



## **2024 WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR!**

- Julie Mellin

We provided some charts and graphs in the February 2025 MLF news. In that issue, we showed that we had served 97,485 meals in 2024. We wanted to give some details of the locations and the efforts in 2024 to continue the good work of our ministry.

Most of our volunteers work with the same team and often have little interaction with other teams. I have the distinct pleasure of getting to visit many of the teams and see the camaraderie and service to others in action. We are about 250 people strong and currently prepare meals every day of the week. On Sundays and Wednesdays we serve or deliver both lunch and supper meals. Most other days it is lunch that is prepared with the exception of Fridays. We have one lunch team and three supper teams that day.

With that amount of activity in the MLF kitchen, it is no easy task for our wonderful Egg Boiling Team to get the job done! There are 30+ volunteers who tirelessly boil our eggs. With a load of 2,000 PER WEEK, this team keeps the refrigerator stocked and makes so many people happy to see that egg in their lunch.

We asked the attendees at the Christmas gathering who they thought we served the most meals to: homeless, working poor, or refugees. We know that many of our homeless brothers and sisters as well as refugees work and could fall into the "working poor" category. We make a distinction based on the locations we serve. Over one-half of our meals, 54%, are delivered to locations that hand out meals to a majority homeless population. These include: Guadalupe Community Center, St. Stephens Care Center, St. Vinny's Bistro, and the Bunkhaus. We also supply sweet Sr. Amelia with meals and she hands them out anywhere she feels called on the streets of San Antonio.

The next concentration of meals, 22%, are delivered to parish locations. We take a very large load every Tuesday to San Martin de Porres (SMdP). The pastor there is responsible for three churches: San Martin, St. Gabriel, and Our Lady of Good Counsel. The team at SMdP assists us by distributing the meals that we deliver to one location. We also make a weekly stop at St. Agnes and Our Lady of Angels. The families there have been with us for over 15 years.

The refugee families that we serve have shrunk over the years. We currently serve 5% of our meals to resettled families living in the Medical Center area. We also support the Interfaith Welcome Coalition with lunches. These are

distributed at the Bus Stop downtown. The number of meals sent there has also decreased in the past year.

Our “kids only” location is His Bridge Builders, an after-school program on the East side. We send meals to them each week, 4% of our total, and they are given to any child in the program. Many use this meal for their supper or lunch at school the next day. The final 5% of our meals are served at Woodhill apartments, Riverside Terrace mobile home park, Larkspur Elementary School park, and for a while at Towne Twin Village. The families there use our meals to stretch their budget. They are also very excited about the clothing on the truck.

As you can see, we are attempting to touch many areas of need in San Antonio. The need never goes away but we are hoping to alleviate some of the struggle. Thank you for doing your part! Together, we are showing the community that we love our neighbor as God has commanded. God bless you all.

### **WE’VE GOT IT COVERED!**

We have been using old truck covers to cover the barbecue pit outside the kitchen. But the last cover deteriorated and had to be thrown away. But



our anonymous volunteer had the idea to make a more permanent cover. So he sprang into action and made one using white panel board. It is decorated in a Lone Star motif. It is in two sections with handles for ease of lifting when the cover is to be removed temporarily. Thanks to the volunteer, the grease and ash are well contained and we have a cleaner place to volunteer.

The same volunteer also installed a no-touch paper towel dispenser in the kitchen. The paper towels magically appear when one puts their hand under the dispenser.

### **SOME FOOD SAFETY NO-NOS**

The San Antonio Health Inspectors post some of the reasons restaurants received a poor or failing score. Here are some of them so we don’t make the same mistakes:

- \* Prepared food not labeled with preparation or expiration date.
- \* Dirty rags stored next to clean dishes
- \* Employees stored personal items in a food preparation area
- \* Not a single employee was seen washing their hands
- \* Back door left open, allowing flies and rodents to come in

## **A WONDERFUL PERSPECTIVE FROM *WELCOME HOMELESS***

In his book, Alan Graham, the founder of Mobile Loaves and Fishes, described how to understand homelessness. He says that most people cannot understand what it means to have a home – that it is profoundly more complex than having four walls. He lists points on what it means to be home. Briefly it includes permanence, memories, relationships, safety, hospitality, a place to gain identity. And then he writes: “Second, it’s realizing that every human being is deserving of a *home* – that no one falls outside of the need for this basic right.”



### **Things to do BEFORE you are Through**

- \* Restock bread in the freezer in the kitchen
- \* Restock peanut butter, jelly, and Ziploc bags into cabinet
- \* If depleted, bag cookies, chips, condiments, etc.
- \* Sweep and mop the floor
- \* Put trash and recyclables into corresponding dumpsters

### **Things to do When you are Through**

- \* Move oldest boiled eggs from secondary to primary refrigerator
- \* Check and record refrigerator and freezer temperatures
- \* Wash, dry, and fold towels and wash rags
- \* Restock gloves in cabinet
- \* Sort clothes



Our **MLF** ministry needs help for these crucial roles:

**MLF Facebook Administrator**

**Day Volunteer Coordinator**

**Facilities Coordinator**, email [qtdarilek@gmail.com](mailto:qtdarilek@gmail.com) to get information.

If you can assist with any of these jobs, please contact **Julie Mellin** at [volunteermf@gmail.com](mailto:volunteermf@gmail.com)

### **Quick Reminders...**

- \* **Fill out the MLF Truck Run Log or on-line report after deliveries and use the bottom section to report any unusual events or problems that occur. The QR code for the reporting website is posted on the bulletin**

**board. This applies whether you use the truck for delivery or not.**

\* Team Captains should notify [mlfnw@sfasat.org](mailto:mlfnw@sfasat.org) before canceling a meal run.

**\* If the delivery team has not arrived when the preparation team is finished, put the meals into the walk-in cooler.**

\* Call the Commissary person (listed on the bulletin board) on duty when you encounter food supply shortages.

\* Please report any kitchen maintenance issues as soon as possible to Glenn Darilek (for now), text at 210-400-4073 or [gtdarilek@gmail.com](mailto:gtdarilek@gmail.com) . It is particularly important to promptly report if a refrigerator or the cooler is not cooling and if the ice machine is not producing.

### **MLF News Content Always Wanted**

Thank you to Julie Mellin for contributing to this issue. Send any relevant news to Glenn Darilek, Editor, [gtdarilek@gmail.com](mailto:gtdarilek@gmail.com)

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