



The TACO Times

Celebrating 31 Years of Bread Day

Paul's St. Louis Turkey Chili

- Kidney beans, juice and all
- Browned ground turkey
- Canned diced tomatoes
- Canned tomato sauce
- Tomato puree
- Season with a blend of chili powder, white onions and garlic.
- Spaghetti noodles

Mix ingredients and cook over medium heat until all ingredients are blended. Put broken pieces of spaghetti noodles in chili and cook until tender. Serve with corn bread and honey.

From Paul Moorman, TACO Food Coordinator. Get a new recipe from our fabulous chefs in every issue.

TACO Wish List

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

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April 2006

TACO Adds Legal Clinic, Gets Funding for Future

Third Avenue Charitable Organization (TACO) has teamed with downtown San Diego's California Western School of Law to offer free legal help to the homeless and working poor.

The new legal clinic, which opened in November on the campus of First Lutheran Church, is a part of the school's Community Law Project. Designed to teach law students about the needs of the downtown community, the clinic is a vital resource for those who need help with a variety of issues, including domestic violence, immigration and a lack of adequate working conditions.

Each week the students see eight to ten people, a number that is expected to grow as people learn about the clinic.

The project is led by Anaheeta Kolah, an attorney and faculty member at CWSL. She and her husband also own the Bombay Express Indian Restaurant in Clairemont Square (which Executive Director Jim Lovell recommends highly.)

Speaking of Jim, he's got good news.

Johnson & Johnson has awarded TACO two grants of \$75,000 for each of the next two years. The money will fund two half-time positions, a project coordinator and a social worker, and also help build a permanent client resources fund.

Applying for this grant took quite a leap of faith on the part of the TACO board. **Read more about this wonderful news on Page 2.**



Pastor Wilk Miller joins TACO guests and volunteers on the patio at First Lutheran

TACO Receives Timely Johnson & Johnson Grant, Award

TACO has been awarded a two-year, \$150,000 grant from the Johnson & Johnson Community Health Care Program and was honored with the Crystal Award, which recognizes excellence in the community health care field.

Word came about the grant on Valentine's Day, just two weeks before funding for Executive Director Jim Lovell's position was due to run out.

"This grant allows us to continue moving forward providing the types of services which began three years ago with our initial grant," Lovell said.

Some of the money will fund Lovell's position, a part-time social worker and part time program coordinator. It will also help bankroll a permanent client resources fund for people who need a bit of financial help to get back on their feet.

"This is also such a blessing to Nance and me as we continue to be able to serve in a way that astounds me on a daily basis," Lovell said.

Lovell, his wife Nance and First Lutheran Pastor Wilk Miller traveled to Washington, D.C. at the end of April to accept the award and attend a health care forum.

The Crystal Award honors individuals and organizations that dedicate themselves to mending lives touched by poverty and ill health.



Jim and Nance Lovell with Pastor Wilk Miller in Washington, D.C. April 24

One of the highlights of the Washington award ceremony was a video presentation showcasing TACO and its mission. In the audience were award recipients, corporate representatives and Capitol Hill lawmakers.

The video, which was shot in San Diego in mid-March, now belongs to TACO and can be used at other events to raise awareness of our ministry.

Echoing the sentiments of all involved, Lovell said "We are so excited and blessed to be offered this moment to carry a vision of healing at our nation's capital."

The grant also provides professional academic assistance in evaluating the effectiveness of TACO's clinics and other services. Through its partnership with the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University,

Johnson & Johnson provides the financial means for a designated doctoral student to study TACO program over the next two years.

The Johnson & Johnson grant is the result of the decision last September by the TACO board to hire an outside consulting firm to help with grant writing.

A lot of prayer and careful thinking went into this strategic move, Lovell said, mainly because TACO's initial three-year grant from the California Endowment was set to expire and could not be renewed.

The payment to Grant Writing Specialists was made from limited funds in the hope of securing new funds.

Lovell said that TACO was one of 10 finalists for the grant, selected from a field of 210 applicants.

Paul BBQs For a Crowd

TACO's Paul Moorman wrapped up his "extra" volunteer work at the Cold Weather Homeless Shelter with a delicious barbecue lunch on April 1.

The downtown shelter, which has received emergency funds to stay open past its original closing date, has provided a place for 150 single men and 50 single women to sleep during the coldest months of the year.

TACO Affiliate Wins Health Information Literacy Award

The Pacific College of Oriental Medicine (PCOM), which runs TACO's acupuncture clinic, has received a Health Award from the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS).

PCOM received the award for its Health Information Literacy program, which includes hands-on computer classes that teach seniors how to access information on prescription drugs, nutrition and diet, Medicare, healthcare companies, and diseases.

See this information at PCOM's

health database: http://www.pacificcollege.edu/Library/health_databases.html.

The Health Information Literacy class meets on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to noon upstairs at First Lutheran Church. More than 3,300 people have attended the classes throughout the San Diego area.

More information about the award and the program can be found at <http://www.nclis.gov/award/>

It Was the Essay: TACO Volunteer Headed to UCSB

Jenna Little, a volunteer for the past two years, has been admitted to her first choice college, UC Santa Barbara. In her application essay, she told of her experiences at TACO and how it changed her view of the world—and her role in it. She wrote: "This place grabbed hold of my heart and never let go." Congratulations, Jenna!

More from the essay: "I am not serving for my family or for community service hours but for my "friends." The smile on Don's face when he shows me his new/used sweatshirt, seeing a young girl wearing the jacket that I brought last week, or hearing the other volunteers who have been there for years call me 'a regular' gives me a joy that

is unattainable by any material or shallow endeavor.

By far, the most cherished element of the time that I have spent with TACO over the past two years is the personal relationships that I have formed with not only the other volunteers, but more importantly with those that I serve."

"This place grabbed hold of my heart and never let go."

What Our Volunteers Are Saying

Comments from La Jolla Country Day students who volunteered at a recent Friday meal

Today I learned about how to be a good listener and really understand the act of giving. I also learned about fellowship.

I realized that the stereotypes [of the homeless] are unfortunate misconceptions.

It is by interacting with homeless individuals that we can work towards breaking down those stereotypes and make the truths concerning these people known.

I learned that washing dishes is actually pretty fun! I also learned that the homeless are really normal people, but they haven't been as lucky as us. ...

I realized that not all homeless people are different than us and they like it when we make conversation with them. I saw that healthy eating is vital for the homeless. It made me happy to see how much they appreciate what we did for them. Education is essential. They need support, not fear.

As of April 1, TACO had fed 2,771 people a total of 3,917 meals in 2006.

As of April, TACO volunteers have dedicated 1,881 hours in 2006.

One volunteer hour in California is valued at \$19.74

Tidings of Comfort and Joy: Christmas 2005 at TACO and First Lutheran

All of us at TACO were blessed last year with a myriad of holiday surprises! The season began with a wonderful donation of ten turkeys by the office of our local California State Assemblywoman Lori Saldana.

Next, we participated in the Lift Up America program with the San Diego Chargers. The national, non-profit organization's goal is to bring the gifts of food, sight and hope to the less fortunate. Sponsors included national league football, basketball and hockey teams, college sports teams and Tyson Foods, LensCrafters, Pearle Vision and Ty Toys.

More than 500 organization in 21 cities participated, and TACO was just one of 50 local agencies selected to attend a Chargers event at Qualcomm Stadium, after which we received free Tyson chicken as well as enough Ty Beanie Babies for all of our TACO friends.

As well all know, it is infinitely more rewarding to give than it is to receive. Therefore, all of us here at TACO made sure there was a lot of gift-giving going on the month of December! In honor of one our long time volunteers, Chuck Stuart, who for many years bought, wrapped and gave away socks at Christmas, we carried on his tradition handing out over 200 pairs of warm socks.

In addition, the Give a Hug group from Calvary Lutheran Church in Solana Beach, distributed more than

150 hand-knit scarves to help keep our guests warm during the chilly winter evenings.

The culminating event was the Christmas gift program December 23, when all our delighted guests received new sleeping bags and goody-filled personal care bags. More than \$2,500 from the Christmas in July fundraiser was used to buy 250 sleeping bags at a special price courtesy of Big Five Sporting Goods. The annual fundraiser was headed up by dedicated volunteer Ladonna Piper. In addition, the second grade classes from Olympic View Elementary School in Chula Vista, under the guidance of TACO volunteer Charlotte Collins and teacher Lisa Lines, filled personal hygiene bags with goodies ranging from toiletries to gloves.

And, last but not least, Grins 2 Go, a local photography studio, provided complimentary holiday portraits for our guests on December 30. TACO volunteers had envelopes and stamps on hand for mailing. Venu Babla, vice president of Grins 2 Go, said " We're in the business of making memories and creating warmth through photography. What better time than the holidays to do something extra special for the homeless. We hope these portraits will help keep them connected their families far away."

Wow! Are we blessed or not?!!!

- Lisa Seiler
Volunteer Coordinator



Just a few of the more than 250 donated sleeping bags await our guests in the days before Christmas 2005.

A Heartfelt Thank You ...

To all of our fabulous volunteers who help make the TACO programs successful in helping those less fortunate than ourselves. **Happy National Volunteer Appreciation Month!**

∞

To the **Ladies Group at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church**, who gave more than forty hours of work at the meal program, donated hand-made sleeping bags, collected hundreds of cans of soup, donated more than fifty lunches to hand out on non-meal days, packaged more than sixty personal hygiene bags, and collected funds during February, a portion of which will be matched by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

∞

To **Ron & Joan Miller**, long-time volunteers who celebrated Christmas and their 50th wedding anniversary by providing the food for and cooking a delicious breakfast of pancakes, bacon, eggs, and more on March 31st.

∞

To **Cheryl Walczak** and the students she brought from **La Jolla Country Day School**, who sponsored and helped cook and serve a meal in March.

∞

To new volunteers from **Alpha Chi Omega** sorority at **USD**, sociology students from **Pt. Loma Nazarene University**, and members of the **Progressive Christian Home Church**.

∞

To TACO interns **Agnes Zsigovics** and **Kristie Buckley**, who finish their year-long internships on May 10.

∞

To **Deb Miller**, who served as First Lutheran Church Council liaison in 2005 and made significant contributions to both First Lutheran and TACO.

∞

To **Agape House, Lutheran-Episcopal Campus Ministry at San Diego State University**, for the donation of personal hygiene products and towels.

∞

To **Pastor Noel Estergren**, founder of TACO and former pastor of First Lutheran, who retired from the TACO Board in December 2005.



Lovely volunteers Isabelle and Sophia Lovell

To **Pastor Ted Johns**, long time supporter of TACO, who also retired from the TACO Board in December 2005.

∞

To **Pastor Bill Radatz**, who led an exciting retreat for the new TACO Board in early February. With his help we were able to look at our role in the community and with First Lutheran and other churches as well as to examine our future direction.

∞

To all with the strength and power to state boldly that this type of work is our Gospel made visible.



TACO interns Agnes Zsigovics and Kristie Buckley with Jim Lovell and Lisa Seiler

A place where healing of body, mind and spirit can happen for any and all who come.”

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Third Avenue Charitable
Organization, Inc.
First Lutheran Church
1420 Third Avenue
San Diego, CA 92101-3193

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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

Coming in Autumn

TACO Autumn Soiree and Silent Auction

A Fundraiser for TACO

Find out how you can help:

619-235-9445

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