**For Immediate Release Contact:**

**Date: Phone:**

**Fight Against Childhood Hunger Gets a Big Boost from Rotary**

Three area Rotary Clubs are taking the fight against childhood hunger in Ingham and Clinton Counties to a new level. Rotarians from the East Lansing, Haslett-Okemos and Williamston Sunrise Rotary Clubs got together on August 24, 2017 at Okemos Community Church to pack 1,000 food kits in anticipation of the kick-off of the Weekend Survival Kits program for the 2017-2018 school year.

The clubs also used the occasion to present Weekend Survival Kits, Inc. with a $15,000 Rotary matching grant to purchase food for the Weekend Survival Kits (WSK) program during the 2017-18 school year. Rotary clubs in East Lansing, Haslett-Okemos and Williamston Sunrise Rotary Clubs each contributed $2,500 which was matched with $7,500 from Rotary District 6360 for a total of $15,000. That’s enough money to provide over 4,250 food kits of the anticipated 60,000 kits that will be distributed by the WSK program during the upcoming school year.

“Let’s face it, it’s harder for kids to learn and stay focused when they’re hungry! Weekend Survival Kits do make a difference in a child’s learning, emotional, and physical development,” said Narda Murphy, Williamston Rotarian and recently-retired Williamston Superintendent of Schools. “Beyond the nutritional value provided by the food kits, kids see a first-hand example of how adults and children volunteer to nurture others and give back to their communities,” she added.

In collaboration with the Feeding America Network and the Greater Lansing Food Bank, Weekend Survival Kits, Inc. secures food for the Weekend Survival Kits program which each contain individually portioned, kid-friendly, nutritious food that requires little or no preparation and typically includes: canned soup, canned vegetables, canned fruit, granola bars, single-serve cereal boxes or oatmeal packets, rice or boxed macaroni and cheese, raisans and crackers.

“The support that area service clubs and others are providing for the Weekend Survival Kits program is simply awesome,” said Jeff Gorsline, Founder and Executive Director of Weekend Survival Kits, Inc. which manages the Weekend Survival Kits program. “These three Rotary clubs have been instrumental in starting and sustaining the WSK program, and this financial support will help make sure that we get off to a strong start with the program this year,” he added.

Service clubs, parent groups and area employers, including: Delta Dental, Jackson and MSUFCU are involved in packing food kits and delivering them to participating schools throughout the school year. Started in 2009 with just 229 students, the Weekend Survival Kits (WSK) program has grown over the past 9 years to provide food kits every other Friday during the school year to over 2,500 hungry children to 54 schools in twelve school districts (Dansville, DeWitt, East Lansing, Haslett, Holt, Ingham ISD, Lansing, Mason, Okemos, Webberville, Williamston) located in Ingham, Eaton and Clinton Counties .

The Weekend Survival Kits program is sustained entirely through volunteer support. Individuals or groups can volunteer to pack the food kits and/or deliver them to participating schools. The Weekend Survival Kits website – [www.weekendsurvivalkits.org](http://www.weekendsurvivalkits.org) – has information about upcoming food kit packing dates and sites.

Just $66.50 a YEAR will feed a child 7 meals and 2-3 snacks EVERY WEEKEND during the school year! Weekend Survival Kits, Inc. is a 501 (c) 3 organization and the fiduciary agent for the Weekend Survival Kits program. Checks to support the WSK program should be made payable to: *Weekend Survival Kits* and mailed to the foundation at c/o Weekend Survival Kits, Inc., 1288 W. Grand River Ave., Suite 400, Williamston, MI 48895.

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