

Stewpot

Faith meeting needs in our community



A Newsletter of Stewpot Community Services

2013

Bean to the Future By Barber Boone

I was asked to write about the challenge I took on as the new co-chair of the Red Beans & Rice Committee. I would love to be able to write about all of the great challenges and work that I have done over the past few months, and the challenges that face me as we get closer and closer to the event on November 2. But, I can't, and the reason why I can't is because the rest of the Red Beans & Rice Committee is so incredible that they take care of everything that needs to be done.

I would like to analogize my role on the committee as that of a Co-Captain on the USS Red Beans & Rice, leading a ship through rough waters, but it is really more akin to an air traffic controller, where planes are landing and taking off, and I'm just trying to keep up with all that is going on around me. I'll give a few examples.

Sally Barnette is on our committee and in charge of recruiting contestants. Before our first meeting, she had recruited four additional people to help her, they had met, and were prepared to send out "Save the Dates" to a long list of prior years' and potential contestants. Since then, she and her new recruits have added enormous value and energy to the committee. They have taken to the streets looking for contestants who have not participated before and have contacted those that have been contestants before. And, it is working. We have contestants coming from near and far, but there's always room for more. (She would never forgive me if I did not put in a "plug" for her, and tell everyone reading this newsletter that we always need more contestants, and we would love for you to come and test your Red Beans & Rice skills on the big stage, the Red Beans & Rice Celebration.) So get your closest friends, or those you just meet on the sidewalk, and sign up to be a contestant now.

Frank Kossen is another new addition to the committee. Frank is the ultimate audiophile. His Facebook posts are filled with concerts where he's already been or concerts in his plans. When I heard that we had an opening for someone to work with the bands, I could not think of a better fit than Frank, and we are lucky that he said yes. Frank hit the ground running and by the second meeting, he had developed a theme for the bands, and had brought YouTube clips for us to see of the bands he was considering. We are very excited this year about our band lineup: Hunter Gibson, Southern Komfort Brass Band, and Dave Jordan & the Neighborhood Improvement Band.

Cliff Agnew is another new addition. He is an incredibly smart guy, whose smarts will ensure that the complex judging assignments made at the event will result in a fair and objective outcome. Cliff is sure to excel at this as we get closer to the event. At a committee meeting, we were discussing the theme of the event, "Bean to the Future," when Cliff commented that he knew someone who had a DeLorean. By the next meeting, he had already contacted the owner, Mitch Tyner. Within a few weeks, Cliff had fully arranged all of the details necessary for us to have a DeLorean at the entrance to the event. We want to thank Mr. Tyner for letting us borrow his DeLorean on the day of the event.

The rest of the committee has done a spectacular job, from arranging the publicity and the media to organizing the kids' area, to coordinating the volunteers, to recruiting the judges and all of the other tasks, big and small, that go into planning this event. There is so much that goes into the planning of this event, and it all just seems to get done so seamlessly. The committee would stage an uprising if I didn't mention them and the hard work that they have done and that is left to do. This committee could not operate without each and every one of its members. In fact, no one "chairs" or "co-chairs" the committee, it "chairs" itself. Michelle Bingham and I, the "co-chairs," merely try to keep up with everyone else.

Before I conclude, I would be remiss if I didn't mention a few new and exciting things about this year's event. We are still having the trick or treating for the kids at the Contestants' booths this year. But, instead of a Halloween Costume competition, we are having a Hula Hoop tournament. Yes, that's right, limber up because anyone who wants to give it a whirl can join in the first annual Red Beans & Rice "Shake your Beans" Hula Hoop contest. For those who want to leave the hip gyrations to others, we are inviting craft vendors to set up and show their wares, so if you sell a craft and would like to have a booth, or you are in the market for some locally made items, this year's event has something for you. In fact, young and not-so-young, Cajun or not, beans aficionados or not, we have something just for you at this year's Red Beans & Rice Celebration. So please join us for a great time this year at Trustmark Park on Saturday, November 2, from 11 - 4:30.

Our

BEANS

are Going
to the Future!

By: Michelle' Bingham

Michael J. Fox did it and now Trustmark and Stewpot will be serving up Beans from the Future!!!
Come Celebrate with us.

Join us for the Trustmark's Red Beans & Rice Celebration on November 2, we HOPE we can count on you to help make this event successful. This year cooking teams from all over will be at Trustmark Park in Pearl from 6:00am to begin cooking their best recipes and decorating their booths to provide you and your family with a "futuristic" experience.

The theme this year is "Bean to the Future". After 23 years of some of the best beans cooked, we are still are in search of the best beans in town. That one recipe we can deem perfect. They're out there somewhere in the galaxy of "Beandom." And, we want you to come out and compete for the title of Best Beans or simply to come help us find the perfect recipe. This event is sure to not disappoint any Red Bean aficionado.

Gates will open at 11:00am and WLBT's news anchor Howard Ballou is back as the emcee.

Entertainment this year promises to be phenomenal. Celebrating with us will be Hunter Gibson & the Gators, Southern Komfort Brass Band and Dave Jordan and the Neighborhood Improvement Band. What a great group of musicality.

Admission is \$10 in advance; \$12 the day of the event; \$5 for children 6-12; free for children 5 and under. We will have trick or treating, a hula hoop contest for the young and young at heart, craft vendors, prizes, as well as many other fun activities in this wonderful and safe environment.

All proceeds will benefit Stewpot. See you there!

Staff Spotlight

Rhonda Sue Tomlin, Executive Assistant



Date of Birth: December 27, 1966

Family: 2 Beautiful Daughters Ashley Leann Tomlin 25 & Brittany Dawn Tomlin 20.

Education: Associates Degree from Florida International University

Major: Accounting

Hobbies: Reading, Spending time her family, and Cooking.

Rhonda has been volunteering with the Opportunity until recently when the Executive Assistant's position became available. She was hired because of extensive skills in Customer Service, Administrative and Clerical Skills, and Computer knowledge. She can literally dismantle and rebuild any computer. Rhonda also brings with her to Stewpot a love for the Lord and a willingness to help people from all walks of life.

Rhonda is a member of New Beginnings Church in Martinsville, Ms and her favorite scripture is: 1John 4:15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

Words to live by: *"I am no longer cursed by poverty because I took possession of my own mind, and that mind has yielded me every material thing I want, and much more than I need. But this power of mind is a universal one, available to the humblest person as it is to the greatest."* Andrew Carnegie

Small Stories of Success with Big Results

When I came to Sims House, I was confused and did not know what to do. My life had taken a wrong turn. I decided to leave my two sons with my parents until I was able to do better for them and myself. I wanted to make sure I had a job and stable place to live before I got them back. With the help of Sims House staff, I was able to set some goals and develop a plan for accomplishing them. My goal was to find a job, go back to school, and get housing. The staff at the Sims House helped me enroll in Virginia College, where I am currently studying for my associate's degree in Business Administration. I was able to find a job at UMC and the staff encouraged me to apply for housing through HUD, section 8.

Fast forward my life 31/2 months and I am doing great! My goals I set while at the Sims House have been accomplished. I have a job, I have my own place and my greatest accomplishment is my boys are back living with me. I learned how to be a better parent, how to budget my money, and how to deal with life's problems through counseling sessions while I stayed in the Sims House as well. Sims House staff helped me to believe in myself again. These are life skills I will be able to use anywhere and apply to any situation. I was not sure about coming to the shelter, but I am so glad I did! I was able to receive the help that I needed from people who cared about me.

Thanks for everything.

Nikita May

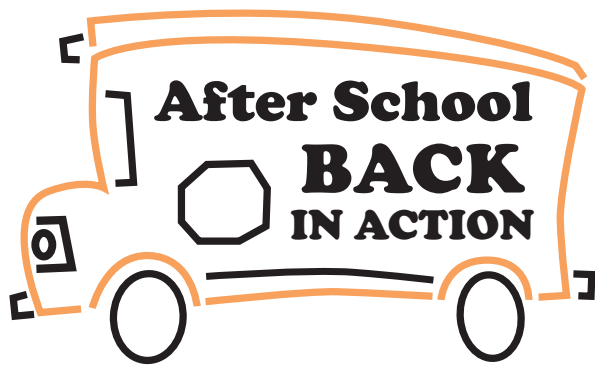
I'm not going to take up too much of your time. I'm just going to tell you how God has worked through Matt's House in my life.

The first thing I did was changed my mindset, I didn't dwell on what got me in this Shelter. When I did that, God closed my eyes so I could focus on what was going on in my life. He knew if I saw what was about to happen for me, I would go back to the way things were for me. God worked through my employers and I was given two raises on my pay checks back to back. I got all negative people out of my life and people who didn't want anything for themselves or for me. That's when I ended up at Matt's House where people who knew how to handle me and my wrong thinking were there to help me. The staff at Matt's House helped in spite of me. They were patient and made sure that I received all the necessary treatment and classes that I needed to prepare me for gaining back my independence. God then replaced all those old hindrances in my life with the people and things that I needed. I am so glad that I had this place because it was just what I needed, when I needed it.

My future is looking much brighter now. I have my own apartment now and my manager works with me so that I am able to pay my rent every two weeks when I get paid. I still don't have a car but the cab driver that takes me back and forth to work allows me to pay \$10 no matter what the meter reads. The Lord was leading the way when He led me to Matt's House and I am glad I followed.

I'm closing but know that Jesus loves you and if he did it for me, he'll do it for you. Thanks for everything.

Andrea Miller



Striving for Academic Excellence

By: Shamberi Horton

I am very honored to work with the Children's Program as the new Director; my life has come full circle. I have been a part of Stewpot since 1999 when I started as a student. I grew up here. It is also a pleasure to be working with Lesley Collins, my assistant, who has worked at Stewpot since she was an undergraduate student from Chicago. She would come down to MS each summer to work with the children in the summer camp.

As the school year has started we are high on education. The students come in each day with a hunger to do their homework. We are striving to make sure our students will be honor students within their schools. We are here each day from 2:00 pm until 5:00 p.m. During our time we have homework time, Reading, Word Wall, Language Arts, & Math, and a fifteen minute warm-up to get them started off to do their homework. We are settling for nothing less than the best for our children. Before homework we say this chant with our kids:

**I know I can
Be what I want to be
If I work hard at it
I'll be where I want to be**



This is a message that let our children know that no matter what, they can do and be whatever it is that they put their minds to. We also put up motivational messages on our door and bulletin board each month to encourage the students.

JOIN US FOR



A FUN DAY FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

November 2, 2013
From 11:00 To 5:00

**Read Details About
Entertainment, Ticket
Prices, Other Exciting
Information On The
Next Page.**

Stewpot Community Services, Inc.

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A TALE OF TWO MEN

By: Rev. Frank Spencer



I personally know prayers are answered but sometimes I forget that things which seem impossible can be changed. Below are the stories of 2 men for whom Stewpot's prayers were answered. Both tales involve people diagnosed with schizophrenia.

The 1st man lived on the steps of Stewpot for 6 years. At first he seemed fairly harmless and we, of course, tried to provide him services. He consistently refused and because he seemed harmless we let him stay. At our weekly staff meetings we prayed for him. This went on for years. Finally, our female staff members reported that he had become more aggressive toward them. It was decided that we should attempt to have him committed to the state mental hospital to have him treated. It caused us a lot of anguish because we were afraid that when the deputies came to get him, he would become belligerent and be injured or killed. However, the deputies came and he went peacefully with them.

To be committed, one has to be evaluated by 2 doctors and proof has to be given in a judicial hearing that the person is dangerous to others and/or themselves and need treatment. When this individual was evaluated, it was learned that he was convinced he was the night guard at Stewpot. The judge saw his illness and committed him to the State hospital. Stewpot continued to pray for him for the months he was there. Finally, he was discharged to a personal care home where he lives today. They make sure he takes his medication and he is living very happily in his new home. He performs house and yard work for the lady that runs the home and she is very glad to have him.

The 2nd man was a terror to everyone in Stewpot's area of town. He fought with Don's volunteers, others outside of Stewpot and most people he met on the street. He always carried a pipe or a long handle of some type to threaten people he met. He was even shot twice in a leg by one person he threatened. Unfortunately, that did not change his behavior. Stewpot Staff prayed for him weekly. Ultimately, his threats became too frequent and his victims were completely covered by him.

It was determined that he had to be stopped and so a trip to court was scheduled. But first he had to be found. Word came to me that he was on the street and I called law enforcement to give his approximate location. When they arrived, they asked me to ride and see if we could locate him. Sure enough, after a few minutes we found him with the pipe in his hand threatening a passerby on West Capitol Street. The officers took him into custody to await his court date. At his hearing he glowered at me and repeatedly told the Judge that I hated him and was lying. Fortunately, the doctors and the judge could see through his mental illness and sent him to the state hospital.

He received his treatment and 3-4 months later we learned that he was out. One day I was leaving work and I saw him on the Stewpot walking toward me. I wondered what was going to happen. I said "Hi George, how are you?." Instead of his usual frown, he asked me politely for a dollar. I was so stunned that I did the unusual and reached for my wallet. I gained my composure enough to tell him that Stewpot wanted him for a friend and he needed to stop threatening people. His reply to me was "I don't scare no more and Stewpot is my friend." He came toward me and before I could think he embraced me and gave me a hug. Of course, I hugged him back. What a change! Since then He and I have exchanged hugs several times.

The point of these stories is to illustrate that prayer can help solve the seemingly most impossible situations. At times even I, a member of the clergy, forget how powerful prayer can be. In my life, these 2 instances may be the most impossible requests that I and we could make. But we kept praying faithfully and thankfully Stewpot staff and I learned once again that God does in fact listen and act.





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Faith meeting needs in our community

Your Stewpot family now has a Post Office Mailing Address!



When sending in your monthly contribution you can now mail them to P.O. Box 3610 Jackson, Ms 39207.

MEMORIALS

Wesley Lutken
by Jean Brewer

Mary Jane Wilson
by Mary Taylor

Thank You to everyone who participated in the Christmas in July Food Drive. Because of you we are able to serve those who need it most!

Raise Money for Stewpot just by shopping at Kroger: Did you know you can support Stewpot just by shopping at Kroger? It's easy when you enroll in Kroger Community Rewards®! To get started, go to www.kroger.com and click on the Community link. That will bring you to the Kroger Community Rewards page. Sign up with your Plus Card and select a local organization you wish to support (Stewpot). Once you're enrolled, you'll earn rewards for your chosen organization every time you shop and use your Plus Card!

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