

Chattanooga Community Kitchen



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

The Weather Outside was Frightful!

A white Christmas - what a blessing! We enjoyed it, but for the hundreds of homeless folks outside, it made for a rough few days (not to mention the huge snow in January)!

So, we did what we could to make the inside *just delightful*.



Beautiful Christmas morning...



Here comes Santa Claus...

started out a bit scary. By 9:00 AM, all of the scheduled volunteers had cancelled due to the snow. More than 200 homeless folks were in the day center. Four staff members were on site. And the snow was still falling.

But, by 10:00 AM, volunteers were pouring through the door - many of them coming



The tables are set...

Dinner was served with all of the fixings. Santa Claus brought presents (though he had to use the front door, not the chimney). Fruit and candy were plentiful.

The day was a great success. Though, it

because they “had a feeling we might need some help.” And we did.

Thanks to all that turned out, we had served Christmas dinner to over 500 people by noon. Santa had seen over 100 children and 450 adults. Clients sang Christmas carols. The Day Center was warm and vibrant with life. But outside was frigid and cold.



All received gifts...

Fortunately, people did not have to worry about sleeping outside that night (or the night before). Due to the extreme cold, we opened as an emergency, inclement weather shelter; in fact, we were open for four nights just that week. We’ve been open quite a bit since as well.

While we don’t consider ourselves a night shelter, we do step up when the need is present. And, although we cannot promise to solve all of the issues surrounding homelessness, we do pledge to use the resources you provide to do whatever we can to eliminate homelessness and meet the needs of our most vulnerable neighbors.



The Day Center was festive AND warm!

Thank you all for continuing to make our work with the homeless and needy possible - we could not do it without your support.

WMBW Food Drive - driven to help

For nine years now, the staff, listeners and supporters of WMBW, Moody Radio, have rallied together in a food drive to benefit the Community Kitchen.

This drive has become critical to our ability to feed the hungry and homeless men, women and children of our city.



And, we are forever grateful for the dedicated support and hard work these fine folks offer.



Always the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, the 2010 drive resulted in 755

turkeys and over 13 tons of nonperishable goods.

That's a lot of food - especially for a rainy day in November.

Thank you WMBW - and thank you to all of the listeners, businesses, churches and volunteers that

made the day possible. Because of your hard work, we'll have turkey for months to come.



WMBW - 88.9 FM
www.moodyradiosoutheast.fm



Remember to renew your **Bi-Lo bonus card!** Keep shopping to benefit the Kitchen.

1. Give this enrollment card to the cashier with your BONUSCARD one time during the program term.
2. One percent of your purchases will be donated to your designated group through May 31.
3. Call 800-768-4438 if you have any questions.

CHATTANOOGA COMMUNITY KITCHEN



Are you a runner?
Participate in the:



2/26/2010

and help the Kitchen.

www.sceniccityhalfmarathon.com

Do you Facebook?

We hope you'll "like" our page!

[http://www.facebook.com/
communitykitchen](http://www.facebook.com/communitykitchen)

Be sure to invite your friends!

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!

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Charlie's Corner:

*I slept and dreamt that life was joy.
I awoke and saw that life was service.
I acted and behold, service was joy.*
– Tagore



Charlie Hughes
Executive Director

One definition of ministry is: “meeting needs.” Using this definition, I see staff, volunteers and donors minister to the homeless and needy of Chattanooga every day.

The style of ministry varies. Bob, a volunteer that serves breakfast once a week, always has a personal greeting for our clients as they come through the line. One morning I heard him say to a client, “Good morning, I’ve been waiting for you. It is so good to see you.” The man he was speaking to just beamed.

Ginger, Merle and Debbie come each month and bring cupcakes, a birthday cake and presents for all the clients that have a birthday that month. No one is forgotten and everyone is special.

Students from the UTC school of nursing come every Wednesday and volunteer in our Foot Care Room. I have seen clients and students tear up as they clean, clip and take care of tired, worn out feet.

Daily we have people bring clothing for us to give away. Many times it will be someone parting for the last time with a loved one’s clothing. It could be a mother, father, husband, wife, etc. Often, as we are loading the items into the buggy, people will begin to share about their family members. Many times they will lovingly put each item into the buggy. I have heard them say things like, “Oh, I remember Mama used to wear this sweater every Christmas.” I hope we are never too busy to listen.

There is a sign posted in the Day Center that says: Need Someone to talk to? Tommy will be available in the Meditation Room Mondays from 8 to 10 AM to provide a listening ear and a caring heart.

Daniel, a special youth at our church overheard me mention needing gloves for our clients. Daniel faces challenges every day in his life, yet he found a way to serve. Daniel and his grandfather bought and collected 100 pairs of gloves for us to give out.

Don’t know what to do, but want to do something? Give us a call or check out our needs list on our blog, (onmywayhome.org). We recently discouraged a blanket drive because we have an abundance of blankets. However, we sure could use some laundry detergent so that our clients could wash their clothes. There is always a need, and always a way for you to get involved.

The Community Kitchen exists because you believe in what we are doing and are willing to support us. We feel called to do this and truly desire to do it.

Won’t you join us as we minister to and care for those in need?

Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act.

– Proverbs 3:27

Message from the Monk

We have once again survived the hectic, emotional chaos of the holidays and begun another year here at the Community Kitchen. One of the most difficult facts of our work is the changelessness of some of the homeless people we serve.

Day in and day out, a few of the faces we see never change. One recent morning, as I walked up the steps to come to work, I was greeted by a long time brother of the streets, William.

“Good mornin’, Brother Ron!”

“Good morning, Will,” I said. “Are you still here?”

I can be such a wise-guy.

William looked at me and very earnestly said: “Yes, Brother. I am still here. It’s sad to say, but you’re all I’ve got.”

It is sad to say, but for so many, we are the only family, friends and stability they have. And, we will continue to be the only home they will ever know.

The stores are filled with red hearts these days, valentines for sale. We will have a Valentine Party here for these lonely hearts, for these red and hankering hearts who want so deeply to be loved.

Tomorrow night, I am coming into the Kitchen to make bread pudding. I will do this as my personal little Valentine to our people. I take the stale bread that is no longer servable and mix some eggs and sugar and canned milk and flavoring and make bread pudding for their dessert. It will be warm and sweet on a cold day.

“Hello, french loaf; hello, old bagels; hello, old muffins.”

“Are you still here?”

And this bread that is of no use will be transformed into something useful and good and desired. Christ said: “Behold, I make all things new.” And, as I bake, I will think of these lives that have become so stale, so hardened, so discarded. And I will pray for the promise of spring, the time of renewal.

This is my prayer for these people I love, that they will be transformed and made new. I hope this will be the year.

- Br. Ron Fender is an Episcopal Monk in the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory, lives at the House of All Souls, and serves as the Kitchen’s outreach case manager.



A Note About Shelter...

There is absolutely no question that emergency shelter is urgently needed in Chattanooga. As we mentioned on Page 1, the Kitchen has been opening as an inclement weather shelter. In fact, we have been open more than 30 nights just this season, with an average of 100 people per night. Over 400 different people have slept in our dining room and day center.

And, while we are firmly committed to meeting the needs of our homeless neighbors, emergency shelter has not typically been part of our plan to offer the support and programs that enable folks to escape homelessness.

Still, when the weather turns medically dangerous, we heed the call and open as a matter of public safety - but the toll is tremendous. Our doors literally do not close.

Operating 24 hours a day places an incredible burden on staff, financial resources and even the physical structure. Our people are tired. Our maintenance needs increase. Operating costs skyrocket.

We are actively engaged with groups throughout the community seeking a better solution. But, until that time comes, thanks for supporting us in making a difference today.



Sleeping in our dining room may not be ideal, but it sure beats standing out in the cold...

The Year in Review....

2010 was a very good year. It was also very busy – so busy in fact that remembering how good it was can be quite a challenge.

We served almost 10,000 more meals than in 2009. We increased the capacity of our housing stabilization programs to include assisting those in the rural, surrounding counties (eleven counties total). We helped nearly 1,000 people secure housing or remain in the housing they already had. We recycled nearly 360 tons of material, diverting items from the landfill. We gave away over a quarter million dollars worth of clothing and household goods. Our staff and volunteers worked hard. So did the clients.



But, we had fun too - we celebrated July 4th with a cookout. We held a Fall Festival. We threw birthday parties. We even started a choir. Life happened - in fact, we had two funerals and a wedding in the Day Center.



It truly was an amazing year. And, while our core operations can take quite a toll, we always hope to do a little bit more than necessary. In fact, each year we

establish a set of goals and expectations for the coming year – things we hope to accomplish on top of the many things we must accomplish.

They are all important things – things that will lead clients to success; things that will improve our overall operation, create efficiency, make life better. But, they can be lofty and aren't always guaranteed, especially when we

experience record service demand. 2010 brought record demand; so did 2009. And 2008. And 2007. As a community, we all had to work harder just to continue the services we already provided. The thought of going above and beyond was almost a pipe dream.



Still, as always, last January we made a list of hopes and dreams. Among the needs we identified were new steam tables, new donation carts, bicycle racks for in front of the building, furniture for the day center porch, classes in the day center, the revival of “Unsheltered Voices” and so much more.

We're happy to announce that all of these goals have been met – thanks to your support. First, PlayCore donated a bike rack. Then, the Safari Club donated two four bay steam tables. Next,



countless volunteers and supporters provided ideas for day center programming; and some, such as the good folks at the Hart Gallery, made a weekly commitment. A group of students at GPS, along with their teacher, have taken on the task of publishing Unsheltered Voices. And, most recently, the Community Foundation awarded a grant that has provided the day center porch furniture and a second bike rack. And, these are just a few of the goals we met this year – all on top of helping thousands of our neediest neighbors get back on their feet and start anew.

Thanks for making 2010 such a successful year – and thanks to all of those who support our work and are part of our mission. To borrow a cliché – you know who you are; and, so do we.



Thanks to Hacker
and Kitty Caldwell
for their
tremendous
leadership of the
Fast Day Campaign.
With your help, we
exceeded the
\$700,000 goal!

- *Food • Shelter • Employment • Clothing •*
- *Housing • Health Care • Case Management •*
- *Phones • Mail • Showers • Restrooms •*
- *Supportive Services •*

• **COMPASSION** •

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Chattanooga Community Kitchen



2010 Annual Report

Total Yearly Volunteer Hours: 27,451

Food Service, No-Questions-Asked Feeding Program Available to All:

180,811 meals - up from 171,001 in 2009
12,045 Volunteer Hours



Saint Matthew's Shelter for Men:

69 Residents
2716 Bed Nights
4745 Volunteer Hours

Recycling:

Cardboard - 41.58 tons
Mixed Paper - 121.74 tons
Plastic 18.21 tons
Aluminum - 1.6 tons
Tin - 2.17 tons
Glass - 40.64 tons
Rags - 131.8 tons
Total - 357.74 tons

SAFAH, Permanent Housing Support for Victims of Domestic Violence:

87 families served with 174 children
59 families completed the program (28 remain)
92% had income at exit
95% graduated to permanent housing

FHLC, Transitional Housing for Families:

19 families served with 30 children
16 families graduated (others still active)
All had income at exit
94% graduated to permanent housing

Help II, Employment and Life-skills:

311 adults served
227 graduates (others still active)
88% had income at exit
77% exited to permanent housing

Triage, New Program That Serves as a First Contact for Homeless Adults and Couples:

752 households were interviewed and referred for services

Footcare:

More than 1,000 served
1000+ Volunteer Hours
National Recognition for UTC Partnership

Saint Catherine's Shelter for Women and Children:

72 Residents
1018 Bed Nights
4745 Volunteer Hours

Clothing and Thrift Store:

Give-away - \$280,951
Sales - \$123,850

Outreach:

Over 1,500 encounters during the year, including field outreach
Emergency shelter provided to over 350 people.





Needs and Dreams for 2011:

- Reopening of our Medical Respite Program
- Establishment of a Transportation Program to Help Clients with Case Plans
- Additional Storage Platforms and Shelving in the Basement
- Freestanding Food Warmers
- New Box Truck with Hydraulic Lift
- New Donation Carts (Plastic Bins)
- Volunteers to Offer Arts and Education Classes in Day Center
- Volunteers to Produce Short Documentaries and PSA's
- Establishment of a True Emergency Night Shelter
- Improvements in Energy Efficiency



Accomplishments of 2010:

- Successful Fast Day Campaign
- Record Service Level Delivery
- Acquisition of Front Porch Furniture
 - New Steam Tables
- Day Center Activities and Classes
 - Installation of Bicycle Racks
- Extension of Housing Services to Include Surrounding Rural Counties
 - New Computer Server
- Improvements in Inventory Control
 - Renewed Partnerships with Area Agencies and Providers
 - Survival!

