

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

September 2022



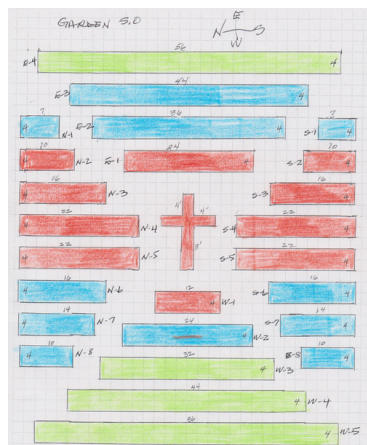
OUR GARDEN IS GROWING – BIG TIME

Big – HUGE - changes are on the way for Catholic Charities' (CC) garden. Anita Mills, who oversees the garden, is planning a significant increase in the cultivated area.

The original garden had to be removed to accommodate construction of the car care clinic and maintenance facilities, but the new garden will feature a much larger set of raised beds to be built to the west of the campus courtyard and extending to the edge of the maintenance building.

Twenty-five beds of varying lengths, aligned north-south, will be arranged around an east-facing crucifix-shaped bed. The beds will be built in three phases, as shown in the graphic. Total growing space will increase dramatically with each phase, resulting in about 2,264 square feet of cultivated area.

The beds will be above grade and filled with locally sourced organic matter that includes materials specifically chosen to minimize cost, maximize moisture retention and yields. Depending on when one observes the beds, one might see chicken wire, sticks and twigs (as wood rots, it becomes a sponge for water and creates a habitat for micro-organisms), wood chips from



Anita's Garden Schematic

Red - Phase 1 is 700 sq. ft.
Blue - Phase 2 is 812 sq. ft.
Green - Phase 3 is 752 sq. ft.



the City of Tulsa green waste site, composted horse manure, compost created from produce that CC donated to a local farmer, and dirt that was saved from the old garden. While the crops will be different in each bed, all the beds will contain the same basic fill.

Many of the crops from the original garden were transplanted into plastic crates and will be replanted again when the beds are ready.

The first four beds have been built (but not filled), and the remaining beds in Phase 1 will be constructed on September 16th by volunteers at the United Way Day of Caring. Phases 2 and 3 will follow later.

Anita is planning yet another innovation to the garden: in addition to the original plants, in the crucifix-shaped bed she will be growing plants mentioned in the Bible that can also be grown in Oklahoma's climate. These include mint, black cumin, coriander/cilantro, dill, black mustard (rich source of dietary fiber), hyssop (antiseptic, expectorant), narcissus, tulip, oregano, and wormwood (reduces swelling and pain).

Anita is also planning to restore the sensory garden area that included plants that are unusual in some way – to touch, to sight, to smell, etc. so that the children of residents can experience these plants up close. We're excited to see the popcorn plant again!

Anita is planning for year-round yields for many of the crops, and, although most of the produce will go into The Market, some of the produce from the garden will be used in the kitchen. Watch for the changes coming soon!



The employees and volunteers who deliver much-needed food to Catholic Charities (CC) satellite facilities – called outreach locations - and mobile pantry events have been busy! To understand how this complex process works, we sat down with Phillip Griffith, who, along with MaryLynn Lufkin, is the key CC staff supporting these activities.

Mobile Pantries: CC schedules about eight mobile pantries per month at locations that are not close to an outreach location but do have a sizable under-served population and, in most cases, a Catholic church. The food handed out to each family at these events is much the same as what is provided to our clients at Tulsa area pop-up pantries: two bags of dry goods, some fresh fruits and vegetables (usually bagged into family portions), meat, some bread and maybe a dessert. Each Thursday, a team of volunteers in Tulsa builds approximately 150 “A” and “B” bags that are loaded up along with the produce, bread and dessert, and trucked to a mobile pantry location. There, a group of volunteers from the church unloads and distributes food to drive-up clients in the parish parking lot. Mobile pantries are currently held in Fairfax, Wagoner, Eufaula, Grove, Skiatook, Rattan, and Pryor.

The dry goods that comprise the bags are warehoused at the Harvard warehouse along an aisle dedicated to Outreach. Produce for Mobile Pantries is ordered separately and kept in the refrigerator, and some food in the freezer at Harvard is similarly segregated away from food destined for the Market. The dry goods that are put in the bags are also ordered separately from the Food Bank.

Each load of food to support a Mobile Pantry consists of 6 pallets of “A” and “B” bags, a pallet each of produce, meat, bread and dessert – around 10 pallets total.

CC is required to collect information about each of the families served at a Mobile Pantry, so that information is gathered at the time of service, and then summarized and reported to the USDA.

Outreach Locations: A coordinator from each outreach location contacts Phillip and let him know what produce they need when they are running short. Sometimes, the requests are specific – like apples, bananas, etc., - and sometimes just “I need anything you can get”.

Outreach locations source their dry goods using their own accounts at the Food Bank, so they get deliveries of that type of food directly. If Phillip has what the outreach location needs, he arranges for a delivery. If the Harvard or the Bartlesville warehouse doesn't have what is needed, he picks it (or a substitute product) from the Food Bank and brings it back to the Harvard warehouse. When it is time to deliver, he loads up his truck, and takes off. Phillip arranges multiple location deliveries and optimizes his route to minimize driving time. Many outreach locations can take just a few pallets of produce, so the order of pallets going into the truck is important!

The outreach locations are open various days of the week: Sallisaw and Muskogee are open for four days a week, Poteau and Wilburton are open one day a week, McAlester is open two days a week.

CC hired Carey Fabrizio to help with food distribution to more southern outreach locations and eventually to support mobile pantries. Welcome Carey!

CC is able to provide food to an average of 2,000 individuals each month through the mobile pantries and standalone outreach locations. Phillip is grateful that he can contribute so much to the well-being of so many people each month. Please give Phillip and MaryLynn a hand whenever you can!



By the Numbers:



Each month, Phillip drives **1,200-1,500 miles**, and uses about **200 gallons of diesel** to deliver around **30,000 lbs. of food** distributed across **50-60 pallets** to the outreach locations and mobile pantries.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: Jan Dailey

Jan started with Catholic Charities (CC) in December 2021, when the effort to place Afghan refugees was in full swing. A friend put her onto the opportunity to help the estimated 800 refugees get settled, after they'd left their country during the fall of Afghanistan in August 2021. She jumped in and landed right into the thick of a major effort to move those families out of hotels and into permanent housing. Jan, along with many others, worked long hours receiving, categorizing, storing, and dispensing household items from the Outpost warehouse to families being relocated. She became the 'bed expert' - the 'meister' who knows the different types of available bedding as well as the parts and hardware required to make complete bed units: mattresses, box springs, frames, sheets, pillows... all the things that would make up a household worth of beds. In addition, Jan created the appropriate sleeping configuration for each family's size and make-up.

Jan had previously volunteered at many different places in the area, but she was extremely impressed by the dedication, teamwork, and camaraderie she encountered with other hard-working volunteers and employees working on the Afghan resettlement project.

When the project ended in May of this year, Jan started to look for other volunteering opportunities at CC and landed at the kitchen. Jan has learned the right way to chop, slice and dice, how flavors interact, how to season properly, and some of the chemistry behind cooking - all the things we probably think we know, but don't. Although you'll find her in the kitchen several days a week, she also spends time at Porta Caeli House. There she prepares meals for families who would like to remain close to their loved ones during their last days.

Jan started her working career at Cities Service as a Systems Analyst supporting the Human Resources Department - so she really knew just about everyone who worked there! After about 5 years, she opened a travel agency - Business Travel International - that had an office in the BOK building and counted quite a few corporate clients in her portfolio.

Jan enjoyed traveling on what are known in the industry as 'fam' trips - free or greatly reduced rate travel - so the agents could see properties and locations for themselves.

When her daughter was born, she traveled less, but she still managed the business for several years. Then, with so many changes in the travel industry over the past decade - including the ability for travelers to book for themselves through the Internet - she opted to sell her business about four years ago.

In addition to her hours of service to others, Jan enjoys spending her spare time kayaking, hiking, camping, and relaxing at her house on Lake Keystone. Oh, yes... and she and a friend supported the IronMan event last year by 'manning' kayaks on the lake during the 2.5-mile swim event. What volunteer exploit will Jan find next?!



2 TRUTHS & A LIE

Can you figure out which is the lie?

- I have a sibling that is serving as a representative in the Oklahoma State house.
- I have a MBA from OSU.
- All of my siblings and I went to college, and some went further, but the one that didn't get any degree is worth more than all the others combined.

The answers will be in the next newsletter!

Embry & Rhonda's Answers:

Embry was never the star of a musical and Rhonda is not a fanatic about working out!

Don't just read about it, join in!

To work with Anita in the garden:



To bag the food Phillip distributes:



To cook with Jan in the kitchen:



CHEF MICHAEL'S RECIPE OF THE MONTH:

Asian Cucumber Salad

Salad Ingredients:

- 2 English cucumbers, thinly sliced
- 2 medium carrots, thinly sliced
- 1 large sweet red pepper, julienned
- 1/2 medium red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 green onions, sliced
- 1/2 serrano or jalapeno pepper, seeded and thinly sliced, optional

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, combine the first six ingredients. In a small bowl, mix marinade ingredients, stirring to dissolve sugar. Pour over vegetables; toss to combine. Refrigerate, covered, 30 minutes or overnight.
2. Serve with a slotted spoon. Top as desired.

Marinade Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup rice vinegar
- 1/3 cup water
- 1 teaspoon each salt, garlic powder and pepper
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon soy sauce
- 1 small garlic clove, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon minced fresh gingerroot
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper, optional
- Optional toppings: minced fresh cilantro, chopped peanuts and additional sliced green onion

Meet: Holy Roller!



The ballots were cast and a winner chosen. The new Warehouse forklift is now called the “Holy Roller”!

Thanks for the input and the fitting name for our new orange friend!

Day of Blessings is comin' home!



Mark your calendars: Thanksgiving Day of Blessings is **Saturday Nov. 19th**, and it's coming back, in-person, to the CCEOK main campus!



GET INVOLVED



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

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