

Full Plate Press

Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank

Summer 2012

A quarterly publication of Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank which includes the Western Upper Peninsula Food Bank, Houghton; Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank, Ishpeming; Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank, Sault Ste. Marie; the Manna Project, Petoskey; Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank, Cadillac; Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank, Grand Rapids; Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank, Benton Harbor and Food Rescue of Northwest Michigan, Traverse City.

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JOHN ARNOLD'S LEGACY

On Sunday morning, March 25, John Arnold (1950-2012) quietly passed away at home in the company of his family. He was diagnosed with prostate cancer six years ago.

For 21 years, John directed Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank, shepherding it through three different warehouses, a huge expansion in reach and a name-change. His ideas and the fire with which he advocated them left a permanent imprint on food banking in the United States. Mention his name to those who knew him, and a flicker of a smile will cross their faces. John was a man with a vision.

"I knew within the first hour of meeting John that this was a person I really wanted to get to know," Susannah Morgan recalled. Morgan, executive director of the Food Bank of Alaska, met John in 2002 when they served together on Feeding America's Allocation Task Force. The two became close friends.

"He was a bundle of passion bound by intelligence," Morgan said. "He was a fierce advocate, but he always wanted to work effectively — to use data to build knowledge to create programs that actually affected change."

Possibly John's most innovative program was the Mobile Food Pantry. John took old beverage trucks, loaded them with fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy and bread, and sent them into communities where grocery stores were scarce. The idea caught on and is now used by 129 Feeding America food banks across the country.

John was first confronted with hunger on a Boy Scout trip to New York City at age 13. According to the now legendary story, John



saw an elderly woman eating food out of a dumpster. The shock of that sight changed the course of his life. "Nobody's grandma should have to eat garbage on the street," he told the Grand Rapids Press in 2005. "I wanted to be involved with helping with that somehow."

Prompted by his concern for the individual, John launched the Waste Not Want Not campaign. The central idea was client choice: Give food pantry clients the freedom to choose the foods they want, and the food pantry will be more efficient. Like mobile pantries, client choice is now the national standard advocated by food banks.

As Morgan put it, "Client choice is dignity and efficiency elegantly combined."

During his career, from founding the Central Illinois Food Bank in 1982 to retiring from Feeding America West Michigan in 2010, John distributed some 321 million pounds of food. As he neared the end of his life, John didn't want this astounding career to become a monument. He believed hunger could be solved, and that the resources to do this were at hand. He didn't want to be remembered so much as to have his work continued.

Ken Estelle, CEO of Feeding America West Michigan, is carrying John's vision into the future. "John's passion and vision for a hunger-free America continues through us here in Michigan and across the country," Ken said. "The combination of compassion and creativity he brought to food banking has forever changed how we fight hunger."

Ken's Keyboard



Ken Estelle, CEO

I am continually amazed at the passion and dedication our community displays toward fighting hunger. It is very encouraging to work with the many West Michigan organizations committed to helping those that may not

fight hunger throughout all of Michigan, you can support the Food Bank Council of Michigan. We are a member of this council, and I currently serve as a board member on the executive committee. The FBCM supports all the food banks in our state by coordinating government commodities as well as Michigan-grown produce.

To fight hunger throughout West Michigan, you can work with us at Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank. We serve 40 Michigan counties by working with nearly 1,300 agencies — pantries, shelters, soup kitchens and others. We are always encouraged to see so many volunteers and financial partners working to ensure food is always available to those who need it throughout these 40 counties.

To fight hunger in your specific community, you can look for those food pantries, shelters or soup kitchens that serve your local community. Most of these agencies are happy to accept your donations of time or money. You can also help these community agencies by donating on their behalf at the Food Bank. The money used "on account" at the Food Bank typically provides 10 times more food than if that money was spent at the grocery store.

No matter how you help, your support for hunger relief is positively impacting people that are forced to choose between food and other necessities every day. Thank you for your partnership!

know if they have enough food for their next meal.

Sometimes, with so many organizations involved in hunger relief, it is difficult to know how best to help. To put this in perspective, I would offer this approach:

To fight hunger across the USA, you can support the Feeding America national office based in Chicago. Feeding America is made up of over 200 food banks from around the country, covering every state. Our national office supports food banks by arranging national food donations and coordinating access to food from around the country. We receive over 40% of our food through Feeding America sources.

Client Story: The Food Pantry Coordinator

On a snowy April morning, Cindy stood in line outside a church in Coopersville, Michigan. She was waiting for the Mobile Food Pantry to open so she could collect her groceries for the week.

Cindy hadn't always stood in line. A few years ago, she worked for the pantry run by Coopersville Cares, stocking its shelves with food from Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank. Then a difficult surgery left her unable to work, and cuts to her husband's hours reduced her income even more. She quickly found herself in need of the assistance that, for so many years, she had helped provide.

In spite of her circumstances, Cindy isn't downtrodden. "I'm an inventive cook," she said with a grin. The fresh fruits, vegetables, and dairy at Feeding America West Michigan's mobile food pantry give her a lot to work with. As a former food pantry coordinator, Cindy also appreciates the lack of waste in the system. Any groceries left over from the Mobile Pantry fill the shelves of Coopersville Cares' pantry.

"Everybody could use a little handout," Cindy said, then thought for a moment. "It's not a handout. It's a hand up."

Thank you for helping West Michigan neighbors like Cindy. With your support, Feeding America West Michigan will be there for Cindy for as long as she needs.



DONORS LIKE YOU FIGHTING HUNGER TODAY AND TOMORROW

Anne Copps got her first tour of the Food Bank from John Arnold 10 years ago. She was impressed with what she saw: a 40-county hunger-fighting machine run on the dedication of its small staff, the passion of its many volunteers and the generosity of its donors. She was so impressed with the Food Bank's ability to relieve hunger in West Michigan that she became a donor herself.

Anne's heart for families in need began long before she toured the Food Bank. While working as an occupational therapist in the Grand Rapids Public School system, she saw firsthand the poverty in many of her students' lives. "I went to children's homes," she said. "There was a lot of need — a lot of need."

One image stays with her to this day: refrigerators set out on roofs in the winter to keep the food cold. For impoverished families, it was a choice between paying for

heat and paying for electricity. In the harsh Michigan winter, heat won out.

For Anne, not helping families in need was unthinkable: "I've been blessed. My family had a company in Holland — Donnelly — and they went public, and we received a substantial benefit. I feel I have to share it."

When a series of power failures made it clear that the Food Bank could no longer operate without a generator, Anne was among the small group of donors who stepped up. Together with the Baldwin Foundation, the Fremont Area Community Foundation, Buist Electric Company and the Thomas and Geraldine Seyferth Fund of the Community Foundation for Muskegon County, Anne purchased the generator that now protects the food West Michigan families depend on in hard times.

Anne's gift has ensured the future of Feeding America West Michigan, and you can too.

If you share Anne's commitment to the Food Bank, consider making a planned gift. When you leave a charitable bequest, you plant a seed of compassion that will nourish West Michigan families in years to come.

Whatever your financial situation,



Anne Copps, one of our generous donors

you can help. Consider this: Muskegon County, one of the most highly populated in West Michigan, has 31,000 food-insecure people. A bequest of only 5% on an estate of \$150,000 could provide a meal to all of them. That's the power of your gift in the hands of the Food Bank.

The need that first prompted Anne to support Feeding America West Michigan still exists. Making a planned gift to Feeding America West Michigan is one of the surest ways to improve the lives of people in your community. Please consider us when planning for the future.

If you're interested in planned giving, call Linda Vanderbaan at 616-389-6356 or email her at lindav@feedingamerica-westmichigan.org to find out how you can get started.



Some of the donors who made the new generator possible

Leave a Legacy: Top Ten Planned Giving Ideas

1. Prepare a will. Only 35% of those who pass away have a valid will. Without a will, you may lose control over your assets and may not be able to specify a guardian for your children.
2. Leave a specific dollar amount or a percentage of the assets in your will to "Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank, a Michigan non-profit corporation." Less than 8% of American households have included a bequest to a charity in an estate plan, yet more than 82% make annual charitable gifts.
3. Consider using assets for your charitable gift. These include, but aren't limited to, mutual funds, stocks, bonds, CDs and real estate.
4. Name Feeding America West Michigan as a full or partial beneficiary of your pension plan or IRA.
5. Purchase a new life insurance policy naming Feeding America West Michigan as the owner/beneficiary.
6. Name our organization as the beneficiary of an existing life insurance policy. This idea even extends to employer-provided group term life insurance.
7. Consider your legacy or a legacy for a loved one. What at Feeding America West Michigan makes you especially excited? A planned giving approach may help to support, endow or name that portion of our work for pennies on the dollar.
8. Encourage other donors to leave gifts to Feeding America West Michigan in their wills. Providing testimonials is a great way to encourage new gifts.
9. Consider making a gift to Feeding America West Michigan that will allow you to retain a lifelong source of income. The most popular vehicles are charitable remainder trusts and charitable gift annuities.
10. Ask your financial and legal advisor to include charitable giving as a part of their client counseling. Then contact Linda Vanderbaan at 616-389-6356 to include Feeding America West Michigan in your plans.

West Michigan farm believes healthy chickens mean healthier communities

A week and a half before Easter, two semi trucks backed into the loading docks at the Food Bank in Comstock Park. That day, Sunrise Acres of Hudsonville and Herbruck's Poultry Ranch of Saranac donated nearly 120,000 eggs as part of the United Egg Producers' yearly Easter donation.

High in protein, vitamins A and B12, and minerals like phosphorous and selenium, eggs supply the nutrients low-income people often miss. As a result, eggs are one of the most sought-after foods at pantries, where protein-rich items like fresh meat are hard to come by.

While Herbruck's began by donating once a year at Easter, the farm now sends shipments of eggs to the Food Bank every month, sometimes more often. Over the last eight years, Herbruck's has given approximately 900,000 eggs to our Food Bank; they also regularly donate to other food banks throughout Michigan.

When his father Harry Herbruck started the business in 1958, the farm had 6,000 laying hens. Now they have 6 million. "The biggest thing is it's just bigger," Greg said. Herbruck's is still family-owned-and-operated, but Greg and his brothers Herb and Steve recognize the indispensable contributions of their staff.

"There's a lot of people pulling on the rope to help move this wagon down the road, you know?" Greg said.

Herbruck's emphasizes superior care for its animals. "You either have the chicken serve you, or you serve the chicken," Greg said, "and we serve the chicken. Our whole focus is about the best care, the best environment, the best nutrition for our hens."

A healthy chicken lives longer and produces better eggs, Greg explained, but getting from 6,000 to 6 million with that philosophy



The Herbruck Family

presented a challenge.

When Greg graduated from college in the 1970s and moved into the family trade, his father told him the farm would never grow until they could find a solution to "the manure issue." Excess manure is a nuisance for humans and a health risk for birds.

After trying out dozens of methods from composting to methane conversion, the family found a solution. With a German manufacturer, Herbruck's developed a new living system that would increase air flow to the hens and dry out the manure at the same time.

The dried and "pelletized" manure can then be sold as fertilizer.

On top of its traditional flocks, Herbruck's has raised cage-free, organic chickens for the last 14 years. In that time, Herbruck's has learned lessons they've applied to all their birds.

For example, oregano oil is a natural remedy for a chicken's indigestion.

Herbruck's also believes that a thriving business has a responsibility to care for its community. While Herbruck's has become the Food Bank's largest local egg supplier, they also donate to their area fire department and support the Critter Barn, a petting zoo in Zeeland that educates children about caring for animals.

The three Herbruck brothers each have their labors of love. Greg has personally traveled to Asia, Uganda, Zambia and South Sudan teaching would-be farmers how to raise chickens. "Eggs and chickens seem to be a global, universal, accepted way — an economical way — to get protein," he said.

We agree, Greg. Thanks for supporting the hungry in West Michigan.

33 volunteers and a big check on Fifth Third Day

Every year, Fifth Third Bank celebrates its own bank holiday — May 3 (5/3) — and they do it by supporting local charities. This year, the bank focused on hunger.

Before first pitch at the day's West Michigan Whitecaps baseball game, Fifth

Third's vice president Scott Stenstrom and senior vice president of community development Pat Lonergan hosted a press conference. In front of a crowd of fans, they presented a check to Feeding America West Michigan as part of the bank's commitment

to send 53,000 meals to families in need.

The bank didn't stop at a donation, though. That week, 33 Fifth Third employees volunteered at the Food Bank for a total of 99 hours of service. Giving and serving — Fifth Third knows how to celebrate.

STUDENT VOLUNTEERS MAKE THE WAREHOUSE A CLASSROOM

This spring, students from elementary school to college helped out at the Food Bank, making sure that our volunteer coordinators Dena and Stacie had as many

hands on deck as they could use. Teachers and their students have realized that, to best understand hunger, you have to get involved.

So to Gerald R. Ford Job Corps, Central

Michigan University, Immaculate Conception Elementary and North Park Montessori — thank you for serving your neighbors in need.



'The Biggest Loser' visits the Food Bank

Fans of NBC's "The Biggest Loser" may remember a challenge in which contestants raced to load crates of Newman's Own salad dressing and spaghetti sauce onto semi-trailers. At the end of the challenge, the hosts revealed that Newman's Own would be donating a total of 60,000 pounds of food to the contestants' hometown food banks. Many of you celebrated with us when you heard the news because two of the contestants, siblings Jeremy and Conda Britt, hail from Rockford, Michigan.

On May 9, Jeremy and Conda stopped by the warehouse in Comstock Park to help unload the 12,000-pound donation. Jeremy, fresh from the season finale where he was declared this year's winner, talked to local news reporters and visiting fans about how sheer grit and a willingness to work hard had helped him come through his 18-week ordeal 199 pounds lighter.

By working with "The Biggest Loser," Feeding America is able to talk to a national audience about hunger, and in this instance, they got to highlight the work of local food banks like ours.



Jeremy and Conda Britt: natives of Rockford and weight-loss celebrities

SCOUTING FOR FOOD IN GRAND RAPIDS



The connection between the Boy Scouts and hunger relief goes back to John Arnold's days as a pack leader in St. Louis. He was one of the initiators of the Scouting for Food program that has since taken root in scout troops around the country.

From the program's beginnings in St. Louis, the scouts were competitive, and they developed at least one big rivalry. "For scouting to be neck and neck with Budweiser — we always had to laugh about that," Bill Mulholland, leader of

Troop 3217, remembered.

In March, Mulholland's troop collected 729 pounds of food, the largest amount collected by a troop in the Grand Rapids area this year. Scouts Tony and Patrick personally unloaded the food at our warehouse on March 24.

Congratulations, Troop 3217 and all the other scouts who participated — an achievement for the Boy Scouts and for families.

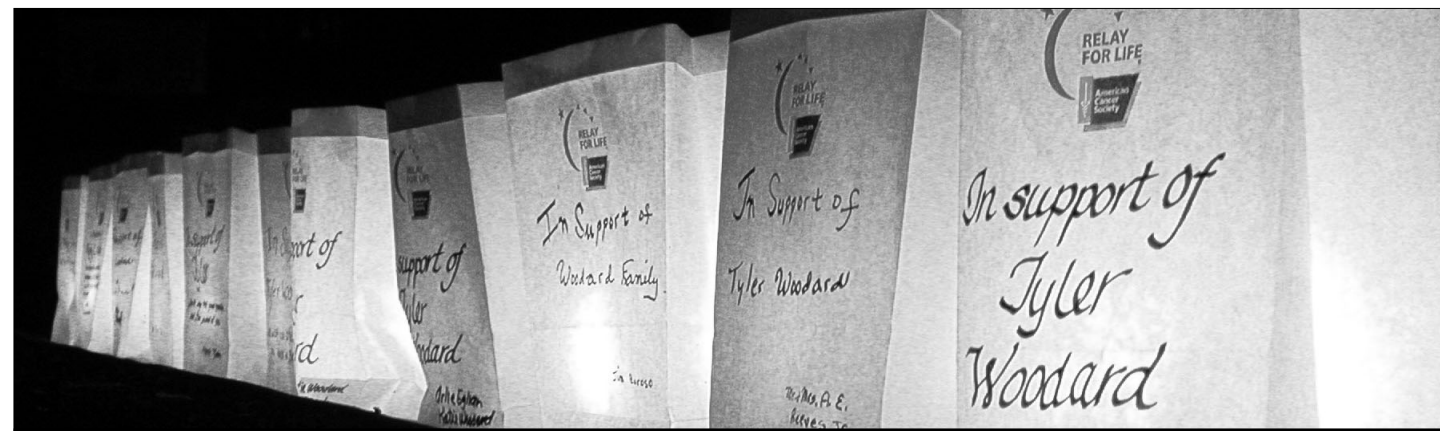
Relay for Life teams up with Cadillac warehouse to fight hunger

Every year, people gather on athletic fields around the country, walking for 24 hours to raise money for the American Cancer Society. Once the sun goes down, the participants light luminaria in honor of loved ones affected by the disease.

Preparing for this year's Relay for Life in Wexford County, the organizers had an epiphany. Instead of using sand to keep the lighted paper bags from blowing away, they decided to use canned goods and then donate them afterward. Feeding America West Michigan's branch in Cadillac was more than willing to accept the food.

Wexford County's Relay for Life was held on June 22-23 at Cadillac High School's Veterans' Memorial Stadium. Though the official total is still being tallied, the organizers hoped to collect up to 1,000 cans on behalf of cancer victims and survivors. Last year, over 400 people took part in the Cadillac relay.

Stacia Thompson, community representative for the American Cancer Society's Great Lakes division, sees a future for Wexford County's new approach. "I hope we're starting something that can continue on for a long time," she said.



FOOD RESCUE GETS ON BOARD

At the end of March, we welcomed another hunger-relief charity into our network — Food Rescue of Northwest Michigan. A program of Goodwill Industries of Northwest Michigan, the Traverse City-based non-profit collects food from local markets and restaurants and distributes it to pantries and shelters from Antrim County to Manistee.

As a redistribution organization under Feeding America West Michigan, Food Rescue will now receive groceries from some of our largest food donors, donors like Sam's Club, Wal-Mart and Target. In return, Feeding America West Michigan will be able to use Food Rescue's six-county presence to serve more families in need.

Feeding America West Michigan CEO Ken Estelle, who signed the contract with Food Rescue on March 27, has high expectations for the new partnership: "By combining our efforts, we can reach even more hungry families than we could alone."

Since it was founded in 2008, Food Rescue has received "tremendous support" from the community, said program director Trish Fiebing. Family-owned groceries like Oleson Food Stores, which donated one of Food Rescue's first trucks, have been especially supportive. "The community was just totally behind the effort," Trish said.

Beyond simply distributing groceries, Food Rescue also teaches people how to use

them. Its Cooking Matters course teaches clients how to prepare nutritious meals with affordable ingredients.

Trish believes the partnership with Feeding America West Michigan will allow Food Rescue to collect 1 million pounds of food this fiscal year — equal to the total amount of food gathered in its first two years of operation.

"We are excited, as we know this is going to increase the amount of good food into the pantry system for people in need," said George Powell, one of the Food Rescue's founders. "We also know that the more food donors who participate, the more efficiently we can operate. This is a win-win for everyone."

Stamping Out Hunger in Kent County

Once a year, the U.S. Postal Service takes on a different kind of cargo. As its letter carriers deliver mail along their routes, they pick up paper bags full of non-perishable food. Though all kinds of anti-hunger organizations benefit from this nationwide food drive, all the food collected in the Grand Rapids area goes to Feeding America West Michigan.

On Saturday, May 12, 160 of you showed up at eight different branches ready to work. One after another, the mail trucks pulled into their branches loaded with food, and you helped get the cans, bottles and boxes into totes and onto our semi-trucks. As a result of this occasionally frenzied day, which lasted from 10 in the morning to 7 at night at some branches, 185,000 pounds of food came into our warehouse.

Donors, thank you for your gifts. Volunteers, thank you for your sweat. Letter carriers, thank you for making room in your busy schedules to serve the hungry in West Michigan. We can't wait to see what happens next year.



OLD ORCHARD SENDS A RIVER OF JUICE TO THE FOOD BANK



When Old Orchard Brands, based in Sparta, Michigan, reached 100,000 Facebook fans in April, they wanted to celebrate. They decided to toast their fans and their regional food bank — Feeding America West Michigan — by giving away truckloads of juice. We're glad they did.

Old Orchard's gift of 5,430 bottles of fruit juice went out to families in need all over West Michigan.

But Sparta's juice-maker was a caring neighbor long before social media. They've been giving to the Food Bank since the mid '90s, and over the past ten years, they've donated a monthly average of 5,600 bottles. Stroll through our warehouse almost any day of the week, and you're bound to find at least one tote full of their juice. You'd think it was a permanent celebration.

Comcast cares about hunger in West Michigan

On April 21, 126 Comcast employees, their families and friends spent a Saturday morning volunteering at the Food Bank. Their combined efforts added up to over 500 hours of service in the name of ending hunger in West Michigan.

Our Comstock Park warehouse wasn't the only place to be lifted on a tide of green-shirted volunteers. All across the



country, more than 75,000 Comcast Cares volunteers served at over 660 sites, doing everything from cleaning parks to painting schools. In addition to Feeding America food banks, the National Urban League, the National Council of La Raza and the Boys and Girls Club of America all benefited from their hard work.

Thanks, Comcast and NBCUniversal!

What if you could send one million meals to families in need?

Dream with us. March with us.

September 29, 2012.

MILLION MEAL MARCH



Encouraging numbers from 2012 Map the Meal Gap study

Map the Meal Gap is a national study of food insecurity conducted by Feeding America. A person is considered food insecure if they worry about their ability to access enough nutritious food to meet their needs. New data was added to the study this year, and for most of the country, the results are good. The national food insecurity rate is down from 16.6% in 2009 to 16.1% in 2010.

The news for the people we serve is even better. Food insecurity in our service area dropped from 16.6% to 15.1%, and every county saw a decrease. Thank you to all the generous donors — of food, money and time — who made this possible.

HONORING JOHN WITH A DAY OF SERVICE



John Arnold didn't want a public memorial service with flowers and a lot of fuss. On the website www.johnmemorial.com, his family passed along his desire that people donate blood, pick up trash, read a book by Tolstoy or volunteer at a Mobile Pantry if they wanted to honor him.

In that imaginative spirit, Feeding America West Michigan held the John Arnold Day of Service at our warehouse in Comstock Park. We opened the Food Bank's doors, and over 50 of you came to celebrate with us.

You sorted donations from the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, planted a Winter King Hawthorn tree on the front lawn, listened to a

proclamation from the mayor of Grand Rapids honoring John's work, and some of you rode your bikes to Rockford and back along the White Pine Trail. In all these ways, you honored John's life the way he wanted — through creative acts of service and remembrance.

Three West Michigan businesses also took part. Rooks Landscaping donated the hawthorn; Creekside Garden Center and Fruit Basket Flowerland offered seeds to be planted in John's memory.

Thank you for your kind thoughts and for continuing with us along the path that John forged. As John would have put it, "Go forth and do good!"





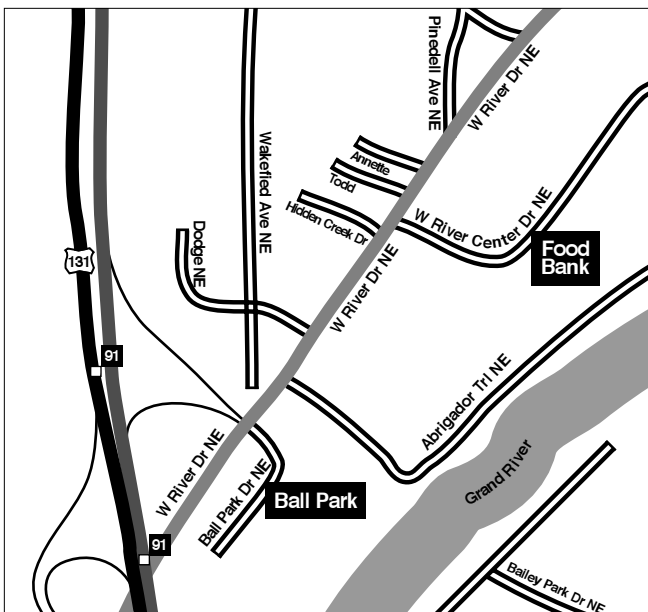
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VISITING THE FOOD BANK? We're easy to find.

Take U.S. 131 to exit 91 (Comstock Park/West River Drive).
Turn left on West River Drive. Turn right at the stoplight at
West River Center Drive (Wendy's on corner). Our address is
864 West River Center Dr., Comstock Park, MI 49321-8955
Questions? Call us at 616.784.3250.



Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank is a non-profit surplus food warehouse distributing about 2 million pounds of food monthly in cooperation with 1,250 charitable agencies. The food we handle helps needy families, the unemployed, senior citizens, at-risk children, pregnant teens, domestic violence victims, AIDS patients and others at risk of hunger in our difficult economy. Ultimately, our food aids an estimated 100,000 West Michigan and Upper Peninsula families annually. Call us at 616.784.3250 or learn more at www.FeedingAmericaWestMichigan.org.

Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank is a member of Feeding America, the nation's food bank network, The United Way, and The Food Bank Council of Michigan.
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