



The TACO Times

Celebrating 31 Years of Bread Day

Volume 3 Issue 4

December 2006

Mel's Holiday Guacamole

- 4-5 large, ripe avocados
- 3 Tbsp. lime juice
- 1/2 cup prepared salsa of your choice
- Salt to taste
- One large pomegranate, seeded

Mash avocados and salsa together with a fork (or use a hand-held blender for smoother texture, if you prefer). Add salt and lime juice.

Fold in most of pomegranate seeds—leaving a handful to scatter on the top of the finished guacamole.

Melanie Novak is the editor of The Taco Times.

TACO Wish List

- Blankets
- Sleeping Bags
- Men's socks
- \$5 gift certificates to McDonald's or Burger King
- Men's T-Shirts (all sizes)

Director's Report: A Season for Thankfulness and Reflection

This time of year is a time of hope for many of us. We wait for Christmas; wait upon the Lord to come. We look for signs and symbols of the season.

The year's end is also a time to reflect. We think of our blessings, the dedication of our wonderful volunteers, and the continued support of our ever-growing circle of TACO friends.

And always, we remember loved ones we have lost.

It was with great sadness we heard of the death last month of **Vivian Dillahunt**, a member of First Lutheran Church since 1944 and a committed, enthusiastic volunteer at TACO.

Vivian embodied the spirit of our mission. Together with her husband, Stewart ("Dilly"), she could be found on the food line or in the kitchen nearly every

Friday morning for many years past.

She once told a newcomer to the TACO experience that the work we do was the greatest example of miracles in action that she had ever seen. Let us celebrate Vivian's life as we continue our mission this holiday season.

With colder weather on its way, we are vividly aware of the needs of the community we serve—especially the daily trials of those who lack shelter at the day's end. We are fortunate that this year the Cold Weather Shelter opened at the beginning of November. This means that more than 200 persons are able to get off the streets. It is also important to note that this is about 5% of those who are estimated to be on the streets.

On November 1, TACO members attended the 6th annual All

Saints Day Memorial Service for the homeless sponsored by the San Diego Rescue Mission. This event honors those who have died on the streets in the past year. Persons whom no one claimed and for whom there will be no memorial service. In our newest program, Going Home End of Life Services, we hope to bring dignity and memorials to those on our streets who are dying. We are ever mindful that we are in the presence of Christ as we walk with those on our streets who are in need.

We also want to remember the constant support of our regular volunteers, people who are not often mentioned by name but without whom we could not meet the needs of those who come.

We wish all of you a blessed Christmas.

God's Peace— Jim Lovell

Autumn Soiree a Huge Success; Planning Begins for Next Year

The "Autumn Soiree," TACO's first-ever fundraising auction, has brought in \$18,000 to support its mission, according to TACO Director Jim Lovell.

"What an amazing night," Jim said. "I was overwhelmed at the giving and the fun had by all that evening."

More than 200 guests attended the auction, enjoying food, live music and spirited bidding.

Big thanks to all the volunteers who donated items—we couldn't have done it without you!

Thanks also to Auction Committee co-chairs Rebecca Snure and Rosemary Spruce, Lisa Seiler, Pastor Miller, Pastor

Radatz, TACO board president Lois Case, and all the wonderful volunteers to helped in so many ways.

Planning is already underway for next year's auction. It's not too early to get involved! Contact Lois Case for information at (858) 481-0384.



Simon ministers (l-r) Jan Bluemer, Paul Moorman and Beth Slevcove

**“Please uphold
Simon’s Walk
volunteers in
prayer during
their ministry”**

Simon’s Walk Volunteers Ready to Begin Ministry

By Nance Lovell
Simon’s Walk Coordinator

TACO’s first Simon’s Walk Training group started its work earlier this fall with a two-day workshop, “Eleos: Walk With Me” in September.

An additional 16 hours of training, participation in the meal program and the Homeless Medical Outreach Team (HMO) followed. This has provided each Simon Minister with over 30 hours of initial training.

Training will culminate in early December with a special ceremony, when our volunteers **Jan Bluemer, Paul Moorman** and **Beth Slevcove** will be commissioned as Simon’s Walk Ministers.

Simon’s Walk, part of TACO’s new Going Home program, provides training, mentoring, and supervision for volunteers who minister to people who are homeless and terminally ill.

Simon’s Walk volunteers will literally be *walking with* a person through to the end of his or her life.

A strong foundation is key

to beginning any new venture. This is true of our inaugural volunteer group.

In addition to their training, our Simon’s Walk ministers, each has a background that is complimentary to the work they will embark on.

Jan Bluemer has a history as a nursing home administrator and currently provides recreational, supportive music to the elderly and dying.

Paul Moorman has overcome a history of addiction and living on the streets. Paul currently serves as the Meal Program Food Coordinator, and is the HMO Team Guide.

Beth Slevcove has a history as a schoolteacher and also in social services. Beth currently works as a Spiritual Director.

Please uphold Jan, Paul & Beth in prayer during their Simon’s Walk ministry.

The name “Simon’s Walk” comes from Simon of Cyrene who, in all four gospel stories, walks with Jesus in the final hours of his life.

The Going Home project’s part time staff will form a team with patients and seek to relieve their needs for housing, insurance, medical care, spiritual care, companionship, family contact and reunification, end-of-life care, memorial services, and burial needs.

In addition, donations are welcome. Monetary gifts are a necessary avenue to providing quality care. Your gifts will directly aid in bringing dignity, mercy and compassion to terminally ill patients.

For donation information, please contact Jim Lovell at 619-235-9445 ext. 1 or at jim.chacha@firstlutheransd.org.

Make donations to: TACO, 1420 Third Avenue, San Diego, CA 92101 (memo: Going Home).



Autumn Soiree co-chair Rosemary Spruce takes a moment to relax on the big night!

A Heartfelt Thank You To

Ruth Gibbons and family.

The women’s group from St. Luke’s Lutheran Church.

Barbara Reuer of ReSounding Joy Ministries, who has begun a twice-monthly music circle for our patio guests.

Outgoing TACO board members Rebecca Snure, Jo Koch, Damon Jefferson, and Isaac Hull.

Rebecca Snure and Rosemary Spruce, co-chairs of the TACO Autumn Soiree and Silent Auction, for all of their dedication and hard work. Also, Lois Case and Bill Radatz for all of their valuable assistance as well.

LaDonna Piper, for leading TACO’s annual Christmas in July fundraising effort for the third year running.

TACO, for treating volunteers to a special luncheon in early December at McCormick and Schmick’s in the Omni Hotel. And Lisa Seiler for organizing!

Laurie Galloway and her Girl Scouts, who volunteered at a meal and brought the proceeds of their garage sale.

The children from Del Mar Montessori, who also volunteered at a meal.

Christmas in July Ready for December

First Lutheran Church's annual Christmas in July project will distribute some 250 backpacks and a festive welcome to all guests on our patio at the Friday meal before Christmas.

The backpack drive was headed up by LaDonna Piper, who also organized a team to hand-knit 250 scarves to tuck inside the backpacks.

This is the third year for the outreach project.

In addition to a handmade scarf, each backpack will include a variety of hygiene and convenience items, including toiletries, a can opener, bungee cord, and nearly a dozen other items that are necessities for most of our guests.

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped to wrap these bundles—it took a village to get it all done!

In Memoriam

All of us at TACO mourn the passing last month of one of our most devoted volunteers.

Vivian Dillahunt, a member of First Lutheran Church and volunteer with TACO since its beginnings as Bread Day, died November 19. A memorial service was held shortly after Thanksgiving.

Our thoughts and prayers remain Vivian's husband, Stewart, and her family. May her service be an inspiration as we continue our mission.



Homeless Sleeping Tickets 'On Hold' ... For Now?

Volunteers and staff at TACO have noted a substantial drop-off in recent weeks in the number of "sleeping tickets" issued to downtown homeless people, Director Jim Lovell said.

"It waxes and wanes," said Jim of the ticketing issue, which has been at the forefront of TACO's social justice advocacy since the summer.

"Right now, we continue to hope and pray that our elected officials will stand for justice on this issue and that those on our streets will not have to hide from the police to sleep."

San Diego police have issued these citations by the thousands to enforce an ordinance that prohibits "illegal lodging," a violation of the California Penal Code.

TACO staff and volunteers

have spoken out against the ticketing on several occasions in the past year.

In September, homeless advocate Larry Milligan, along with Pastor Noel Estergren and Jim Lovell, appeared at a city council meeting, where Larry read an open letter to Mayor Jerry Sanders that asked the city to declare a moratorium on the tickets. Larry staged a nine-day hunger strike immediately afterward.

A lawsuit was filed two years in San Diego challenging the practice. In April, an appeals court in Los Angeles ruled on a similar suit, finding that city's ordinance against public sleeping was unconstitutional.

Also in September, the mayor opposed a plan drafted by City Attorney Mike Aguirre that would create a policy in the city where homeless people could sleep without being tick-

eted for certain hours of the night. Sanders said he was against the plan because it "did nothing to solve the systemic problem of homelessness," according to the San Diego Union-Tribune.

In the 14 years that this law has been in place, more than 24,000 tickets have been issued. The vast majority have been issued since 2003, Jim Lovell said.

"This process has a very detrimental effect on the homeless," Jim said. "We have worked with persons who are in need of medical attention but could not go to important appointments because they were arrested the night before."

We have worked with folks who have actually lost jobs which may have helped them off of the street, because of this law. "

**"We pray ...
that those on
our streets will
not have to
hide from police
to sleep"**



Volunteers at September's Eleos training

The TACO Times
Third Avenue Charitable
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***A place where healing of body, mind and spirit
can happen for any and all who come.”***

Join us

- Preparing and serving meals
- Set-up and cleanup
- Driving, shopping and picking up food
- Gathering other supplies and donations

Sponsor us

- Urge your company or corporation to contribute
- Organize your church or youth group
- Make an individual financial contribution

Support us

- With your prayers and voice of advocacy for the people we serve

Are you a medical professional? Consider donating your time and services to our medical, dental and acupuncture clinics.

Contact us

We can not close our eyes to the realities of our community, and we will not close our doors when outside there are people in need.

Jim Lovell

Project Coordinator

(619) 235-9445 ext. 1

jim.chacha@firstlutheransd.org

Lisa Seiler

Volunteer Coordinator

619-235-9445 ext. 2

lisa.taco@firstlutheransd.org

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