



Summer 2026

FEEDING *the* HUNGRY

Letter from the CEO

When I stop to think about the number of partners the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas has supporting our mission, it is truly mind-boggling. Last year, the Food Bank distributed more than 9.4 million pounds of food. That's the equivalent of 235 tractor-trailer loads of food! When you realize that most of the food was donated, it's even more impressive.

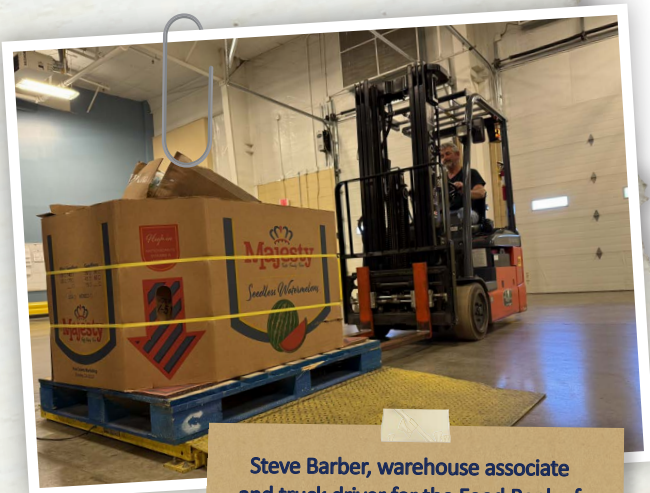
One of our largest channels of food donations is our Retail Store Donation Program. Every day, grocery stores, restaurants, and convenience stores across Northeast Arkansas are donating their surplus food items to our food pantry network. Nutritious protein, fresh fruits and vegetables, canned goods, and bakery items are among the things we receive from our retail donors. And many of these locations have been regular donors for two decades!

Other partners show their support in different ways. Greenway Equipment has supported the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas for a number of years by conducting a fundraiser in partnership with Jason Aldean. This year's fundraiser took things to a whole new level. Jason Aldean gave a benefit concert at the East Arkansas Community College Fine Arts Center in Forrest City to benefit the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas, the Arkansas Foodbank, and the Southeast Missouri Food Bank. The event raised more than \$172,000 to fight hunger!

It takes partners of all kinds to enable the Food Bank to carry out its mission. And we want you to know that we are grateful to count you among our partners! Thousands of people throughout Northeast Arkansas giving what they can adds up to making a big impact in the fight against hunger. Thank you for your generosity!



(From left) Emily Piechocki (Arkansas Foodbank), Christie Jordan (CEO of the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas), Bill Midkiff (Greenway CEO), Jason Aldean, Joey Keys (Southeast Missouri Food Bank), and Rebecca Hendrix (Chief Development Officer of the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas) celebrate the total raised by Aldean's benefit concert in April of this year.



Steve Barber, warehouse associate and truck driver for the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas, weighs a pallet of donated products from a retail store.



With Gratitude,

Christie Jordan
Christie Jordan



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Staff Directory

Terry Austin, *Development Officer- Grants & Media*
Steve Barber, *Warehouse Associate & Truck Driver*
Marty Black, *Warehouse Associate & Truck Driver*
Laura Dunivan, *Agency Relations Coordinator*
Jeff Fielder, *Compliance & Facilities Manager*
Angela Finley, *Development Assistant*
Ethan Frazier, *Warehouse Manager*
Allan Garner, *Director of Operations*
Jennifer Hannah, *Chief Program Officer*
Rebecca Hendrix, *Chief Development Officer*
Chrissy Holbrook, *Development Officer*
Elizabeth Johnson, *Donor Engagement Coordinator*
Christie Jordan, *Chief Executive Officer*
Bonnie Mamula, *Office Manager*
Lauren Mick, *Administrative Assistant*
Scarlett Mullins, *Service Insights Coordinator*
Natalie Neal, *USDA Coordinator*
Gary Phillips, *Food Sourcing Coordinator*
Adam Stanage, *Warehouse Associate*
LaToya Wallace, *Agency Relations Coordinator: Child and Senior Programs*

For all the latest information,
visit our website at
FoodBankofNEA.org

We're very social!
Join us on:



@FoodBankofNEA



Country music star Jason Aldean performs at the "amped acoustic" benefit concert held in April of this year. The concert raised nearly \$173,000 for three food banks in the region, including the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas.

Jason Aldean Greenway Equipment Brings Star Power to Fight Hunger

On April 18, country music artist Jason Aldean and the "big green tractor" folks from Greenway Equipment continued their collaborative fight against food insecurity, raising \$172,912.36 to help hungry neighbors.

Aldean performed an "amped acoustic" concert at University of Arkansas – East Arkansas Community College in Forrest City. The intimate venue ensured a personal setting, and Aldean delivered a great show.

Event proceeds were donated to the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas, the Arkansas Foodbank, and the Southeast Missouri Food Bank.

"We are grateful to Greenway Equipment for being long-time supporters of the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas. Their fundraiser this year took things to a whole new level!" said Christie Jordan, CEO for the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas. "Thanks to partnerships like Greenway Equipment and Jason Aldean, the Food Bank can continue to provide emergency food assistance to people facing hunger."

"For eight years, this fundraiser has reflected Greenway Equipment's ongoing commitment to fighting food insecurity in the communities we serve," said Greenway CEO Bill Midkiff. "Jason Aldean also has a genuine passion for helping address hunger and connects authentically with rural, hardworking communities, making him a natural fit for this effort. Thanks to the continued support of our partners, customers, and Jason himself, we've now raised nearly \$1.2 million, helping provide approximately 4.7 million meals to families who need it most."

From Field to Table: Corn Effort Benefits Families in Northeast Arkansas

For the second consecutive year, Greene County farmer Cliff Carter did the planting and tending so that Northeast Arkansas neighbors could reap the benefits. Carter and his team sowed three acres of sweet corn in a Marmaduke-area field, with the understanding that the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas would handle the harvest.

Carter coordinated the effort with the Food Bank's Chief Development Officer, Rebecca Hendrix. As was the case in 2025, the Food Bank called on its cadre of willing volunteers to sweat it out for a good cause when the corn was ready to harvest.

Funding for this project came from an "Access to Local Foods" grant provided by the Arkansas Community Foundation in Little Rock.



Early growth of the sweet corn planted by Cliff Carter on some of his acreage near Marmaduke, Ark.

Retail Donations Make Big Impact

An important but often understated source of food donations is the retail sector of the local economy. From big-box retailers to convenience stores, urban shopping centers to rural value stores, international chains to independent markets — across the spectrum of stores in Northeast Arkansas, a great many of them donate groceries and products to help fight food insecurity.

In 2025, donations from retail stores to the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas and its partner agencies totaled 2.2 million pounds. “In most cases, arrangements have been made for representatives of local food pantries or agencies to pick up the donations directly from these stores,” said Gary Phillips, Food Sourcing Coordinator for the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas. (Learn more about Gary on Page 4!)

In April and May of this year, Walmart and Sam’s Club stores held their annual “Fight Hunger. Spark Change” campaign in coordination with Feeding America. Funds raised from this campaign will benefit local food banks, including the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas. As part of promotions for this campaign, the Food Bank highlighted the relationship between the Walmart Supercenter Store #229 in Trumann, Ark., and the Trumann Food Pantry.

Under the leadership of store manager Jake Gaddis, the Trumann Walmart store donated over 119,000 pounds of



Gary Phillips (left) presents a plaque to Jake Gaddis, store manager of the Walmart Supercenter in Trumann, Ark., commemorating the Trumann store’s 2025 total of 119,309 pounds of food donated.

food to the Trumann Food Pantry in 2025, which was in turn distributed to neighbors in the Trumann area who were experiencing hunger and food insecurity. The Trumann store’s total was the highest amount donated by a Walmart store in the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas’ 12-county service area. In total, local Walmart stores donated 1,504,674 pounds of food. Walmart’s Neighborhood Markets donated 204,773 pounds to local agencies, and the Jonesboro Sam’s Club donated 533,050 pounds.

Phillips makes regular contacts with managers of local retail establishments across Northeast Arkansas. Stores that are not currently donating but would like to learn more are encouraged to contact him at gphillips@foodbankofnea.org or by calling (870) 932-3663.



TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

PRESENTED BY

**SOMEWHERE,
SOMEONE'S
BOWL IS
EMPTY**

SEPTEMBER 24TH | 11:30AM-1:00PM
FOOD BANK OF NEA, 3414 ONE PLACE, JONESBORO

SCAN ME





Employee Spotlight

Gary Phillips, Food Sourcing Coordinator

Gary Phillips is the Food Sourcing Coordinator for the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas, a job that fits his years of experience in retail and grocery management. However, he is also a man of many interests, skills, and accomplishments. Earlier this year, he published a novel, and a collection of short stories will follow. He's an avid reader (and collector!) and enjoys a good concert when he can find the time.

Q What brought you to work at the Food Bank?

A I spent my entire life in retail management and had retired. I saw the posting for this job and thought it would be a good fit. It has indeed been a great fit.

Q What is your favorite part of the job?

A Part of my job is visiting donors. Meeting people is a real pleasure, especially when they know you're there to help someone else. I've met so many people over the past two years and reconnected with so many people I worked with in the retail world.

Q What is your LEAST favorite part of the job?

A The understanding that as hard as we have worked, food insecurity still exists in our community. Seeing this every day is hard. As our community grows, so does the number of food-insecure friends and neighbors. It could be someone you know and have no idea they don't have enough food. This is what keeps me up at night.

Q What has impacted you most since you started working here?

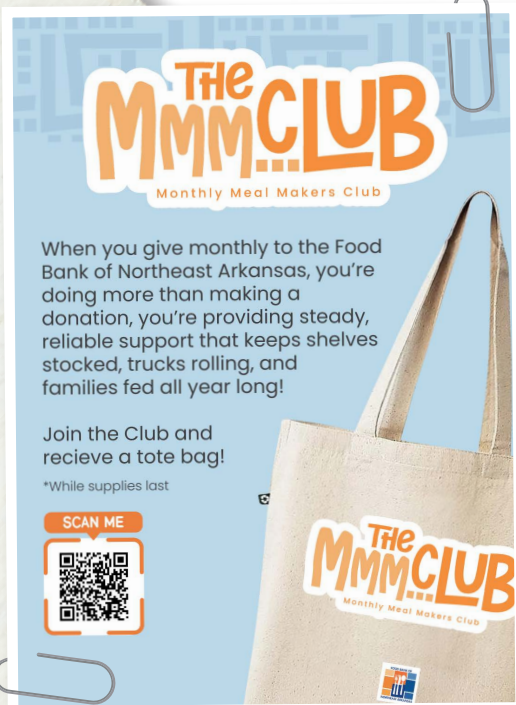
A The generosity of the community. Whenever there is a need, this community steps up. It's inspiring and uplifting to see that generosity every day. Our last Fill The Food Bank event, which shattered our goal of 350,000 meals with 542,000 meals, is a testament to the giving spirit of our community.

Q If you could choose three to five people (living or dead) to have dinner with, who would you choose, and why?

A Neil Degrasse Tyson – I've read all his books, seen him in person a few times, but his knowledge of the universe would be incredible to hear over dinner.

Nicola Tesla – His impact on the world cannot be understated. Grotesquely misunderstood during his lifetime, it's only been recently that his genius has started to be understood. I would love to tell him how he impacted the world after dying penniless and unknown.

My father – I lost him over 25 years ago, and there's not a day that goes by that I don't wish I could talk to him again, if even just for a couple hours.



The MMM CLUB
Monthly Meal Makers Club

When you give monthly to the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas, you're doing more than making a donation, you're providing steady, reliable support that keeps shelves stocked, trucks rolling, and families fed all year long!

Join the Club and receive a tote bag!
*While supplies last

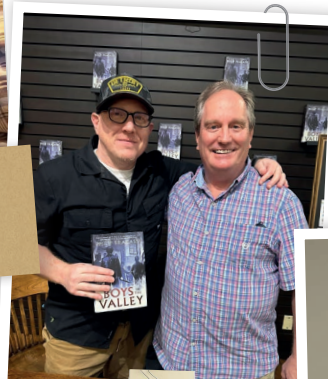
SCAN ME



The MMM CLUB
Monthly Meal Makers Club



Gary and his wife, Vicki, to whom he's been married for 43 years.



Gary and one of his fellow authors and friends, horror novelist Philip Fracassi.



Gary stands with Irish mystery novelist John Connolly, one of his favorite authors.