

Tampa Bay Harvest



"Working to end hunger in our community"

"No Problem! I Took The Kids Along"

In 1998 Alison Payne heard a presentation about Tampa Bay Harvest by board member Jerry Bohannon at Pasadena Presbyterian Church. "I knew then," she says, "that my heart was for helping to end hunger in our community." She promptly put together a group of volunteers from her church and her community of friends. They have been gathering food from twelve public schools and a Publix Super Market ever since, delivering it to shelters in Pasadena and Treasure Island.

Asked about her best moment of working with Tampa Bay Harvest these last nine years and she says, "Every single week, it is a heartfelt rewarding moment when I pull up before a shelter and deliver food."

As a busy mother of four, you would think Alison might not have time to both coordinate the volunteers in her group and take

her turn at pick up and delivery, but that, she says, is not a problem. "I involve the children," she says. Tyler, her oldest, made his first run last summer. The others, Troy, Jase and Jacob do their share also. Alison remembers the days when the youngest were in car seats. Her mother would ride along and watch over the children while Alison was making the pick-ups and deliveries.

Members of Alison's volunteers group are; Hal and Joy Feininger, Rusty and Nancy Haak, Tracey Creel, Gabby Fox, Alison Hitzel, Tyler Payne, Jerry Bohannon, Buck Philips and other church members and friends who have helped over the years.



Tampa Bay Harvest Volunteer Alison Payne

Let's Party!

**And, of course,
have an annual meeting!**

All volunteers and their families
are invited for our
annual meeting and party

**Sunday, June 3, 2007
3:00 P.M.**

Pavilion 7

(Beside the playground and the lake!)

at

**John Chestnut
Senior Park**

2200 East Lake Road
Palm Harbor, Florida

Come enjoy good company,
recreation, and light refreshments,
Tampa Bay Harvest style

*The Party will be fun—
The Meeting is Important*

www.tampabayharvest.org

If You Want A Good Chef, Pray

One of the places served by Tampa Bay Harvest is the St. Vincent de Paul Soup Kitchen in Clearwater.

"Tampa Bay Harvest has always been a tremendous blessing to our work at the Soup Kitchen," says Mary Lou Guthart who has supervised the Kitchen for twenty years. "When I retired from being a nurse," she says, "I came to help out at St. Vincent de Paul and it's been my home ever since."

Surveying her spotless domain, awash with tempting aromas, she talks about the early days when the Kitchen fed from 80 to 100 people a day. "Now there are up to 300 a day, many of them homeless. Others are seniors from low income housing who are here partially for the sociability of it. They live alone and enjoy chatting together as they eat."

Mary Lou's staff provides a full meal everyday, from soup to desserts. This is served between 9:30 and 11:00, seven days a week. "We never turn anyone down," she says. "Everyone is welcome . . . especially volunteers," she jokes.

With the winter resident volunteers beginning to head home, new volunteers are needed to take their place, with food preparation, serving meals and clean up, between 7:00 A.M. and 1:30 P.M.

In her twenty years with the Kitchens, Mary Lou has encountered a variety of challenges. One memorable time she was desperately in need of a cook. On Friday she went to the chapel to pray about it. On Monday, a man showed up, applying for a position as cook.

"Have you had any experience?" she asked.

"Well," he said, "As a cook at the White House, I cooked for three presidents."

That was good enough for Mary Lou and the "presidential cook" dished up excellent meals at St. Vincent de Paul for many years.



*Mary Lou Guthart
at St. Vincent de Paul
Soup Kitchen*

“The Best Chefs Have the Emptiest Garbage Cans”

Chef Eric Higgins, Executive Chef at the Tampa Convention Center, served by Aramark Food Service, speaks with enthusiasm of Tampa Bay Harvest and other similar agencies. They work with him to meet his goal of putting as little food as possible in the garbage can, he says, partly because, when customers “clean up their plate” it means they enjoyed the food, and partly because it means any surplus food is not wasted but goes to people who need it.

At the Convention Center Chef Eric and his staff serve meals to about 600,000 customers a year and donate hundreds of thousands to agencies like Tampa Bay Harvest for distribution. Sometimes the Convention Center hosts food or produce shows and there’s often a large volume of food available for donation. Other times customers order more food for their guests than is eaten, such as a recent day when there were 500 sandwiches left over after a large meeting.

“I work with about six or seven agencies,” says Chef Eric, “because I have to call at the last minute, not knowing what I will have available at any given time. It’s good to call Tampa Bay Harvest, or one of the others because I know, that way, the food is not sitting around but is being handled right.”

In his seven years at the Tampa Convention Center, Chef Eric has taken real satisfaction in being a part of Tampa Bay Harvest, and the other agencies’, efforts to stop hunger in our community.

Just A Note!

Publix Super Markets have long been openhanded and generous donors to the Tampa Bay Harvest program. They have donated a wide variety of foods to help end hunger in our community. Recently, however, requirements associated with transportation of temperature sensitive foods have limited what we are able to transport from Publix. Neither they, nor we, are happy about this, but we are making plans and having on-going discussions in hopes that something can be worked out in the near future. We are looking forward to, once again, collecting the nutritious variety of foods Publix has supplied for so many years.

Share With A Friend

Anything worth doing, is worth doing with a friend. Don’t keep the satisfaction of being a part of Tampa Bay Harvest to yourself. Invite a friend to join you. Your friends can volunteer to transport food from a donor to a recipient. This takes about one hour as TBH tries to make assignments close to home. Transport volunteers are especially needed in South St. Petersburg at this time.

If your friend would rather work from home, TBH also needs volunteer liaison people to help things run smoothly between donors, transport volunteers and TBH. Also needed are volunteers to retrieve e-mail messages and route them to the right place, and a “poundage reporter” to assist with gathering necessary information for our reports.

For information on volunteering, call 727-538-7777, ext. 1.

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