



# SERVINGS

News from the East Texas Food Bank

**2026 Spring Newsletter** Give Now: [etfb.link/260103](https://etfb.link/260103)

## You're Helping Seniors Like Alan Live with Dignity



food boxes. Many live in rural communities where your nearest grocery store might be 30 miles away, and where every dollar counts.

**“Many seniors live on a fixed income,” said Kim Morris, ETFB Chief Impact Officer. “Your donations help supplement what they can buy after covering utilities, rent and medication. To qualify, recipients must be 60 years or older, live within our service area and meet income guidelines.”**



Alan wants you to know how much your generosity means: **“We need it. Thank you. What the food bank does for us is marvelous.”**

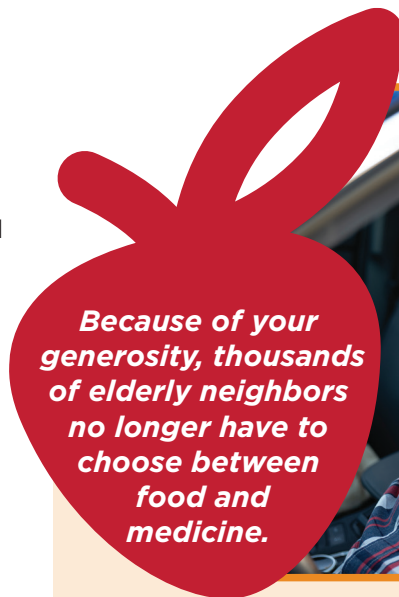
On a crisp East Texas morning, cars lined up outside First Christian Church in Tyler. Inside each vehicle sat a neighbor waiting for something you made possible — a senior food box from the East Texas Food Bank.

Among those in line was Alan, a retired veteran who depends on the monthly box to help fill his pantry.

**“I’m retired, and living on a fixed income,” Alan shared. “This box helps me make it each month. I enjoy making cheese dip and chili. The economy is a struggle, but God is good.”**

Your support fills each box with staple items like beans, rice, fruit, canned meat, juice and cereal. One of the most popular items? The classic block of cheese that brings smiles to so many faces.

Every month, an average of 4,900 low-income seniors across 26 counties in East Texas receive these nutritious



## Your Dollars at Work

**In fiscal year 2025, your support enabled us to distribute over 63,000 senior boxes. That’s 63,000 times a senior didn’t have to choose between medication and meals. That’s 63,000 moments of relief, dignity and hope. Thank you for supporting the East Texas Food Bank.**





## A Special Message From Our Chief Impact Officer

Dear Friends,

What does spring mean to you?

Is it finally breaking free of winter's grasp? Is it a time to clean and purge the old? Does it represent flowers? Or is it the dreaded allergy season?

This spring holds, for me, an opportunity to reset.

Last year was difficult, with lots of changes. We saw national programs reduced, an epic government shutdown and learned how important SNAP benefits are to our communities. Through these highs and lows, our organization stood firm, learned and adapted. This spring, we will continue to move forward.

The Impact Team restructured and focused on supporting our partners while leaning into the benefits and availability of healthy eating in East Texas. Across our service area, we are blessed to have more than 200 partners who are invested in supporting the nutritional security of our communities.

So, this spring season, the Impact Team at ETFB will continue to lean into that age-old lesson that it takes a village. Our village is all of you, and it takes us all to continue Fighting Hunger. Feeding Hope.

Thank you, and Happy Spring!

Kim Morris  
Chief Impact Officer, ETFB

## ROCKY'S FIGHTING SPIRIT

At 55, Rocky of Longview embodies the same determination as the iconic boxer from the Rocky movie franchise. His story is one of resilience, generosity and an unbreakable will to keep moving forward, no matter the odds.

In 2017, Rocky's life changed when he suffered a stroke that left him in a wheelchair. The setback could have slowed him down, but instead, it fueled his desire to help others. "I'm glad I found my work home," he said, referring to his role at the East Texas Food Bank Longview Resource Center.



We're so thankful for folks like Rocky who turn their compassion into action in support of our mission!

Rocky built a career in retail and as a driver, all while dedicating his time to volunteering for various organizations. Giving back has always been part of who he is. But at age 47, everything came crashing down when high blood pressure led to his stroke.

Rocky began visiting the Longview Resource Center — not as a volunteer, but as a neighbor in need. "I found that with rent and utilities, I was stretching my disability check a lot and needed help," he recalls. Over time, Rocky's determination to give back resurfaced. He wasn't sure if volunteering from a wheelchair would be possible, but the team encouraged him to try.

Rocky's commitment doesn't stop there. He has organized community food drives, collecting more than 350 pounds of food. His motto sums up his outlook on life: **"If you got it, give it."**

He also reminds others that generosity shouldn't be seasonal. "Don't just give during the holidays. Give during the springtime too. People need help year-round," he says.

## COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

One of nearly 200 pantry partners working with the East Texas Food Bank across 26 counties, St. Vincent de Paul has served more than 1.7 million meals in Tyler since 2012.

This year, they were honored with the Community Partner Hunger Hero Award for their compassionate, life-changing work.

"We support the East Texas Food Bank because they support us in meeting the hungry where they are at," said Grace Vierling, Executive Director with St. Vincent de Paul. "We are partners in the fight for food security and are proud to join them in this mission of hope!"



# CORPORATE PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



## H-E-B fuels the fight against hunger with \$195,000 gift.

A longtime champion of the East Texas Food Bank, H-E-B continues to show up in a big way with a generous \$195,000 donation to help feed East Texas neighbors. With more than 455 stores across Texas and Mexico and a legacy that just marked its 120th anniversary, H-E-B proves that strong communities start with strong partners.



## CHRISTUS Health invests \$110,000 in healthier futures.

Through two grants totaling \$110,000, CHRISTUS Health is strengthening the Tyler and Longview Resource Centers and helping address food insecurity as a critical health need. Their support is making a real difference for families working toward stability and wellness.



## TEXARKANA COUPLE RECEIVES LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR TWO DECADES OF SERVICE

Mark and Nadara Sperry, with Texarkana's Westside Church of Christ, recently received the East Texas Food Bank Hunger Hero Lifetime Achievement Award — recognition for two decades of transforming lives through food assistance.

The Westside Church of Christ pantry opened in 1999. Today, the church provides 3,500 pounds of food on average each month to families across Texarkana.

The Sperrys became involved with the pantry and have helped guide and shape it into its current form. They have a huge volunteer base of 50 dedicated community members from multiple churches and have made great strides to serve this unique border city.

“We first volunteered in the pantry 20 years ago because we firmly believed that Jesus wanted us to share what He had given us,” said Nadara Sperry. “We have continued to work because of the many stories from the grateful people who receive boxes each month. They have told us repeatedly that a monthly box of food makes a significant difference in their lives.”



**DID YOU KNOW?**  
ETFB has seven pantry partners in the greater Texarkana area!



# PLANT A GIFT THAT GROWS

Spring is a perfect time to put your Donor Advised Fund (DAF) to work for neighbors facing hunger across East Texas.

## How it works:

1. Open a DAF by making a tax-deductible gift to a public charity that sponsors DAFs, like Fidelity Charitable or Schwab Charitable.
2. Decide how your contribution is invested so it can grow tax-free.
3. Recommend grants to public charities you care about, like the East Texas Food Bank.

## Why it's a smart way to give:

- It's easy. The DAF sponsor handles recordkeeping, disbursements and tax receipts.
- Contributions are tax-deductible and any investment growth is tax-free. You can also donate long-term appreciated securities, potentially avoid capital gains taxes and support multiple charities with one stock gift.
- There's no cost to open a DAF, though sponsors usually require a minimum initial contribution.

**This spring, let your generosity blossom into meals and hope for East Texas neighbors. To learn more about giving from your DAF, visit [easttexasfoodbank.org/join-the-fight/donate-money/donor-advised-funds/](http://easttexasfoodbank.org/join-the-fight/donate-money/donor-advised-funds/)**

# WHY WE BELIEVE IN THE MISSION OF THE EAST TEXAS FOOD BANK

*By Robert and Nancy Holsomback, Donors*

We retired from Houston in 1996 and moved to Flint, TX, where we planted our first garden. Not knowing how productive the rich East Texas soil would be, we ended up growing far more cucumbers and green beans than we could ever eat. We tried everything, eating them fresh, pickling, making relish and even giving them away to neighbors. It got to the point where our neighbors would go inside and lock the doors when they saw us coming with another batch!

Not wanting anything to go to waste, we decided to take about 50 pounds of cucumbers to the East Texas Food Bank. We didn't know what kind of reception we would get, but we were met with kindness, appreciation and a warm welcome. The staff even gave us a tour of the facility. We were so impressed by the friendly team, the cleanliness and the efficiency of the operation. **We knew this was something special.**

That moment planted a seed in our hearts. We knew we wanted to do more. So, just as we once shared our extras from the garden, we made the decision to leave behind some "cucumbers" and "green beans" in a different way—to help ensure this wonderful ministry continues to thrive for years to come.



# ETFB CORPORATE SPONSORS



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