Jane wasn’t expecting things to be this way, but she’s the first to attest that it’s futile to make assumptions about how things will be when life can change at a moment’s notice.

The hard-working mother with two kids at home was employed as a CNA and peer support specialist at local agencies when she received a cancer diagnosis. Already battling a spine disease that makes even walking a challenge at times, Jane was forced to leave work to focus on her health.

“I went from being able to support myself and my family to sitting at home worrying about where our next meal would come from,” Jane recalls. She’s happy to share that she’s now cancer-free, but the treatment caused her spinal injuries to worsen, and she’s relying on an upcoming back surgery to be the fix she needs to get back to work.

“It has been a surreal experience,” Jane admits. “I used to be the one referring patients to Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes for help with groceries, and now I’m the one who needs help. I never expected to be in this situation.”

Jane candidly admits that, at first, seeking help made her feel embarrassed. She would fight the urge to hide herself when waiting outside a pantry, wondering what people thought of her as they drove by. Some days she has to remind herself to put her pride aside and remember that she’s doing what she needs to do to take care of her children. There’s no embarrassment in that.

Her children have played an important role in her road to recovery. Jane cites the love and encouragement from her daughter and son as key to keeping a positive outlook despite the hardships they’ve faced.

“You can never give up hope,” Jane advises. “Even if things seem they’re at their worst, there’s always hope.”

Client name changed for anonymity
COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT:
KALAMAZOO FOLKLIFE
BENEFIT CONCERT

K’zoo Folklife has been hosting their fall benefit concert for 20 years. Once again, they’ve generously selected Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes to be the beneficiary of their 2017 event. This year’s lineup promises to be their best yet. When you attend one of these banjo-and-fiddle-laden shows, you do so with the understanding that toe-tapping is an attendance requirement. It’s true you’ll find a fair amount of head bobbing and singing of familiar tunes, but there’s also a less conspicuous layer of something else that’s very close to the Folklife organization’s heart - giving.

“The mission of the K’zoo Folkli...
GIVING COUPON: OCTOBER
COUPON #168
Start the holiday season with the gift of giving. Your support is so appreciated.

Donation Amount

GIVING COUPON: NOVEMBER
COUPON #169
Don’t forget those who are struggling to make ends meet this season.

Donation Amount

MONTHLY GIVING COUPONS

GIVING BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER

There’s no denying that the hustle and bustle of daily life can sometimes make it difficult to connect with friends and loved ones. While the dinner table used to serve as the proverbial homing device of the American family, today’s busy schedules can make even coming together for a meal challenging at times.

At KLF, we have the unique opportunity to witness how giving one’s time brings people together for a common cause. On a weekly basis, our warehouse and pantries are filled with spouses, siblings, extended family, friends, and co-workers coming together for an hour or two to help the community. Not only are these volunteers helping to fight local hunger, they’ve also found a common location to gather and reconnect on a regular basis.

Consider gathering family and friends for a monthly, bi-monthly, or even weekly volunteer shift at KLF. Contact KLF’s new Volunteer Coordinator, Andrea Meinema, at 269.488.2617 ext. 209 or email Andrea@kzoolf.org for more information on getting your group signed up to volunteer.

FAITH IN EACH OTHER

Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes got its start in several downtown Kalamazoo congregations in the early 1980’s. A group of individuals recognized that their neighbors were struggling to put food on the table so they took up the charge to fill the food gap. What they didn’t know at the time is that their initiative to lend a hand would have a profound impact on our community. Today, those efforts have grown into an independent non-profit organization without formal ties to any one denomination or faith, but one that welcomes all faiths equally. With help from people of all beliefs and backgrounds, we provide an average of 700 people with groceries each day.

Giving members from all backgrounds pitch in to make KLF’s services possible. Some individuals choose to give money to help fund vital food programs; others donate time helping in our warehouse or pantries to ensure shelves are stocked when clients are in need. Though 35 years have passed, the same value of helping one’s neighbor remains the heart of KLF’s mission.

To learn more about how you can get involved with KLF, or to have a KLF representative share information with your congregation or group, contact Greta Faworski at Greta@kzoolf.org or 269.488.2617 ext. 208.
GET INVOLVED!

Looking for a way to get involved in the local fight to end hunger? Consider joining a KLF Committee or our Board of Directors. You'll help provide guidance to our organization, play a key role in the development of future programs and services, and stay better connected to the community you work and live in. For more info, contact Greta Faworski, by phone at 269.488.2617 ext. 208, or via email at Greta@kzoolf.org.

THE BUDGET CUT BLUES

There are nearly 40,000 people in Kalamazoo County who struggle to provide enough food for themselves and their families each day. Of those, over 13,000 rely on federal programs to help fill the food gap when household budgets are stretched too thin. In 2015 alone, 45 million Americans utilized SNAP (Supplemental Food Assistance Program). The program lifted 4.6 million Americans above the poverty line, including two million children and 366,000 seniors. Programs like SNAP are vital to making ends meet for so many in our country, and the effects of sudden drastic cuts to federal programs like these would be felt by far more than those who rely on them to fill bare cupboards.

According to the USDA's Economic Research Service, every $1 billion of retail generated by SNAP creates $340 million in farm production and thousands of jobs. Agriculture is Michigan's second largest industry and over 1000 Michigan farmers livelihood is attached to federal food programs. A 25 percent cut to SNAP (as previously proposed by the Trump Administration) would greatly affect local grocers who rely on SNAP as a percentage of overall annual sales as well as add further strain to already burdened food banks and meal service programs.

People utilizing federal food programs, especially seniors, see a lower risk of diet-related illness and disease due to better access to nutritious food. These individuals could see an uptick in medical costs from funding cuts because access to food programs save taxpayers millions on healthcare costs each year. Consider programs like Meals on Wheels, which served over 219 million meals to 2.4 million homebound seniors in 2016. Many enrolled in the program would be unable to stay in their homes if it weren’t for the service because of the high price of medical care.

It’s important to remember that just because someone may not need a helping hand today, doesn’t mean they won’t need one in the future. Programs that help Americans meet their basic needs are vital to a thriving economy, strong workforce, and a healthy lifestyle. When basic needs go unmet, we diminish the chance for a brighter future.

HOLIDAY TRIBUTE GIFTS

GIVE A GIFT THAT WILL HELP OTHERS THIS YEAR

- Your gift stays local.
- For every dollar gifted, you’ll provide three meals for someone in need.
- KLF can provide to you or mail special gift recognition cards for your gift recipients.

Contact Greta Faworski at Greta@kzoolf.org or 269.488.2617 ext. 208 for further info on donating to KLF.
TRIBUTES

7/13/17 - 9/11/17 Special thanks to those who honor friends and family through contributions to KLF!

IN HONOR OF

Lee Accorso
Sam & Barb Accorso
Stuart Crowell & Caitlin Eberly
Nancy & Ron Crowell
Harold Fitzgerald
William Fitzgerald
Jane Hamilton's Birthday
Carol Payne Smith
Ruthann Humphrey
Stephen Humphrey
Jennifer Johnson
Jon Riccio

Kalamazoo Central Class of 1954
The Ladies of the 80s
Jean M. Lealofi
Sam Lealofi & Paul Lamphere
Our Children
Robert & Loree Bagley
Barbara Redmond
Marie Shane’s Birthday
Sidonie L. Shane
St. Luke’s Episcopal Church
Joan Hartman
Virginia Weller's Birthday
Earl & Nancy Hyde
Linda & Paul Wienir’s Anniversary
Nan Goldenthal
Thomas & Lauretta Holmes

IN MEMORY OF

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Benjamin Betterley
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Megan Mazur
Charles Bowman
Dana & Becky Beauchamp
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Lillis McWethy
Carol E. Bailey
Kathy Mizeur
Vincent H. Mizeur
My Mom and Dad
Catherine Peck
Jaimie Oorbeck
Karl W. Westra

IN HONOR OF

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Ms. Elizabeth G. Roelofs
Mr. Jeffrey Rostami
Darrel M. Rostami
Antonia H. Rostami
Robert & Norberta Renauld
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Joyce & Marshall Draper
Lois West
Jackie & Craig Splinter
Barney Westra
Karl W. Westra

Welcome, Katie!

Thank You For Your Patience!

Our development office had vacant positions this summer and, consequently, gift acknowledgements took longer than usual.
We’re very excited to be fully staffed again!

For corrections or mailing database updates, please contact KLF's new Development Assistant, Katie Paauwe, at 269.488.2617 ext. 206 or Katie@kzoolf.org.
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

WHERE KLF’s FOOD COMES FROM

31% | The Charitable Food Network
Low-to-no-cost food through our partnership with the Food Bank of South Central Michigan and the Feeding America network.

27% | Purchased Food
We turn to the wholesale market to purchase food that’s not typically donated or available through the charitable food network.

23% | Food Rescue
Grocery store food destined for the dumpster because of “sell by” dates and slight imperfections that’s still nutritious and edible.

8% | Community Food Drives
Donated food from our supportive community.

6% | Government Supplied Food
Food we receive from the USDA and Commodities Supplemental Food Program.

5% | Farms + Growers
Food we receive local, and not-so-local, growers and farmers.

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Staff / Business Office

269.488.2617
Joan Atwell, Call Center Coordinator
Bill Brown, Warehouse Assistant
Paul Bushek, On-Call Warehouse Staff
Art Cole, Services Director
Carol Cormack, Office Coordinator
Bob Dekker, On-Call Warehouse Staff
Greta Faworski, Resource Development Director
Linda Fox, Call Center Coordinator
Lizbeth Fuentes Rosas, Bilingual Call Center Assistant
Joe Galaviz, Warehouse Co-Coordinator

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Dave Hafer, Warehouse Co-Coordinator
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Kim Hinds-Lepsy, Melzer Pantry Coordinator
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Phyllis Hepp, Organizational Development Director
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Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director
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Deb Josephson, Services Coordinator
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Marvin King, Food Procurement Specialist
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Ray Kuerth, Warehouse Assistant
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201
Andrea Meinema, Volunteer Coordinator
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Katie Pauwels, Development Assistant
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Jackie Smith, Douglass Pantry Coordinator
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