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Contact Information:

Gene Hallinan
Communications Manager
Harvesters - The Community Food Network
816.929.3071/913.231.4849
ghallinan@harvesters.org

Emily Brown
Public Relations Coordinator
Mid-Continent Public Library
ebrown@mymcpl.org
O: 816.503.4187
M: 816.809.9630

Many Harvesters Kids Cafe Programs Begin This Month

Library and Other Summer Feeding Program Sites Help Alleviate Childhood Summer Hunger

Kansas City, MO – As part of its Childhood Hunger Initiative and to help alleviate summer childhood hunger, Harvesters – The Community Food Network is offering its summer feeding program—Kids Cafe—at more than 60 sites this summer including seven Mid-Continent Public Library branches.

“Mid-Continent Public Library is dedicated to supporting and enhancing the lives of local residents,” said Christen Stein, Associate Director for Public Services at MCPL. “Hosting Harvesters’ Kids Cafe program at our branches is just one more way that we can extend a helping hand to the children and families in our communities who need it most. We’re proud to play a role in supporting the growth and development of the next generation—whether that involves hosting critical early literacy programming or providing nutritious food.”

Working with the USDA and the States of Kansas and Missouri, Harvesters’ Kids Cafe offers free summer meals. The summer theme, Meet and Eat, welcomes all children and teens ages 18 and younger to come and meet up with their friends and enjoy a healthy meal. Many sites provide activities as well. Mid-Continent Public Library, for example, will offer numerous free programs for children this summer as part of its annual Summer Learning Program, which encourages kids and teens to stay intellectually engaged over the summer months.

All summer sites accept walk-ins and do not require pre-registration. Many sites will offer meals between June 1 and August 12. A full list of Kids Cafe sites can be found on Harvesters’ website.

The Mid-Continent Public Library sites are as follows:

- **Blue Ridge Branch, 9253 Blue Ridge Blvd., Kansas City, MO**
  - Kids Cafe began June 1 and ends August 11
  - Food will be served Monday-Friday from 12-1 p.m.

- **Buckner Branch, 19 E. Jefferson St., Buckner, MO**
  - Kids Cafe began June 1 and ends August 11
- Food will be served Monday-Friday from 3:30-4:30 p.m.
  - Grandview Branch, 12930 Booth Lane, Grandview, MO
    - Kids Cafe began June 1 and ends August 11
    - Food will be served Monday-Friday from 3-4 p.m.
  - North Independence Branch, 317 W. 24 Hwy, Independence, MO
    - Kids Cafe began June 5 and ends August 11
    - Food will be served Monday-Friday from 4-5 p.m.
  - Red Bridge Branch, 11140 Locust St., Kansas City, MO
    - Kids Cafe began June 5 and end August 12
    - Food will be served Mondays from 12-1 p.m.
  - Riverside Branch, 2700 NW Vivion Rd., Riverside, MO
    - Kids Cafe began June 1 and ends August 14
    - Food will be served Monday-Friday from 3-4 p.m.
  - South Independence Branch, 13700 E. 35th St. South, Independence, MO
    - Kids Cafe began June 1 and ends August 10
    - Food will be served on Thursdays from 12:30-1:30 p.m.

“Of the nearly 383,000 people who turn to Harvesters for emergency food assistance, nearly 20 percent of them are children,” said Valerie Nicolson-Watson, president and chief executive officer of Harvesters. “Through our childhood hunger programs like Kids Cafe, we are reaching out specifically to those children in need in our community. Kids should not have to worry about where their next meal is coming from.”

Working with community partners, Harvesters serves meals at schools, libraries, parks, pools, community centers and churches throughout its 26-county service area. Kids Cafe utilizes the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). CACFP and SFSP are federally funded programs through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and are administered by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Bureau of Community Food and Nutrition Assistance in Missouri and the Kansas Department of Education, Child Nutrition and Wellness in Kansas.

To find additional summer feeding sites, please visit the Kansas State Department of Education, Child Nutrition & Wellness at www.kn-eat.org, or the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.

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**About Harvesters—The Community Food Network**

Harvesters is a regional food bank and was Feeding America’s 2011 Food Bank of the Year. Serving a 26-county area of northwestern Missouri and northeastern Kansas, Harvesters provides food and related household products to more than 620 not-for-profit agencies including emergency food pantries, community kitchens, shelters, and others. Agencies in Harvesters’ network provide food assistance to as many as 141,500 different people each month. Harvesters, which was founded in 1979, is a certified member of Feeding America, a nationwide network of more than 200 food banks, serving all 50 states. For more information, visit www.harvesters.org.

**Access Your World**

Mid-Continent Public Library is the largest library system in the Kansas City metropolitan area, operating 31 branches and four Library-To-Go locations and serving nearly 800,000 people in Jackson, Clay, and Platte Counties. The Library strives to enrich our citizens and communities through expanding access to innovation, information, ideas, and inspiration. MCPL is a 2014 National Medal for Museum and Library Service winner. Connect with the Library on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.