

Homeless Breakfast Update (St. Max & St. Jude) May, 2013

Greetings, Everyone

We encountered some early morning fog, as we entered Camarillo & Oxnard. Then, conditions were rather pleasant when we all arrived & unloaded our cars.

Our volunteer group this morning was smaller than usual (just 11 of us), so we were all very busy the entire time. Present were Sue & Mary, Betsy, Pat, Cyndy & Bob, Jean, Steve, Audrey & Olivia, & Sally.



We were able to purchase the plastic table cloth roll in black ONLY, so thought the look might be a bit “morbid.” However, someone discovered remnants in a variety of colors, so we ended up with a cheerful mix of hues!

(Assembling the tableware packets are Jean & Pat, with Cheryl assisting.)

Both Cheryls were present today. The blonde Cheryl (an attractive well-groomed grandmother) was there early & cheerfully helped set up the tables. I was amazed that she is now walking so well. She had had a heart attack, was in a motorized wheelchair at one point, & suffers from “drop foot.” She looked healthy & happy. The brunette Cheryl (very slender & a long-time regular) is also improving health-wise. She no longer needs her crutches (from injuries sustained after being hit by a car) & the swelling in her ankle has diminished significantly. She continues to live in the SUV with Mark, getting just some sleep. She seemed somewhat more rested than last month ...

While Cyndy & I made the “donut run,” Chuck, a troubled long-time regular, stopped by the dining hall. He spoke to some other volunteers, but did not stay to eat breakfast. He was reportedly quite agitated, saying he couldn’t come in or wasn’t allowed to do so ... then he left. Chuck is the one who was re-united with his sister several months ago. I will email this sister (who lives in the Mid-West) to see if she can get him some help through a cousin (who lives in Ventura). As is often the case, there is no easy solution to the dilemma of his life.

This past week, Bob & I attended a meeting chaired by Pat McClean, of Family to Family, which is the “umbrella organization” that coordinates the 29 of our groups who comprise the Feeding of the Homeless. This assemblage pays the rent for our dining facility, manages repairs & upkeep, & purchases supplies, such as styrofoam cups, paper towels, toilet paper, trash-can liners, etc. The most pressing problem is always money, since Family to Family has no regular source of funds. If I understood correctly, Catholic Charities contributes nothing toward our program, even though we operate out of their building. Now, the need for financial aid has increased substantially, as a requirement for a Uniformed Security Presence has been imposed by the Archdiocese. It seems that part of the reasoning for this condition is to appease neighboring businesses, who fear that the Homeless population can cause trouble, perhaps more so in a group. So, Pat plans to contact churches, organizations, & businesses in Ventura to explore additional funding ideas & resources. We are all being asked to dig a bit deeper into our pockets.

Keep well, my friends

Sally Holland