

Hunger is a big problem.
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Stories of Hunger – Judy

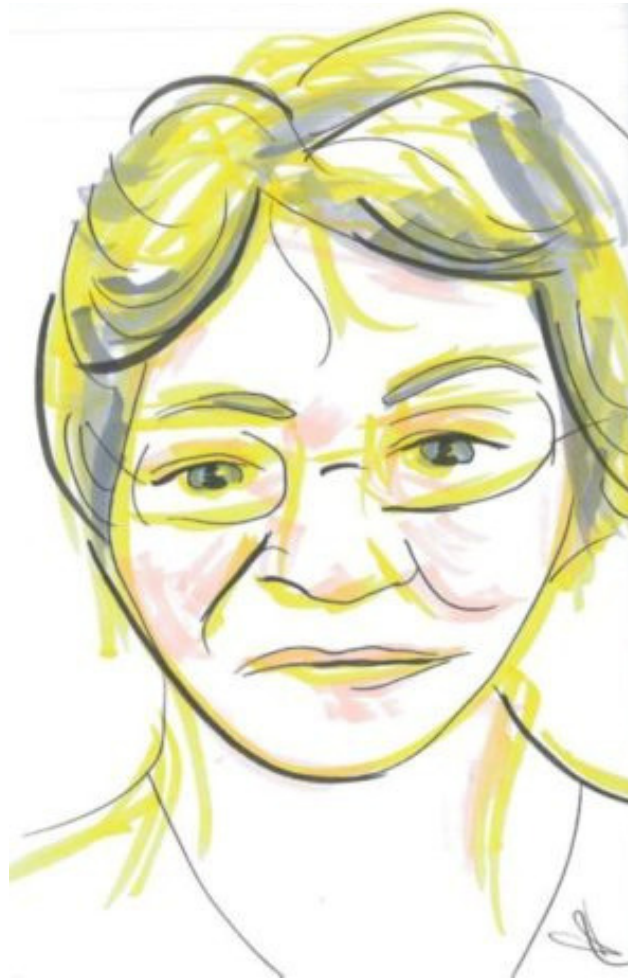
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Judy calls herself a "Boone Transplant." She lives in Boone now, but called Eastern Iowa her home until 1988. She visits the food pantry at IMPACT Community Action Partnership in Boone to make ends meet on her fixed income.

"I'm on Social Security, so that's all I get. If it wasn't for IMPACT here in Boone, there would be months that I don't eat," she shared. Going to the food pantry allows Judy to pay her bills. "I have renter's insurance, and an electric bill. I cover all of that with my social security and have about, depending on the month, \$30 or \$50 left over."

Sadly, her situation is not uncommon. Nearly 5 million senior citizens face hunger in the United States, according to Feeding America. Often, seniors find themselves facing an incredibly hard choice – buying groceries or paying for medical care.

Judy's been there, too. Before her double knee replacement, she was a pastry chef. She is no longer able to work because of her disability. For her, this transition was humbling.



Questions? Contact us at contactus@foodbankiowa.org or 515.564.0330

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"I was used to being active and always doing something, and then all of a sudden I could do nothing. For six months I was panicking. It took a lot of coaxing from my daughter for me to come into the food pantry." At one point her cupboards consisted of a can of tomato soup, half a loaf of bread, some cheese, ketchup, and mayo.

The pantry at IMPACT allows her to get meats such as chicken, pork, or turkey. There is always fresh fruits and canned foods available at the pantry. Her favorite things to get from the pantry are bananas, strawberries, or raspberries.

What Judy likes most is the personal care section. This has all of the items that she is unable to purchase with her SNAP benefits – toilet paper, body wash, shampoo, hairspray, toothbrushes, toothpaste and dental floss are just a few of the things she has received.

Without access to the food pantry at IMPACT, Judy believes she would have to ask her children to help her out with food. The closest one lives 100 miles away and all of her kids have children of their own, so the idea of asking them for help is hard for her. Through all of her hardships, Judy shared with us that her grandchildren are what keep her going.

For anyone who is in need of food but hasn't gone to a food pantry yet, she would tell them this: "Just do it. You'll be so glad you do. I wasn't going to come at first, but I am very glad I did."

And for those who support hunger fighting organizations and food pantries like IMPACT Community Action Partnership in Boone, she would like to tell them "Thank you very much."

About the artist

Jennifer Leatherby is a painter, illustrator, and digital artist. She lives and works in Des Moines, Iowa where she co-owns Portrait Studio and a feminist t-shirt brand. She is inspired by minimalism and the digital age. Learn more at www.jenleatherby.com.

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