

Chattanooga Community Kitchen



The Open Door - Newsletter of the Chattanooga Community Kitchen - Spring 2011

Volunteers of the Year

Individual - Don Baldwin

Most of you have received a letter or two from Don Baldwin...though you likely had no idea. For the past couple of years Don has stuffed our thank-you letters. He's also on a serving team with his church, First Christian downtown. But, most significantly, he's proven to be indispensable for tracking our end of year inventory.

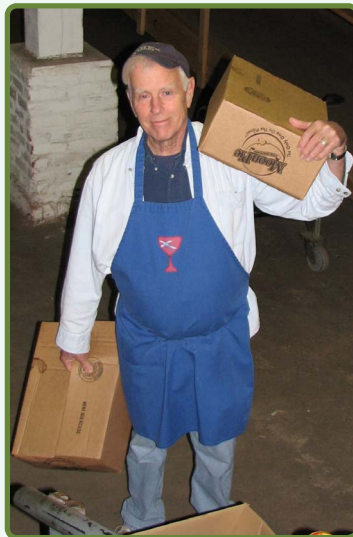
Honestly, we're not quite sure what we'd do without Don. In fact, we've already tripled his salary on three different occasions! But, we still couldn't get the job done for any less.

Don is one of those rare, humble volunteers - the kind that gets embarrassed when recognized for their importance.

He shows up when asked, and often even when he isn't. He keeps track of products and inventory throughout the year, even suggesting strategic ideas and plans. And through it all, Don keeps helping others at the forefront of his mind, most recently calling with ideas about how to help victims of local tornados.

As such, we are honored to have Don as a volunteer, and proud to recognize him as the 2011 Volunteer of the Year.

Thanks, Don, for all of your hard work, in keeping track of inventory, in stocking shelves, and in serving the homeless and needy. You are greatly appreciated!



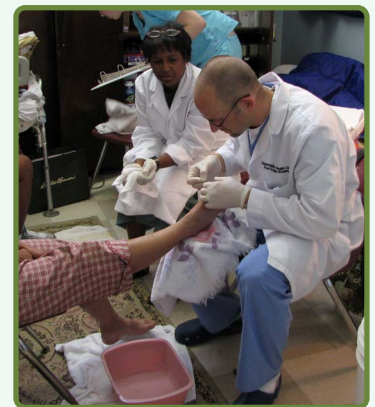
Don at work...

Group - UTC School of Nursing

And, so is the UTC School of Nursing.

What started four years ago as a short talk in a classroom has turned into an award-winning partnership.

For the past few years, Dr. Lisa Muirhead of the Nursing Program has supplied student volunteers and staff supervision, bringing a team of nurses each week to the Kitchen's Day Center where they offer footcare services to our homeless and needy.



Foot care then...

Not only are they able to tend to the physical needs of those we serve, but the process of offering footcare also empowers the spirit as people that are accustomed to being ignored enjoy human contact in a caring environment.

With support from Dr. Muirhead and the School of Nursing, the foot care program has grown from a bucket in a closet to its own room in the Day Center.



Foot care now...

Thank you, Lisa, for all you and the students of UTC have done for the homeless!

Comcast Cares

Thanks to Comcast, for helping out by bringing hundreds of employees and volunteers as well as supplies, tools and a great attitude on April 30th!

Thanks to these helping hands, our entire East 11th streetscape has been renewed.

Thanks for cleaning, redoing flower beds, replacing the awning and so much more! We're grateful for all you've done, and look forward to working together again!



Men (and women) in blue!

Working up and down the block.
Thanks!

Volunteer Appreciation

Thanks to the Chattanooga Theatre Centre for once again hosting our Volunteer Appreciation Event this year.

We're grateful for the invitation and for all of our volunteers, both those of you that were able to attend the play and those that weren't.

Special thanks to our own Brother Ron Fender, who directed the play!



The cake says it all!

Thank you volunteers!

Remember to renew your **Bi-Lo bonus card** every July! Keep shopping to benefit the Kitchen. Bring this newsletter into the store and have them scan the bar-code below to get started!



Browse the Internet?
www.goodsearch.com
donates money every time you search. Designate the Chattanooga Community Kitchen and each click helps us help the homeless!

Do you Facebook?

Be sure to "like" the Community Kitchen by visiting www.facebook.com/communitykitchen and pressing the like button!

We can use your support!

Financial Contributions

We value your support and regard ourselves as accountable not only to you but also to God for stewardship of the funds you entrust to us. We are audited by a recognized, local independent CPA firm and publish an audited annual financial statement.

The Chattanooga Community Kitchen is a 501(c)3 organization. Contributions are tax deductible.



Help from the Heart of the City is more than just a slogan!

Contact Information:

Street address: 727 East 11th St.
Chattanooga, TN 37403

Mailing Address: PO Box 11203
Chattanooga, TN 37401

Phone: (423) 756-4222

Fax: (423) 756-3820

Email: kitchen@homelesschattanooga.org
CFC # 32577

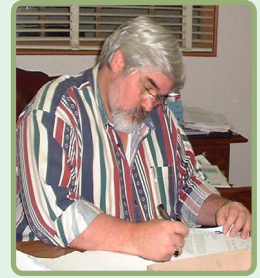
www.homelesschattanooga.org
blog - www.onmywayhome.org

Charlie's Corner:

“You can't run away from trouble. There ain't no place that far.”

~Uncle Remus

On Wednesday April 27th, many in the Chattanooga area were looking for a place to hide from trouble. Many were unable. That morning we had to interrupt our staff meeting to take everyone to the basement because of the winds and tornado potential. We would all go to the basement two more times that day.



Charlie Hughes
Executive Director

Not wanting anyone to be forced outside, we decided to open that night as an emergency shelter. 65 men and 23 women stayed safely under our roof. Once the staff and volunteers were set up, I went home. I got home around 8:00 PM to total darkness, not knowing in reality that this was just the beginning.

I had a battery powered weather radio and my wife and I were able to hear what was happening around us. We were amazed as we listened to how many tornadoes were being reported and their force. Around 11:30 we decided it was safe to try and get some sleep.

I got up early the next morning and checked for damage. The power was still out and lots of trees were down, but no major damage.

When I arrived at the Community Kitchen, I was told that we did not even lose power during the night. We were able to continue serving meals; the Day Center was open, showers working, phones working. Other than having several staff that weren't able to make it in, all of our services were open.

We immediately let Emergency Services know that we would serve meals all day long to anyone in need and that clothing was available. We offered to help in any way we could.

As I read reports and listened to radio and television, I began to realize how immense this tragedy really was. People were saying things like, “we lost everything,” “I don't know what we are going to do,” and “you never think something like this can happen to you.”

I went out to the Day Center and heard a mom with two children tell a case manager, “I don't know what we are going to do.” She had fled domestic violence, a tornado of another kind, and was seeking help. Another couple was in need of help because the husband had lost his job, could not find work and they had been evicted.

I briefly wondered if we'd be able to help these folks that had lost everything. Would our case managers be able to empathize with the tornado victims? I then realized that our front line people deal with these situations every day. We would be able to understand the tragedy of homelessness.

As it turned out, Chattanooga stepped up to the challenge. Agencies, emergency personnel, churches and countless volunteers arrived at the affected areas and helped out in so many ways. We had a few come in for services here. Some ate meals; others used our showers and laundry facilities. Some got clothes and some just wanted to use the phone.

We realize that the tornado victims will be in need for many months. Rest assured that we will be here to offer our services in any way that we can, as always. Thanks be that you make this possible.

Message from the Monk

I have a recurring dream. I am walking up a very high and steep hill where people have gathered. All my Gregorian Brothers are there, and my family. Many of my co-workers and people from Chattanooga are there, too. It is a windy, high place and birds are crying.

The sun is bright and the sky is so blue, so beautiful, it almost hurts my eyes to see it. There is a man standing there, waiting for me; he is a beautiful man and laughing as he reaches his hand out to me. I realize that he is leading me to the edge of a very sharp cliff. The sheer height makes me dizzy, and I am afraid. I understand that we are to step off of this edge, he and I, holding hands

and in the company of all these people. I also realize that if I can find the courage to leap, I will not fall to my bloody and horrible death, but rather we will fly.

On July 23 at 1:00 in the afternoon, I will lie prostrate on the floor in a little chapel and the Brothers of Saint Gregory will cover me in a funeral pall. There will be prayers offered and anthems sung, and I will make my Life Profession of the Holy Vows. A gold wedding ring will be placed on my hand and I will forever be married to this amazing life.

You will be there with me, some few in body, and I pray all of you will be there in spirit and in prayer.

Your support and encouragement have nurtured me and made my work possible. And your love and friendship have blessed me. I thank God for you.

And, when I return, I will continue to be committed and faithful to the service we offer here to the homeless and hungry people of Chattanooga. As I take these holy vows, I celebrate the Chattanooga Community Kitchen and the Living Christ we serve here every day.

- Br. Ron Fender,
bsg is an Episcopal
Monk serving as the
Community
Kitchen's outreach
case manager.



Six words, pages of stories....

As part of a weekly creative writing course LaDonna Guffey has been teaching in the Day Center, we recently asked clients to write a memoir in just six words.



At a class picnic...

Here are a few of the powerful results:

Not wanted, shuffled around, independent survivor

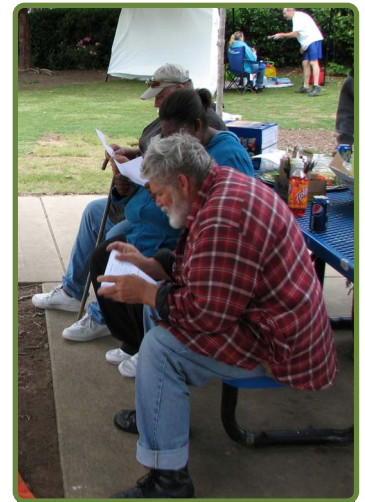
Got drunk, got sober, still pickled

Take a number, wait in line

Growing old gracefully, tired of fighting

Tourist of life, tickets still available

Singing not heard, writer not read



The class at work...

Thanks for helping us remember the humanity of those most in need. Their stories are often overlooked, but sometimes the messages are remarkable.

A Voice for All - Sheltered and Unsheltered

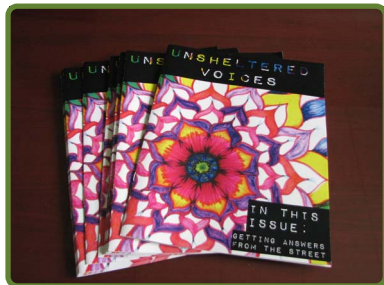
Having a voice - an outlet - a person to listen; these are basic human desires, even needs.

Too often, though, a homeless person's voice goes unheard, dismissed, or even ignored. Here at the Kitchen, we work to offer an outlet to our clients - whether it be a group discussion, a caring case manager, or a moment with a volunteer. The point is to instill a sense of humanity through validation and interaction.

And, sometimes our work is taken up by others. Most recently, students at GPS took on a great challenge - they resurrected "Unsheltered Voices," an arts magazine showcasing the works of homeless artists and authors.

The young women of the school's Amnesty International chapter took it upon themselves to collect, jury and publish the artwork and writing, creating the first copy of Unsheltered Voices to be published in nearly five years!

We're very appreciative of their fine work and even more appreciative of the voice they have given to our clients.



Just before this edition of Unsheltered Voices was published, we held a staff development exercise. It was a simple round-table discussion, with four basic questions - but it was so successful with staff we decided to give it a whirl with our clients. What a ride - the response was astounding and reminded us once again of the importance of offering a voice to those we serve. Providing services is critical. Advocating essential - but nothing can replace the empowering, humanizing impact of treating a person with respect and asking for their input.

We learned a bit more too - many of the clients provided valuable feedback on our programs and ideas for new activities. While many mentioned direct services, others were far more philosophical; take a look at a few of the answers to the questions we posed:

Why are you here?

*my life is in need of...moral changes
to improve: friendship, quality of life, self reflection,
information*



What do you contribute to the Community Kitchen?

*I lend an ear to those who need to talk
my time, respect to the people who come and the staff
a positive attitude*

What does the Kitchen do for you?

*refuge, moral and spiritual advice - happiness
feeds me, gives me a place to shower, call my family
and children, wash clothes
hope that I will survive this homeless hardship*

What are your personal goals?

*find a new job and get off the streets
to continue to strive to rebuild my life without my
children
to keep my job, to be encouraging to others and to live
my life as God intended for me to live
to stay sober and to help others stay sober*



Buy a dozen donuts and help the homeless!

For the month of July, \$1 from every dozen donuts sold at Julie Darling's on the North Shore will be donated to our work with the homeless and needy. Do good and eat well!

7am-7pm Mon-Thurs
7am-9pm Fri & Sat



121 Frazier Avenue
423.591.3737

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