



Greater Cleveland
Food Bank



At 82-years-old, Burt Saltzman still works seven days a week at Dave's Markets - the same place he's worked for the last 75 years.

"I kind of grew up in the store, right on 33rd and Payne. It was our first store," Burt explained. My dad used to take me to our little store and my first job was delivering orders in my little wagon. Over the years, I learned the business."

After graduating from The Ohio State University with a degree in accounting, Burt soon realized he wanted to join the family business. "I did pretty well in school, but in the back of my mind, I still loved working with people. I went for two interviews and was offered an accounting job, but I went to my mom and dad and asked to work for the store. They said, 'okay.' And then I went to work there," Burt remembers.

At the time Dave's Market was one small grocery store in Cleveland. Burt quickly got to work growing the family business into the success it is today with more than ten stores across Northeast Ohio. "I just love the business," Burt said with a smile, "90% of my life, I worked seven days a week."



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It was while working at the first Dave's store on East 33rd and Payne that Burt was introduced to the Food Bank. "I remember the Food Bank was right off of East 27th and Payne and I liked to help them a lot. We were neighbors," Burt remembered. He used to make regular trips to the Food Bank just a few blocks away to drop off donations. And in the early days of the Food Bank, partner programs used to pick up food at the Food Bank, and then continue to Dave's Market to get the rest of what they needed.

Burt has a giving spirit and he loves supporting people in need in Northeast Ohio. "The Food Bank is an organization that you know that whatever they're doing, people are being fed," Burt said with a smile. "When you support something like that, you know your dollars are going to the right place."

And Burt has given his share of dollars and time to the Food Bank. From dropping off donations when Dave's and the Food Bank were neighbors to supporting the Food Bank's Capital Campaign in the early



Burt with Anthony Rego, Susan Alcorn, and Jeff Heinen, other food industry leaders, 2003

2000s, Burt was up for the challenge. "I worked together with Anthony Rego, a friend of mine, when they were collecting money for the new building. Anthony had me call certain people I knew to get money for the expansion," Burt explained.



Burt regularly bags groceries at Dave's Market in Midtown Cleveland.

Now, Burt still supports the Food Bank in many ways, but especially through the Check Out Hunger campaign every spring. Over six weeks, Dave's and other local grocery stores work to collect donations for Harvest for Hunger from customers at the register. "We always try to do a little something different to try to get customers to donate. It's enjoyable because you know it's going to a good cause," Burt explained. He loves the campaign and is glad to play a part in it, both as a leader, and as a grocery bagger, something he does frequently at the store.

Dave's is still a family business. While Burt still works seven days a week, he's handed the reigns over to his son, Dan, who sits on the Food Bank's Board of Directors. Burt feels good knowing his son is continuing the work he started, both at Dave's and in the community. "I know Dan will continue to do



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Dan Saltzman (left) with fellow Board member John Sauerland

this work after I'm gone," Burt said with a somber smile, "I feel good because some families aren't sure what's going to happen after they're gone. But, knowing Danny, he'll continue to support organizations like the Food Bank."

As Burt reflects on a long and successful life, he's proud of the work he's been able to accomplish, but also the support he's been able to give to organizations like the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. "There's only one Food Bank," he stated.

"Knowing the people that we work with and that the Food Bank works with, you know that somehow,

between the Food Bank and their partners, these people are eating healthfully. There's no negatives to it. The Food Bank is a plus because of how they affect so many people's lives for the better."

In the next 40 years, Burt hopes to see people in need still being fed. "Food is so important," he explained, "whether it's through the Food Bank or through what we're doing here at Dave's."

When Burt's father started Dave's Market, he couldn't have imagined the business Burt and his sons would grow it into almost 80 years later. Much of that is due to Burt's passion. But Burt won't just be remembered for his business acumen, he'll be remembered for his generosity, much of which helped the Greater Cleveland Food Bank from our days on East 27rd off of Payne Avenue and will continue to help feed so many in need into the future.



Burt with his sons, Dan (left) and Steve (right).