



Press Release

For Immediate Release
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Missouri Rotarians to volunteer for Ozarks Food Harvest's *Mobile Food Pantry™* and *Weekend Backpack Program™* Friday morning *Three Rotary districts will participate in state-wide convention's Service in Action project*

SPRINGFIELD—Three Missouri Rotary districts will come together for a [state-wide district convention](#) in Springfield April 15–17, and will participate in the new hands-on service project of the event—[Service in Action](#)—on the morning of Friday, April 16. Rotarians will volunteer for Ozarks Food Harvest, benefitting two of The Food Bank's programs—the Mobile Food Pantry™ and Weekend Backpack Program™.

Participating Rotarians will help distribute food from The Food Bank's Mobile Food Pantry™ truck to low-income seniors in the community. Volunteers will also create "Hope Notes" for Ozarks Food Harvest's Weekend Backpack Program™, which provides at-risk children with a backpack filled with nutritious child-friendly foods for them to take home over the weekends, when they might otherwise go hungry. Hope Notes are placed inside the backpacks to give selected students personal messages of support and encouragement.

"We're deeply grateful to our family of Rotarians for this meaningful service to these important programs, and we're thankful for Rotary's continued support throughout the year," said Ozarks Food Harvest President/CEO Bart Brown.

Springfield Area Rotary Clubs, along with Ridewell Corporation, sponsor The Food Bank's two Mobile Food Pantry™ trucks, which have been featured in Rotary International videos and publications, highlighting the Clubs' demonstration of "Service Above Self" in partnership with Ozarks Food Harvest.

A recent grant from Rotary will provide funding for personal hygiene supplies for the Weekend Backpack Program™. The Food Bank provides the Weekend Backpack Program™ to 28 area schools that have free and reduced lunch rates of 50 percent or greater.

Springfield-based Convoy of Hope will also benefit from the convention's *Service in Action* component on Friday. Rotarians will create low cost water pasteurization devices to send to a clinic for malnourished children in Haiti. Volunteers at this agency will also prepare 30,000 meals for international distribution by Convoy of Hope.

The [Missouri Rotary Convention](#) for [District 6040](#), [District 6060](#) and [District 6080](#) is held at the University Plaza Convention Center; the keynote speaker (Thursday) is Baseball Hall of Famer Whitey Herzog. The Rotary Clubs of Springfield will be hosting the 11th Annual [Rock'n Ribs BBQ Festival](#) this weekend. To learn more about Rotary International, visit www.rotary.org.

Ozarks Food Harvest is the only food bank in southwest Missouri and serves more than 350 hunger relief organizations, reaching 155,000 people annually across 29 Ozarks counties. The Food Bank distributes between seven and nine million pounds of food each year. Transform Hunger into Hope™ at ozarksfoodharvest.org or facebook.com/ozarksfoodharvest.

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