

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

May 2021



BOARD WALK.. (..IN OUR SHOES FOR A DAY)

On Wednesday the 14th of April, the Food Pantry's last day at the North Harvard campus, many members of Catholic Charities' (CC) Board volunteered to help load food into shopping baskets and unload those carts into clients' cars. The purpose of the visit was to introduce Board members to volunteers and staff, and for the Board members to get a better appreciation for the dedication and commitment our volunteers demonstrate with their presence. The Food Pantry depends on a dedicated group of volunteers – without that commitment, the Food Pantry simply couldn't deliver on its mission.

The members who volunteered for the day showed up at 8:30, and after a few words, some picture-taking and a prayer led by Bishop Konderla, were paired off with a volunteer, led to their assigned positions and began their two-hour shift. Local CC paparazzi, Dustin Samford, captured many of the Board members doing what we do – pushing carts loaded with groceries, talking to clients, and moving food out the door.

A questionnaire was distributed to the Board members after their visit to get their thoughts on what they saw and did that day. All were impressed with the kind, welcoming, and professional interactions the volunteers had with our clients, and the quality and quantity of the food we were handing out.



The questionnaire asked what challenges they saw. Some considered it remarkable how we were able to utilize a space that wasn't designed for that purpose. Others worried about keeping enough food and volunteers on-hand to deliver on our mission.

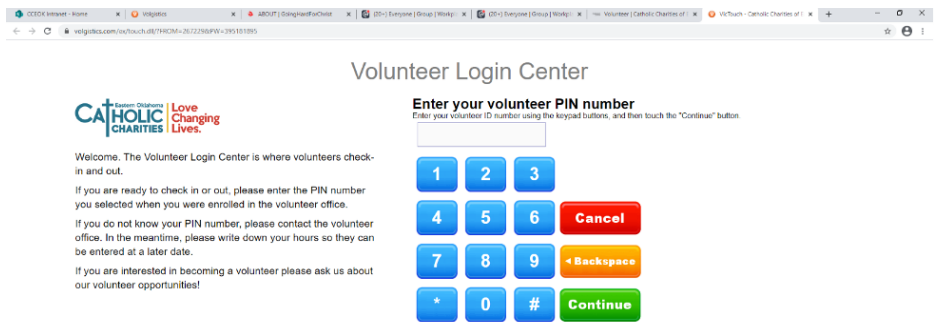
All the Board members were familiar with what happens at the Pantry, but there were a few surprises: how energized one was after their activity, another remarked on the fact that CC must buy paper bags to put food in, and still another thought the PVC rail in the sidewalk was an ingenious solution. A few remarked on the diversity of our client base.

Employees, volunteers and Board members alike considered the day a success. Maybe more Board visits might be in the offing?

Time is of the Essence

Catholic Charities depends – critically – on donations of time, treasure, and talent. Some individuals choose to donate their time and skills, others choose to share some of the gifts they have been given so that the people of Eastern Oklahoma can be served by the diverse programs that make up Catholic Charities (CCEOK).

Those who choose to share their treasure want to know that their gift is being used most efficiently and effectively. Those who choose to donate their time and skills to CCEOK are doing three things: (1) they are helping to deliver mission services, (2) they are doing something that gives them fulfillment, and (3) they are showing, by their donation, that they are committed to the work that Catholic Charities does, and that in the collective, volunteers are demonstrating the magnitude of that commitment to potential cash donors.



tinyurl.com/CCEOKVolunteerHours

It costs money to deliver on CCEOK's missions. The amount it takes is reduced significantly by the number of hours put in by each of our volunteers – no matter how many or how few hours donated by each person. When CCEOK applies for grants, it needs an accurate estimate of the number of volunteer hours that are being contributed to show granting institutions that there is broad community support for the program being funded, and that the donation will go to program execution rather than to administrative, salaried overhead. The more the number of hours that can be reported, the better the program looks to a potential donor. Volunteer commitment is a point of pride at CCEOK that is communicated repeatedly to audiences throughout the diocese.

When you log your time, you are showing your commitment to the mission, and helping CCEOK be a good steward of our donor's resources.

We've all seen the kiosks around the Food Pantry that are used to capture the time we spend there. In case you didn't know already, there's a way to use your smart phone to check in and out without having to use one of the kiosks. Simply type this URL in your browser: www.tinyurl.com/CCEOKVolunteerHours

DID YOU Know?

At least 22 food pantries operate in Tulsa county.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT: Mark Marston

We've all seen Mark – he's somewhere in the Food Pantry four days a week, filling and unloading shopping carts, restocking, or basically filling in and doing whatever needs to be done to ensure that the food we get is distributed to the hundreds of families we serve every day.

Mark is a Bishop Kelley graduate who majored in Chemical Engineering at college. His career was spent in the natural gas processing industry in Tulsa and Houston. Mark returned to Tulsa in 2016 to be closer to family, then retired in 2019. While in the Houston area, Mark spent almost 15 years volunteering with Habitat for Humanity. Back in Tulsa, Mark started volunteering in the Home Improvement Ministry at the Church of Saint Mary.

Mark's been donating his time to the Food Pantry since August 2020. He began on a Thursday morning after Jerry Brueck (a friend who volunteers at CC's Porta Caeli House) asked him to give it a try. He came out again the following Tuesday (answering the call to help on the busiest day of the week!) and at the end of that day heard Brent say, from clear across the room, "See you tomorrow!" One volunteer day became two days, then quickly three, and finally four.

Mark discovered that help from a tall guy was needed restocking the Pantry in the afternoons, so he stays each afternoon to make sure that the food we receive is

positioned to be distributed the following morning. Mark estimates he spends roughly four hours each day he's at CC, either stocking, restocking, shopping, or unloading carts.

One day last fall, Deacon Erick asked Mark if he could drive a manual transmission (ah, oh, here comes the hook...). Indicating he could handle a clutch and a stick-shift, Mark was then enlisted to drive trucks of Farmers to Families (F2F) boxes to help with the distribution of food to various

locations within the diocese. Mark now splits his time between the Food Pantry and the F2F Program.

His outsized dedication to Catholic Charities' mission to help families through their trials and difficulties is what drives the always-affable Mark to show up every day, rain or shine, to help make our clients get the food they need – no matter where in Eastern Oklahoma they happen to live.



2 TRUTHS & A LIE

So now that you know all this, he has two truths and a lie to share. Can you figure out which they are?

SKY KING: I have a private pilot's license, with multi-engine and instrument ratings.

DESERT DWELLER: I was a teacher in North Africa and got paid in propane.

MARK TWAIN: I have published three(!) textbooks on natural gas processing.

The answers will be in the next newsletter!

Answers to Kim Owen's Two Truths and a Lie: Kim has studied opera, she has even ridden a bull, but she has yet to jump out of a flying airplane.



Mark won "Who wants to be a millionaire" with his guess of 166 families served the first day at "The Outpost"

59th St. Open House

An Open House to celebrate the move to our new location and to recognize the hours volunteers donated to the effort was held on the afternoon of April 16th and was well-attended. Attendees were treated to heavy hors d'oeuvres and drinks. The photos above help tell the story.

A betting pool (this is Catholic Charities, remember) was set up to guess the number of clients that we would serve on our first full day at the new location. Over \$70 in the pool was won by Mark Conciencie, whose guess was the closest to the 168 clients we saw on Tuesday the 20th.

Chef Michael's Recipe of the Month - Chili

Ingredients:

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| 1 lb. ground beef chuck | 2 Tbs. chili powder |
| 1/2 lb. Italian sausage | 1 Tbs. ground cumin |
| 2 16oz. cans red kidney beans | 1 1/2 tsp. dried oregano |
| 2 14.5oz. cans diced tomatoes | 1/2 tsp. dried basil |
| 1/2 6oz. can tomato paste | 1 tsp. salt |
| 1 medium yellow onion, diced | 1 tsp. ground black pepper |
| 2 stalks of celery, chopped | 1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper |
| 1 bell pepper, seeded and chopped | 1 tsp. paprika |
| 1 4oz. can diced green chiles | 1 Tbs. Worcestershire sauce |
| 1 Tbs. minced garlic | 1 tsp. hot sauce |
| 2 cubes beef bouillon | |

Directions:

1. Brown and drain the meat
2. Combine everything together and let simmer for at least 1 hour. Stir often to keep the bottom from burning.

GET INVOLVED



Volunteer with us! cceok.org/volunteer
Join our Facebook Group!

For story ideas, feedback, etc.,
email: volcommunications@cceok.org