

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.



Learn about The Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen. Read all the newsletters. Donate any time. www.soupk.org

The Benton Harbor
Soup Kitchen

A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION • 1-269-925-8204 • WINTER 2018 EDITION



*The
Soup Kitchen
Works Because
of You!*



THE SOUP KITCHEN WORKS BECAUSE

The Soup Kitchen works because everyone helps. Volunteers, donors, and guests. It sounds simple, but it isn't. Restaurateurs tell us that it is impossible to staff a restaurant kitchen with volunteers. The Soup Kitchen has done that for over 38 years. Volunteers contribute about \$500,000 of labor every year, and are vital to our success.

The key to financial success is you, our donors. You contribute 70% of our budget every year, year in and year out. Other pieces fluctuate. We have improved our event receipts. We run a tight budget. We have found corporate donors who fund food for the poor. These improvements add up to a 10% increase.

Guests help as much as they can. They clear their trays every day, and some volunteer. A few leave small donations in the "tip" jar.

On the negative side, we have lost 2 or 3 supporting groups every year for the last 3 years. Supporting groups (church and business) bring the food as well as the volunteers, so our food costs are up. Federal support for food programs is 1/6 what it was 10 years ago. Our

regular volunteer groups from companies have also become fewer. Matching gifts are down. The losses are about 20%.

Our guests have increased needs. The SNAP program (food stamps) of 10 years ago gave a single person \$200 in benefits. SNAP has been reduced several times. That same person now receives \$16. That is why we are distributing more food in the dining room along with the daily meal.

The bottom line is that we have run \$10,000 in the red every year for the past 4 years. Don't get excited, we are not in danger. But as the caretakers of this corporation, we must reverse this trend.

For that, we need your help. Can you dig a little deeper? Can you recommend the Soup Kitchen to your service group? Do you know people who might donate? No matter how hard we try, we will never eliminate the need for the Soup Kitchen. We need your help to keep The Soup Kitchen healthy for those who will need it now and in the future.

WHO PACKED THE PARACHUTE?



Charles Plumb was a Navy pilot in Vietnam. On his last mission, he was shot down by a missile. He spent 6 years in a Vietnamese prison, and he lived to tell the story.

One day, he was sitting in a restaurant and a man came up to him and said "You're Plumb! You were shot down in Vietnam!" "How do you know that?" asked Plumb. "I packed your parachute. I guess it worked." said the man. Plumb replied "It sure did. Otherwise, I wouldn't be here today." Plumb thought all night about how many times he might have seen this sailor on board ship, quietly doing his job; as a fighter pilot, he may not have even acknowledged this man in passing.

Now Plumb asks us all, "Who's packing your parachute?" Sometimes in the daily challenges of life, we may fail to say hello, please, or thank you...to congratulate someone, to give a compliment, or say something nice for no reason at all. This holiday season, recognize the people who pack your parachute. And if you take the time to work at the Soup Kitchen or donate to our ministry, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for being someone's parachute-packer!



WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBER SHARON AUSTIN

Ask anyone who knows Soup Kitchen Board Member Sharon Austin, she's a woman who makes things happen. Through Sharon, hundreds of people have come to volunteer and get to know

about the Soup Kitchen. Her energy, heart, and passion have enabled countless people in need to know there is always a hot meal waiting here for them, even when they may not be able to rely on anything else.

Besides serving tirelessly on our board, Sharon is the Soup Kitchen coordinator for Storyline Church. Through this service she has learned that she has a love of connecting people to a mission that is bigger than themselves, helping people be creative, developing relationships, and loving those that come daily to the Soup Kitchen.

About 8 months ago, Sharon started serving every other month with a group of friends. They call themselves "Moms with a Mission."

Sharon Austin has lived in St. Joe for 16 years with her husband Tom, and their children Jacob, Abby, and Alec. She graduated Bethel College in 1992 with degrees in psychology and sociology, and minors in music and biology. Sharon worked for Holy Cross Care in South Bend as the director of Social Work until 1998.

Tom and Sharon own Austin Tax & Financial. Sharon is a licensed insurance agent, runs the office, manages staff, and is a tax preparer.

Sharon attends Storyline Church, is a member of the Elder Board and serves as Treasurer for Lakeshore Excellence Foundation. Sharon believes she and her family have been blessed, and they wish to be a blessing to others. Thanks to Sharon Austin for blessing us with her service on our board.



AND THE RAVES CONTINUE TO POUR IN!

....for last year's benefit dinner at The Bistro on the Boulevard in honor of Barbara Whitwam's many years of dedication to The Soup Kitchen.

Next year's Bistro Dinner will be held on Sunday, May 5, 2019. The invitations and reservation information will be mailed by mid-March. Please call the office if you do not receive yours. The dinner is still only \$80 person, and, as before, dinner will be served from 4 pm thru 7 pm.

The classic ambiance, lake view, and superb cuisine at The Bistro generated many compliments from last year's diners.

The unique feature of this event is that all proceeds go directly to The Soup Kitchen. Another feature of this fund-raising dinner is that there are other activities ...just fine dining with friends.

In past years this event has reached maximum capacity, so we suggest that you make your reservations early. This is The Soup Kitchen's major fund-raiser of the year, which is essential to serving about 50,000 warm meals annually. It should warm your heart to know that you have truly helped make this possible.

Please think about this.....that although the U.S. economy is really humming, there are still a lot of folks in need of a warm meal!

2019 Soup Kitchen Events!

January 27th
Euchre Tournament

May 5th
Benefit at The Bistro

March 10th
Soup Bowl

June 10th
Golf Outing at
Harbor Shores

SOUP KITCHEN DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

The Soup Kitchen is a non-profit, 501c(3) organization. Our mission is to feed a nutritious meal to the hungry. Donations to The Soup Kitchen are deductible to the full extent of the federal law. Please consult your tax advisor for further information on the tax benefits of your generous donation.

FEEDING AMERICA WEST MICHIGAN

Churches are automatically eligible to purchase food at 17 cents (or less) per pound, including food in #10 cans, from Feeding America West Michigan, 1488 E. Empire Ave., Benton Harbor. Unlike other organizations, churches are not required to be a 501c(3). Please think about shopping there first.

For more information, contact Feeding America Manager, Rich Glista at 269-926-2646.

MATCHING GIFTS PROGRAMS

The Whirlpool Corporation matching gift program matches personal contributions of \$50 and up with dollars from the Whirlpool Foundation. Full-time, salaried and hourly U.S. Whirlpool employees and retirees are eligible. Please, if you are eligible for matching gifts, please take that opportunity. Private foundations must distribute five percent of the value of their net investment assets annually. As for most things involving the IRS, it is a bit more complicated than that, but 5% is close. So you are not imposing by requesting a matching gift. You are helping to direct money that they must donate. Because of your support, the Whirlpool Foundation is always one of our top five revenue sources. The Soup Kitchen office can email you the matching gifts form.

The Thrivent Choice® program is a charitable grant program that allows members to recommend where Thrivent Financial distributes a portion of its charitable grant funds each year.

Eligible members invited to direct Choice Dollars can recommend where Thrivent should distribute some of its charitable funds among thousands of enrolled 501(c) (3) nonprofit organizations, including The Soup Kitchen Inc. Visit Thrivent.com/thriventchoice or ask your representative for more information.

EQUITY GIFTING AND THE RMD CHARITABLE DEDUCTION

The strong performance of the stock market the last several years has left many investors with appreciated stock which will result in a capital gain when sold by the owner. Gifting appreciated stock is one of the most effective means of tax savings available as the capital gain on the stock is avoidable and the donor receives a charitable deduction.

In addition, a qualified charitable deduction allows an individual to transfer up to \$100,000 from an IRA directly to a qualified charity. It is only available to IRAs and individuals who have reached RMD age (70.5). Any amount processed as a Qualified Charitable Deduction counts toward your RMD requirement and reduces the taxable amount of your IRA distribution. This lowers both your adjusted gross income and taxable income, resulting in a lower overall tax liability.

The Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen accepts donations of individual stock or distributions from an IRA. We appreciate all the gifts we have received in the past and our so thankful for the financial support we receive from our local community, without these generous donations it would be very difficult for the Soup Kitchen to carry out our mission of serving the less fortunate.

BOARD MEMBERS:

Les Ashmore	Sue Pscholka
Sharon Austin	Rob Romano
Rob Burgess	Alex Schaeffer
KC Gast	Andy Takacs
Debbie Gillespie	Chris Woodruff
Julee Laurent	

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

