

Spring 2009

generous helpings

You **make**
a difference for
seniors
in need!



houston 
foodbank

Filling pantries. Filling lives.

...look inside to see how your gifts impact southeast Texans of all ages.

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*Ex-Officio

Health For All Ages



Brian Greene
President and CEO

Dear Friend,

Every day, thousands of senior citizens right here in our community don't get enough to eat. Whether it's because they are unable to leave their homes, unable to cook for themselves or simply unable to afford increasingly expensive groceries, seniors are especially vulnerable to the risks of hunger.

It's a sad reality that people who have worked hard their whole lives to raise families and contribute to their communities are often left without much to look forward to during their "golden years."

Fortunately, your gifts to the Houston Food Bank enable us to provide nutritious food to senior centers in 18 southeast Texas counties, many of which also deliver meals to homebound seniors. You can read about the specific impact your gifts have made in local seniors' lives in the pages of this spring issue of *Generous Helpings*.

You also help provide hot meals and nutritious groceries to families and children – and while the economy remains in distress, the need for food continues to grow.

As we work to ensure that hungry families, children and seniors have access to the food they need, I'm glad to know I can count on the support of friends like you. Your involvement is vital to the effectiveness of our fight to end hunger here in southeast Texas.

Thank you for all you do for our neighbors in need!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Greene". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

‘Thank you SO much’

Pamela is a natural caretaker. As both a mother and a grandmother, she has years of experience caring for her own family. So her recent decision to become a licensed nurse was an easy one.

She’s been working nights as a nurse’s assistant and attending nursing school during the day. But not long ago she started getting sick every day. Eventually it got so bad that she had to take a break from work and school.

Pamela was heartbroken to put her dream of becoming a nurse on hold – but she was also scared as she started undergoing several expensive tests to find out what could be wrong. She says her doctors now think she has bone cancer and she will need a bone marrow transplant soon.

Unfortunately, Pamela isn’t sure how she’s going to afford the cost of the surgery, even with her health

insurance – not to mention all the medications she’ll need. She doesn’t qualify for Medicaid, and all the doctor’s visits and prescriptions have already put a strain on her finances.

Since she had to leave her job, her only income right now is in the form of Social Security. She says it’s getting harder and harder to afford basic necessities like rent, utilities and food. In fact, food is often the first thing to get cut from her budget.

Thanks to your gifts to the Houston Food Bank, food is one thing Pamela doesn’t have to worry about. She can come to Our Lady of Guadalupe, a Food Bank partner

agency in Baytown, for nutritious groceries whenever she needs them.

“Thank you so much!” she says. “I really appreciate it. It helps me a lot.”



YOU'RE FEEDING SOUTHEAST TEXANS OF ALL AGES!

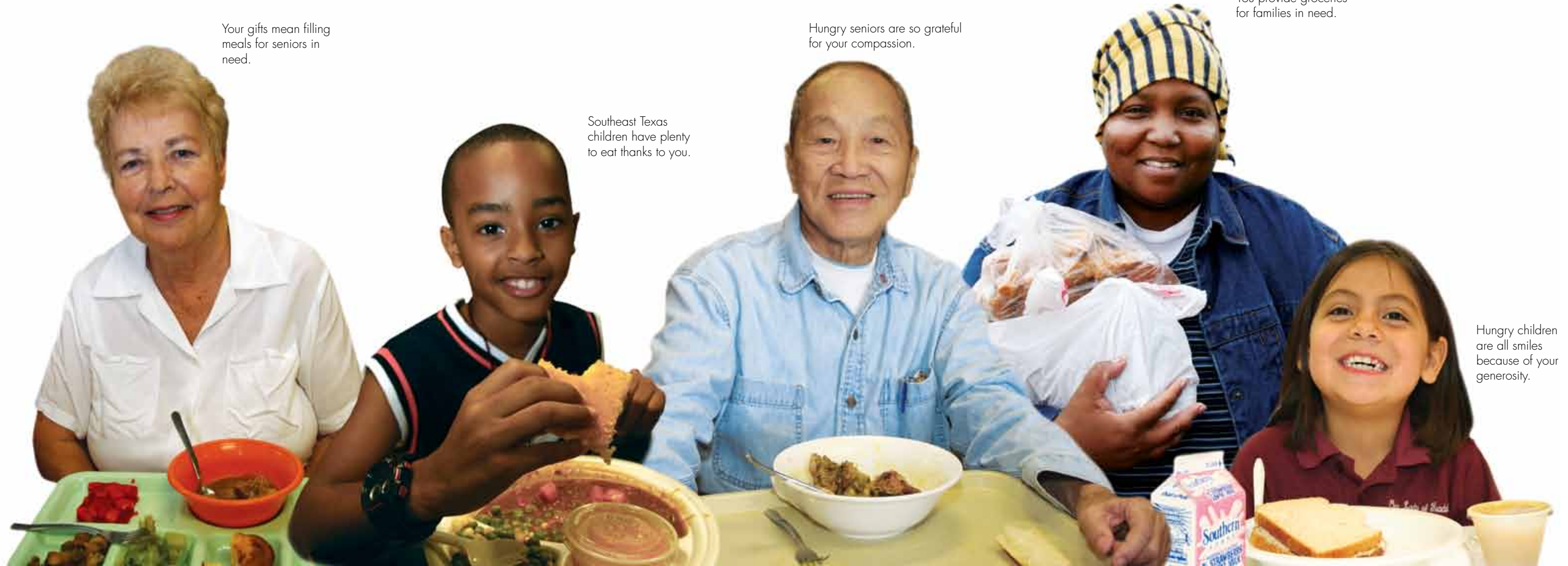
Your gifts mean filling meals for seniors in need.

Hungry seniors are so grateful for your compassion.

You provide groceries for families in need.

Southeast Texas children have plenty to eat thanks to you.

Hungry children are all smiles because of your generosity.



THANK YOU!

MLK, JR. DAY – A DAY OF SERVICE

Thank you to all who donated their time and talent to the Houston Food Bank on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day for a National Day of Service! The event brought together volunteers from Shell, Hope Worldwide and many other civic organizations. Special thanks to Don King Entertainment for donating nearly 2,800 frozen turkeys and to Shell for bringing more than 200 volunteers! We'd also like to thank U.S. Representative Shelia Jackson Lee



for helping to distribute the turkeys to her constituents in need in northeast Houston. Thank you!

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

Thank you to all who participated in the largest food drive in Texas, the Souper Bowl of Caring, by volunteering at your local grocery store or donating nonperishable food items. Your efforts will help us feed hungry families, children and seniors here in southeast Texas! We'd also like to thank our media partners and our grocery partners, HEB, Kroger and Randalls for teaming up to fight hunger in our community.



ABC-13'S SHARE YOUR HOLIDAYS

Thanks go out to ABC-13 for sponsoring the Food Bank's annual Share Your Holidays Food Drive December 5. Thank you to all who donated nonperishable food to help fight hunger in southeast Texas during the holidays!



NRG TEXAS

A very heartfelt thanks to NRG Texas for its generous \$200,000 gift during our Hurricane Ike relief efforts.



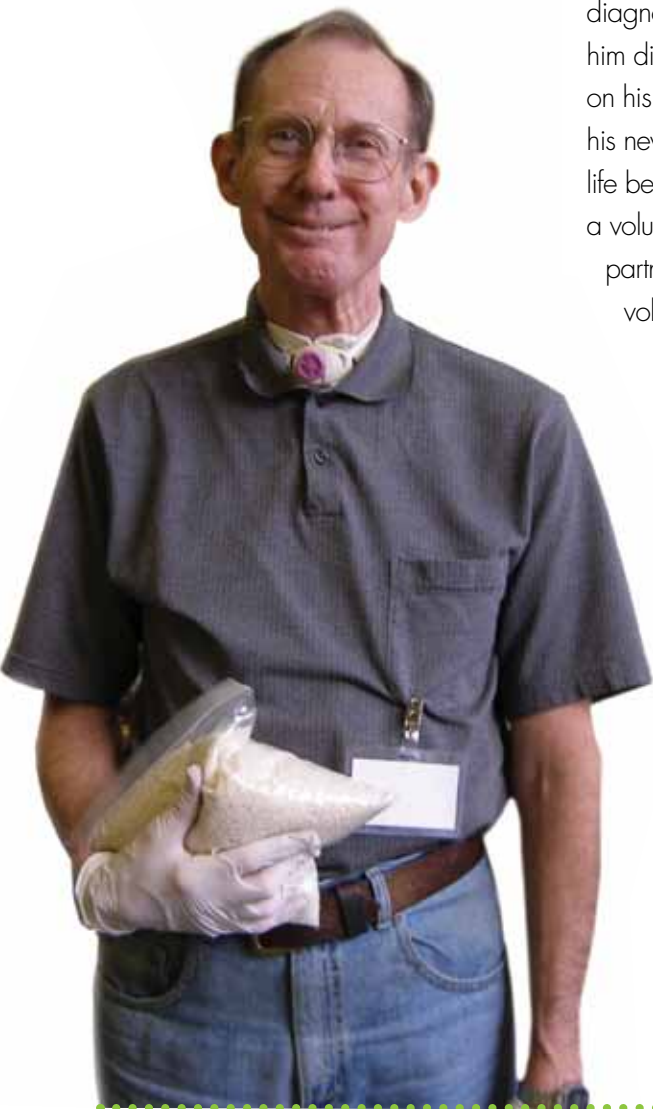
SAVE THE DATE!

EMPTY BOWLS | March 21

Mark your calendars now for the 5th annual Empty Bowls, presented by Whole Foods Market. The event will take place on Saturday, March 21 at the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft and the Lawndale Art Center. For a minimum donation of \$25, come enjoy a lunch of savory soup, bread and dessert and select a beautiful bowl hand-crafted by a local artist. The empty bowls serve as a reminder of all the empty bowls in our community and the world. All proceeds benefit the Houston Food Bank. To purchase tickets or for more information, visit houstonfoodbank.org.



“...seeing the need up close certainly brought the problem into focus.”



Nine years ago, Tom Ashworth was diagnosed with a brain tumor that left him disabled. But instead of dwelling on his disability, Tom decided to spend his new found “free time” helping make life better for others. He went to work as a volunteer for two of the Food Bank’s partner food pantries, which led him to volunteering at the Food Bank.

“I had no idea what the Food Bank was or what it did, but it didn’t take long for me to be impressed and convinced that I wanted to work here,” he says.

Tom has been faithfully volunteering at the Food Bank for more than five years, sorting and packing boxes of food, measuring out bags of rice and beans and doing whatever else he can to help feed southeast Texans in need. He says he enjoys working at the Food Bank because he knows he’s making a

difference in the lives of hungry people in our community.

“I had a basic awareness of the side of life where people are hungry or homeless [before I started working at the Food Bank],” he says. “But seeing the need up close certainly brought the problem into focus.”

Tom’s heightened sense of awareness about the problem of hunger has inspired him to seek out additional sources of food, asking everyone he meets to give to the Houston Food Bank.

“If I don’t ask, they won’t have the opportunity to say ‘yes’ or ‘no!’” he says.

Tom encourages others to get involved in the fight against hunger in any way they can, whether it’s donating time, money or simply raising awareness.

“Sure, some of the work is hard, but every effort assists the Food Bank in feeding 80,000 people a week,” he says. “And volunteers make it happen!”

We are so grateful for Tom’s faithfulness and for all of our wonderful volunteers.

A GOOD TIME TO PLAN

Like many southeast Texans, you’ve probably been thinking about the economy and the impact it could have on your personal finances. The Houston Food Bank offers many resources to help you with your financial planning. We can help you take advantage of tax-deductible tools and techniques such as wills and bequests, trusts and charitable annuities that can be customized to your specific circumstances.

There is no cost or obligation for using our educational services; it’s just our way of partnering with you. For more information, please visit the Gift Planning/Wills section of the “Donate Funds” page at houstonfoodbank.org or contact Scott Stuckey at 713-547-8667 or [sstuckey@houstonfoodbank.org](mailto:ssuckey@houstonfoodbank.org).

Volunteer by visiting houstonfoodbank.org or contact Volunteer Services at 713-547-8609

“You save and help more people than you can imagine.”

William has always worked hard to make a living. For years he owned his own 18-wheeler and lived comfortably off the income he made as a truck driver.

But William’s life was recently turned upside-down when he was diagnosed with cancer. He was forced to retire from his job and was hospitalized for 10 weeks to undergo treatment.

He’s now in remission, but he says the treatments have left his body weak and worn – plus, they were very expensive. Since he had to leave his job, his only income is in the form of Social Security and \$24 a month in food stamps. With so

many medical bills looming over his head, plus rent and utilities, he rarely has enough left over to buy food.

Fortunately, friends like you are helping people in need like William every day. Thanks to your gifts to the Houston Food Bank, he can come to the food pantry at St. Ann Catholic Church, a Food Bank partner agency in Tomball, for nutritious groceries whenever he needs them. He’s very grateful for the food he receives – and he knows it’s possible because of your generosity.

“You save and help more people than you can imagine,” he says. “People really need what you’re doing – we really need it!”

Thank you for opening your hearts to our neighbors in need.



“I can get meals and not have to worry”

For more than 60 years, Ola had a steady companion in her husband, John*. They shared the excitement of moving into their first home, the joys of building a family and even the pain of losing their youngest son to a heart attack.

A few months ago, John passed away. For the first time in her life, she's living on her own and is struggling to make ends meet on a fixed income. Not only is it scary and stressful for her to navigate life on her own with limited resources, she misses her husband terribly. She knew her first holiday season without him would be very difficult.

“It's kind of rough when you're by yourself,” she says.

Ola receives a Social Security check each month, as well as a small veteran's pension from John's military service, but this income just isn't always enough to pay for utility

bills, medications and groceries. Since Ola is diabetic, it's especially important for her to have access to nutritious food.

Your compassion and generosity will help sustain Ola and

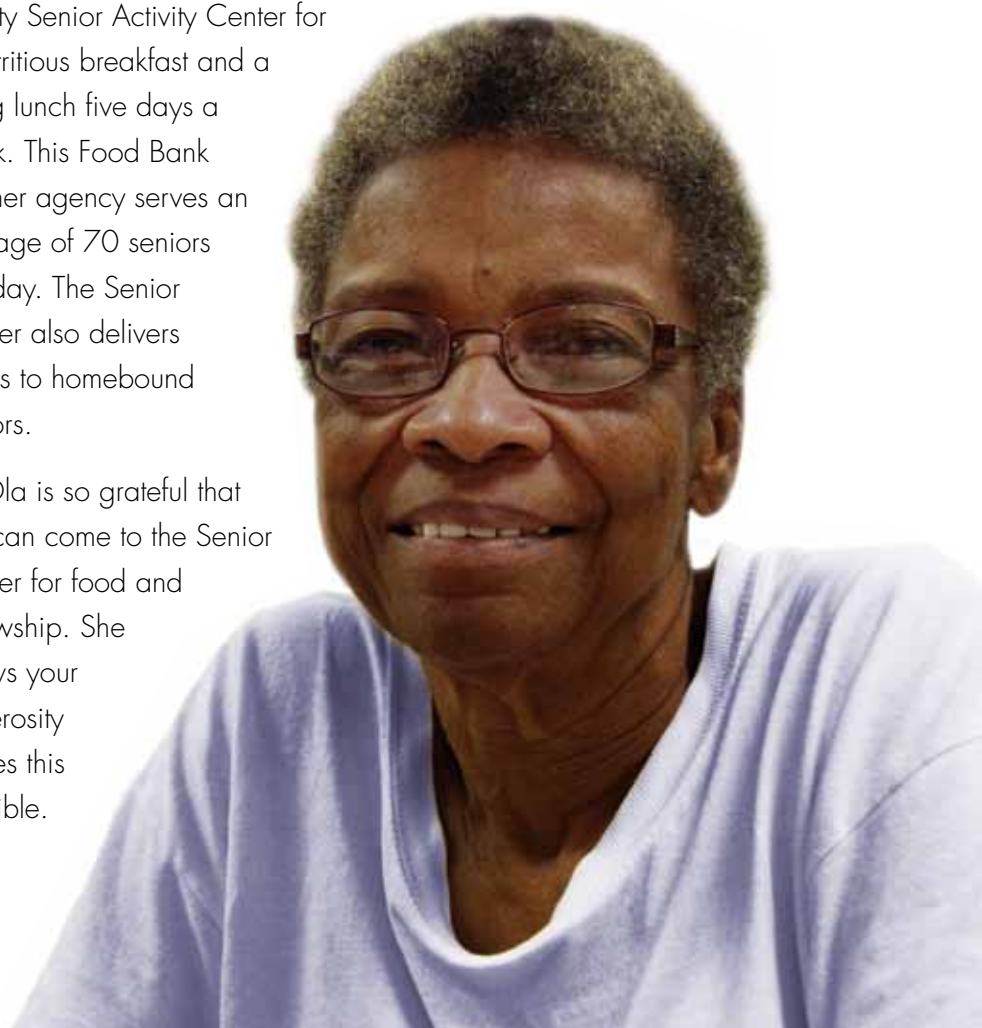
other seniors just like her. Thanks to your support of the Houston Food Bank, Ola can come to the Liberty Senior Activity Center for a nutritious breakfast and a filling lunch five days a week. This Food Bank partner agency serves an average of 70 seniors per day. The Senior Center also delivers meals to homebound seniors.

Ola is so grateful that she can come to the Senior Center for food and fellowship. She knows your generosity makes this possible.

“I'm glad we have the service here,” she says. “I can get meals and not have to worry! I'm getting the nutrients I need.”

Your gifts to the Houston Food Bank are making the holidays brighter for seniors in need like Ola. Thank you for your compassion!

**this name has been changed.*



houston  **foodbank**

Filling pantries. Filling lives.

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 FEEDING AMERICA™

your donations are welcomed at houstonfoodbank.org