
Kathleen Fleece
Linda Mary Renauld Lutz
Robert & Norberta Renauld
Larry MacPhee
District Two Little League Umpires
Violet Maki
Maria Maki & Brian Smith
Sophia Marvin
Thomas & Charissa Oliphant
Garry McCormick
John Hall
Shawn & Nancy Hagen
Kathy Mizeur
Vincent Mizeur
Gale & Kathleen Newell
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