

Mission:

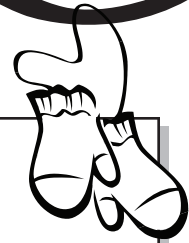
To provide a nutritious daily meal to the hungry of the area, as well as to provide a safe and sheltered place for social gathering.

THE SOUP KITCHEN



A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
1-269-925-8204

2010 WINTER EDITION



Painting Crew

We assembled several forces to paint the dining room and restrooms at the Soup Kitchen on Sunday, January 24th. About fifteen members of a group of young professionals called "The Junction" formed the largest segment of the painting



crew. They were assisted by some regular Soup Kitchen volunteers and four students from Lake Michigan Catholic High School.

The LMC students, Marcus Bledsoe, Jake Wood, Wil Daley and Ben Bournay did the prep work for the painting on Saturday the 23rd. They have a few more jobs here to finish out their senior project for Lake Michigan Catholic High School.

We also had a group of eight students in the "Alien Youth" group from the New Life Christian Center come in that day to wash the dining room chairs.



Individual Projects

Many different individuals and groups have created their own fundraisers for the Soup Kitchen this past year. Here are some of them:



Eagle Scout project: Drew Lybbert held three food drives and collected money to support the Soup Kitchen as his Eagle Scout project. His original goal was to collect 1,000 pounds of food; he collected over 1,500 pounds of food for us. Great job, Drew!

The River Valley Garden Club obtained a grant from the Pokagon Fund to garden for various organizations. They grew many vegetables for the Soup Kitchen and delivered about 65 bushels of produce to us last summer.

Affinity Salon and Spa Food Drive

The Affinity Salon and Spa held a food drive spanning Thanksgiving and Christmas of 2009. They collected non-perishable food items from customers and others who responded to the publicity about the drive. They delivered several loads of food to our food pantry.

Pier 33 Potluck Fundraiser



"Club 33" is a dedicated group of boaters who spend their summer weekends enjoying boating and fellowship at Pier 33 in Saint Joseph. This past summer they turned their annual year-end pot-luck into a fundraiser for the Soup Kitchen. They collected a pickup truck full of food and also raised a sizable monetary donation for the Soup Kitchen. This great event had it all – great food, live music and dozens of raffle prizes.



NEW BOARD MEMBER – KC GAST



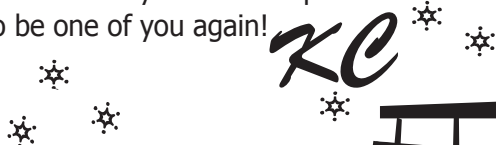
Actually “re-new” might be a better way to put things. I’ve been associated with the Soup Kitchen in one capacity or another for quite some time, going back to odd jobs performed at the old location on Pipestone. I first became associated with the Soup Kitchen as a result of working for LECO Corporation, a long-time supporter of the Benton Harbor

Soup Kitchen. Back then, we did periodic maintenance, repairs, painting, cleaning – whatever needed to be done...and there was plenty to do back then. Sometime shortly after we moved to the new location, I became a board member and saw things from a completely different perspective.

The Soup Kitchen is the largest volunteer network of people of faith in our area; year-in and year-out, the Soup Kitchen manages to feed the hungry of our area, 365 days a year, completely through the blessings of people like YOU. What an honor it is to be a small part of this effort. Nevertheless, I stepped aside from our board for a few years because of church, family, and job commitments, but now things have quieted down (kids grown, job settled down) and it’s great to be back!

If you’re reading this now, you’re obviously a supporter of the work of the Soup Kitchen and I don’t need to tell you how vital the work is that goes on here or how much we rely on you. By the time this is printed, we will have held our annual Texas Hold ‘Em fundraiser and the Bowl-a-thon, Tabor Hill Benefit Dinner, and the Golf Outing are all coming up soon as well. Each of these provides a wonderful opportunity to meet the people who make this work and also to have fun while supporting the feeding of and caring for those who absolutely need it most.

I’m thrilled to see professionals on the board of the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen still giving their time to make this all work without tax dollars. There are no intermediary steps; any support you offer feeds people. No agencies or bureaucracies take a cut. So if you’ve served meals at the Soup Kitchen, donated food, provided monetary support, helped promote our fund raising, volunteered time for maintenance, or served on our board at any time in the past – thanks...and it’s great to be one of you again!



THE GOLDEN THREAD AT THE SOUP KITCHEN

Many of our volunteers and donors already know what I am about to share with our Newsletter Readers for you have been there for years and experienced the moments. What is the Golden Thread? For lack of a more eloquent term: “The Golden Thread” at the Soup Kitchen is Barbara Whitwam. Let me share a few experiences some of you may or may not know.

Barbara is the only current Board member who has been with the Soup Kitchen since its inception. Board members, Administrators, volunteers and donors have come and gone in the overall ministry of the Soup Kitchen, but Barb has remained committed and present – not to the Board or the organization but to the clients and the mission we serve.

Most people in the community would know Barbara Whitwam because of her husband Dave, the retired – CEO of Whirlpool Corporation. We at the Soup Kitchen know her in a totally different light. She is a light that shines like a Golden Thread, day in and day out, year after year. A Golden Thread that is connected to Godliness.

Our clients, know Barbara Whitwam as “Barb” and they know her very different from you and I. They know that if they or someone in their family has a need Barb is there for them. They know that if they have a doctor’s appointment and have no means to get to the appointment Barb will give them Dial a Ride bus tokens. She provides phone numbers and places they can go to get assistance and so much more. Barb works with clients to get them into substance abuse programs and medical care. She listens and gives them Godly counsel in handling the problems of life. She quietly acts as an advocate for them to other agencies and those having significant impact on their life. She brings, hats, coats, gloves, boots and what ever else they need. She does intense research to get them Michigan identification cards. As one client told me, they know “Barb is one person they can trust.”

The Clients know Barb is there explicitly, exclusively for them. She is a true and faithful advocate. When Barb is not there, the clients ask where she is. When she is ill they pray for her because she has taught them to pray. When Barb is in the Soup Kitchen, the clients cover and protect her. She is the “golden thread” of hope, of love and of good will that our clients see.

Barb does not like and certainly rejects any kind of praise. I have watched her over the years and have learned what truly delights her is making the burden lighter for someone else. She “eyes” the clients coming in the door without gloves or hats and assures they are warmer before they venture out that door. She sees a quiet, downtrodden soul and goes after them to listen and to help.

This article is written out of respect and honor for a woman who gives selflessly of herself for people who can never return the favor. When we look at the world news with so many perverse and corrupt incidents, one could get the wrong impression. I write to confirm within our own community that you may know and be strengthened of the good works being done right here and now.

Each of us can make a difference in one person’s life today. If you are led to find a person to help, please give us a call. Just being an advocate, a friend, or someone to talk with; praying with and for a client makes a significant difference in their life. Who but our God really knows... what He can do through you for the least of our brothers.

Pray that God will continue the work of the “Golden Thread”.

Our staff...

Alvin Favorite "Our right hand man"



Alvin has worked at the Soup Kitchen off and on for the last 12 years. He is there 6 days a week, and most days, Alvin shows up way ahead of schedule just to help out. In those 12 years, Alvin assisted in the training/mentoring for the last four Soup Kitchen Administrators.

Basically he is the "right hand man" for everyone. If anyone needs to know where anything is at, in the Soup Kitchen...just ask Alvin. He helps the volunteer groups and donors in one way or another and knows most of them by name and church. Alvin sweeps, mops, shovels, does the dishes, shovels the walkways, does the laundry, stocks the shelves. Yep...that's just about everything.

Alvin was born and raised in Benton Harbor. He has two grown children and a lovely lady friend named Ann who keeps him straight. Many of you reading this know Alvin enough to know that he truly enjoys working with the volunteers and clients. Alvin always has a smile on his face and he jumps right in and helps where ever he can.

Sylver Davis "Highly Dependable"



Sylver was born in Norfolk, Virginia. Her family moved to Chicago and St Louis, MO before moving to Benton Harbor when she was 8 years old. She has three sisters, two brothers and one son.

Sylver started working at the Soup Kitchen a little over a year ago. She has proved to be a great addition to our staff

because she is a good worker, highly dependable, and has a great sense of humor. She looks out for the clients and steps in to fill whatever job needs to be done. On the days when Sylver is not working she often comes down to the Soup Kitchen just to socialize and help if she is needed.

Tom Tedrick "Great worker"



Tom has worked at the Soup Kitchen for five years, serving as both dishwasher and custodian. Tom is very careful about his work and can always be depended on to get all the little details right.

Tom was born in Baroda. He graduated from Lakeshore High School and has taken a few classes at Lake Michigan College. Tom loves music, enjoys his computer, and is usually the star bowler at our annual bowling/holiday party.

David Wayne Green "Everybody's Favorite Volunteer"



David volunteers nearly every day at the Soup Kitchen without pay. David has been involved with the Soup Kitchen for more than 14 years as both an employee and volunteer. David no longer works at the Soup Kitchen because he has developed a serious heart condition, but often shows up to help.

David was born in Tennessee and has 2 brothers and 2 sisters. His family moved to Michigan when he was 12 years old. David is a friend to everyone at the Soup Kitchen and can always be counted on to lend a hand.

Ontoine Meyer "Loyal Friend and Worker"



Ontoine was born in Benton Harbor. He is married to a lovely lady for 1/4 century and his compassion and ingenuity are his strengths. He has 3 children, 2 girls and one son. Anton steps in to volunteer and to work where ever and whenever he is needed.

Ontoine and David both do odd jobs such as raking leaves, helping with landscaping, painting and a host of other chores for the staff, volunteers and others. They are hard workers full of skills, fun to be around and therefore make the task easy to accomplish.

Texas Hold 'em Poker Tournament 2010

Our 4th annual Poker Tournament fundraiser was held Sunday, January 31, 2010 at the new Shadowland Ballroom down at Silver Beach in St. Joseph. Thanks to the generosity of our players we made \$3842.50 and added 75 cans of food to the pantry.

David Schmaltz of Baroda was our \$1000 winner. Gabe Krajecki of Riverside took second place honors and Rene Ledesma of Coloma was our third place player.

Michael Walker – Berrien Springs(4th), Mason Moore – Eau Claire (5th), past champion Rick Carpenter – Coloma (6th), Adam Dryer – Coloma (7th), Rick Freeman – Benton Harbor (8th), Joe Jezek – St. Joe (9th) and Ray Clark – Benton Harbor (10th) rounded out the top ten finishers.

Congratulations to Scott Schreiner and Scott Kreiner, who knocked Sheriff Paul Bailey and our Mystery Player, Kathy Wallace out of the game to earn \$50 bounties. Congrats also to Amy Gaynor who won the 50/50.

We really appreciated the mirror, tee shirts, hats, key chains, CDs and other door prizes provided to us by OK Distributors: a nice extra for our players! Thank you also to Anne Vonk and the Bistro at the Boulevard for their support.

As always we could not pull off these events without our great volunteers! Thank you to Deedy Fowler, Claire Gillespie, Nancy Gillespie Smith, Linda Barker, and Kristi Clark; many, many thanks to our dealers

Colin Prillwitz, Jamye Molley, Mary Ann Blythe, Joeline Von Koenig, Nancy Von Koenig, Karla Von Koenig, Laurie Peoples, Bob Riccio, Kathy Karnik, Adam Karnik, Pam Smith, Chris Woodruff, Kathy Fechner, Jeff Keehn, Jan Zilke, John Kaltz, Karen Krajecki.

The Soup Kitchen is grateful for the organizational skills and support of Nancy and Jeff Von Koenig, Pit Boss Extraordinaire!

There was conversation about having another tournament in the spring; we have our players email addresses and phone numbers; we'll keep you posted on this proposed event.

Thank you all again!



Crop Walk

Thanks to everyone who dedicated his or her walk to the Soup Kitchen at last year's Crop Walk. We received \$3,102.40 for your efforts!

During 2009 we served 54,950 meals to the hungry in our community, and your help is very much appreciated.

Soup Kitchen Wish List

- Mid-sized towels, (like hand towels and bar towels.)
- Canned fruit or vegetables; the large #10 cans are the best. It takes about six of these 102 ounce cans for one meal.
 - Large toolbox
 - Our current gas bill -\$524.58
 - Help to decorate and organize our bulletin boards.

Tabor Hill Event – April 18, 2010

Paul Landeck, vice president of Tabor Hill Winery and Restaurant has indicated it's "ALL GO!" for replicating the successful fund raising event, benefiting the Soup Kitchen, which was held for the first time last April. We're hoping and praying for your support once again.

Enjoy the superb cuisine and ambience while relaxing with your friends – with no speeches, no raffles, no formalities – just fun! And all for a most worthy cause: feeding the hungry of our area.

We hope to see you there!

Anne and Andy Takacs



Sunday, April 18, 2010

4 pm to 7 pm

Tabor Hill

Winery & Restaurant

**\$80 per person with
all proceeds going to The Soup Kitchen.**

**Includes choice of entree, hors d'oeuvres, dessert,
wine, cocktails and gratuity.**

**For more information or to make reservations,
please call 1-800-283-3363**

SOUP KITCHEN PRESENTATIONS

We would be honored to present the Soup Kitchen story to your organization. Please call today to schedule a time and date.

STATE OF MICHIGAN FOOD KITCHEN TAX CREDIT

Michigan residents who donate to the Soup Kitchen get a tax benefit at both the state and federal level. Consult your accountant or tax advisor for advice on how your donation may qualify.

GLEANERS FOOD BANK

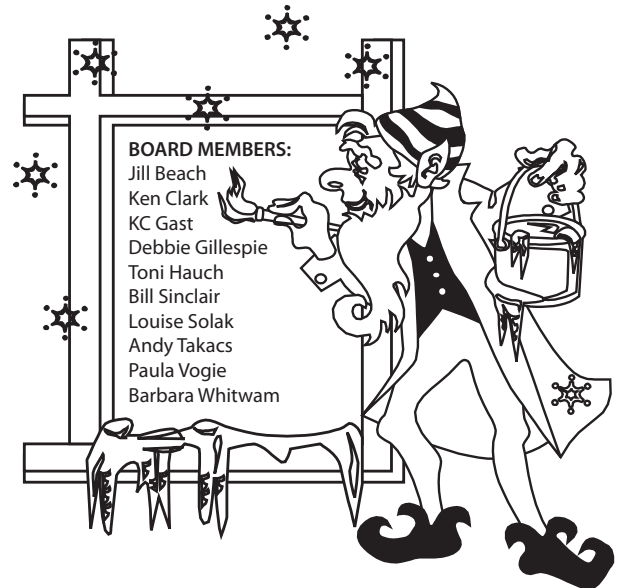
Remember, churches are automatically eligible to purchase food at an average of 15 cents per pound, including food in #10 cans, from the Southwest Gleaners Food Bank, 622 Langley Avenue in St.. Joseph. Unlike other organizations, they are not required to be a 501 (c)(3). Please think about shopping there first.

For more information, contact SW Gleaners Manager, Rich Glista at 269-983-7260.

MATCHING GIFTS PROGRAM

The Whirlpool Corporation has two matching gift programs to help maximize employees charitable donations.

The Matching Gifts Program combines personal contributions with matching dollars from the Whirlpool Foundation. Full-time, salaried and hourly U.S. Whirlpool employees and retirees are eligible.



Thinking about the
Soup Kitchen? Check out the new
"Need Right NOW!" page on our website at:
www.soupkitchen-bentonharbor.com