

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

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**This Month in the TACO
Times:**

- Sunset by the Sea a Success! (page 1)
- A Special Christmas Tree (page 2)
- Pictures from Sunset by the Sea (page 3)
- Thanks to our Arms Outstretched members (page 3)

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

Upcoming Events at TACO!

- Twice a month, a group gathers at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church to make sleeping bags. Known as the "Bag Ladies," they carefully and lovingly assemble beautiful sleeping bags that are given to TACO's patio guests upon request. Those who ask for these sleeping bags are people who are sleeping on the streets. Having a sleeping bag that offers extra padding and warmth is a huge gift. The Bag Ladies need extra help! While each sleeping bag takes many hands, you need not be an expert with needle and thread! Their next gathering is Saturday, November 20 at 9:30 a.m. at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, located at 8350 Lake Murray Blvd, San Diego, 92119. For questions, call the church at 619-464-4211.
- Our Christmas in July gifts will need to be wrapped! So mark your calendar for the wrapping party on Wednesday, December 15 at 9:00 a.m. in the lounge at First Lutheran Church. Please bring a roll of wrapping paper if you are able! If you are unable to attend, but still want to help, bring wrapping paper anytime! Thank you!

Christmas in July Home Stretch!

We have almost reached our goal of \$6,250 to purchase 250 gifts to distribute around Christmas time. If you would like to give, it's not too late! Each gift will cost \$25.00. You can write your check to TACO with "Christmas in July" in the memo line.

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The TACO Times

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**Basic Needs
by Rachel Line**

What are your basic needs for everyday life? When I think of my daily routine, my needs are: alarm clock, toaster for my breakfast, clean clothes for work, gas in my car, lunch bag for lunch, glasses to see what I'm doing at work, sunglasses for the drive home, my grill for dinner, my mattress for a good-night's sleep.

But are these my basic needs? Or are these things that make life more comfortable?

How often we forget about the basic things that we take for granted! What about clean socks? What about toothpaste and soap? What about deodorant and a razor? These are items that are most asked for by people who are living on the streets. Sometimes we have these items, but sometimes we don't. These donations are always accepted and always needed. If you or your church would like to collect these items and donate them to TACO, we would very much appreciate it!

Wish List

Disposable razors
Travel size shampoo
New socks
Toothbrush/toothpaste
Deodorant

So far this year, TACO has served 20,949 meals to 13,577 people. Many thanks to all of our volunteers who make this possible each and every week.

The TACO Times

Celebrating 35 Years of Bread Day

Volume 7, Issue 5

November 2010

Director's Report by Jim Lovell

Wow, what a great event we had with all of those who came to Sunset by the Sea!! It was a thrilling and beautiful night. I hope that you enjoy some of the pictures from the event in these pages. Thank you to all of you who participated, volunteered, bid, bought, encouraged, sponsored, affixed stamps, mailed, requested, donated, and fed us through the months leading up to the event as well as the day of. Thanks to all of you who found parking and found the shuttle and waited to get back to your cars too. We honored Anaheeta Kolah, one of the founders of the Community Law Project, a clinic now 5 years old happening every Monday night. She really has done amazing work. Special thanks to the Sunset by the Sea committee and volunteer group who made sure that all went well that night.

We currently have tallied \$24,000 raised that night. An amazing amount. We also had an unprecedented amount of attendees with more than **160 people** filling the La Jolla home of Drs. Vani and Rup Nagala. We are so thankful for their giving and care for our organization and the medical care that happens at TACO on a weekly basis. There were trips offered, musicians to come perform in your home, art, furniture, and adventures to be had. We filled the house with people as well as filling it with the warmth and caring that all our guests brought with them for the work of TACO. A warm "Thank You" to each of you from TACO and from myself. Your dedication is indeed such a blessing to us all.

In other news, this year the city



council of San Diego took perhaps the longest amount of time deciding where the new Cold Weather Shelter would be located. I counted more than 6 different votes over 5 different places for the shelter to be. In the end, the site chosen was not a tent at all, but rather the first floor of the old San Diego Housing Commission building at 1625 Newton St. Sadly,

Continued on page 2

Sunset by the Sea a Success! by Andy Taylor

TACO's 2010 Sunset by the Sea was a great success. Over 160 people gathered on Saturday, October 23, for an evening of food, friendship and fundraising. We feasted on a wonderful dinner provided by Lisa Rosa-Retamoza of Dinner-a-Go-Go, enjoyed wine courtesy of Jo Koch and DebHoitad, drank beer provided by Stone Brewing Company, and dipped into the chocolate fountain courtesy of Kristin Westerman and Linda Bright. We also bid on a variety of silent auction items, including items as diverse as works of art, passes to local museums and attractions, even a day at a spa. When the silent auction closed, we held a live

auction, gaveled by Joe Slevcove, where we bid on items including a set of Callaway irons, baseballs autographed by Adrian Gonzalez, vacation stays in Oregon and the Bahamas, concerts by artists such as Deborah Liv Johnson and Robin Henkel, and much, much more.

Best of all, we raised \$24,000 to benefit the work of TACO, so that we can continue to serve meals and provide health and end-of-life care among the homeless and poor of San Diego. Our thanks to all who made this possible. Special thanks to Doctors Rup and Vani Nagala for donating their spectacular home in La Jolla to host the

event, to John Vaughn our event photographer, to Stephanie Alexander for the beautiful flower arrangements, and to Gregg Rayo, Kathleen Sorahan and Dave Clark for driving the shuttle vans to and from the parking lot at Bird Rock Elementary School.

Most of all, thanks to all of our donors and sponsors, and particularly to all who bid at the silent and live auctions. Thanks to you and your generous financial support, TACO will continue to provide meals, healing and care to any and all who come.

Director's Report *continued from page one*

though this site passed unanimously on the 3rd of November, it had previously met a stalemate vote (4-4) just two weeks prior. It took the end of the elections and the rejection of Golden Hall to vote it through. I say sadly because each time that the council met to discuss where to locate the shelter, the discussion was always about how one community or another should not have to "put up" with a shelter in their neighborhood. Both in the meetings and in the paper each day after meetings, homeless individuals would be reminded that "no one" wants them around.

This coming just a month or so after many volunteers from downtown and surrounding areas interviewed more than 750 homeless men and women, finding out that so many were at risk of dying on the streets. It should also be noted that the city does not actually pay for the shelter, the money comes from the federal government. They only need to decide where. There were strong advocates on the council for those who are on the streets and they did fight hard to get a decent option decided.

We also celebrated the lives and mourned the deaths of 50 homeless individuals who have died in the past 12 months. We joined with the San Diego Rescue Mission, 1st Presbyterian Church, the Interfaith Rotational Shelter, and so many others at the Ninth Annual Vigil. In addition to the 50 noted, this year we had four people be remembered on our patio. Two of those who died this year were in our Going Home End-of-Life Services program. These were a man and woman. The woman, no one would have guessed homeless and the man everyone had known on the streets for years. The very day of the vigil came word of the death of a long-time homeless man. This brought the reality of the day so much closer for many of us.

Thank you to all of you who are such ardent supporters of those who struggle in poverty in our community. Your willingness to look in the faces of people regardless of stature is what makes change happen. It is the most important challenge to separation and alienation. It is what makes us all human and allows us to see not only God in the faces of others, but also God in our own lives.

The Christmas Tree *by Nance Lovell*

At one Simon's Walk visit I was eternally changed. Christmas was nearing and there were reminders of the holiday celebration in store windows and on light posts along the street. Conversation often was a time for reminiscing about the client's family and Rocky Mountain snow.

For all my years, my family always celebrated Christmas with a tree. As a young child, it was an artificial tree, limbs covered in a fake snow and it always stood taller than me. Decorating the tree was a family affair that held special meaning. This tradition carried with me through my adulthood (though we often opted for a real tree!) and it is a tradition that my husband and I continue with our own children.

This one day when I arrived for a visit, she nearly jumped out of her chair with glee. She kicked up her feet like a young girl and pointed to her dresser-top.

There, sitting on a corner of the dresser stood a small branch of a juniper tree (perhaps a foot high at most). Her ingenious partner rigged up a stand for the tree by inverting a discarded busted frying basket and covered it with a cloth and cardboard of sorts. He had found the broken off branch along a flowerbed and decided to bring it back to their room as a Christmas tree. Her pure joy, rained down on me with the hugest smack of reality.

The tree was decorated over time and though I never was able to photograph it, it will be engrained in my memory. Discards of any type, mixed with ingenuity and humility equal a child-like joy matched by no other.

I will continue to have a Christmas pine tree each year as far as I know, that is my tradition. But the juniper branch plunged into the hole of a busted metal basket will be the one I remember most.

Compassion

This song was written by one of TACO's faithful Friday morning volunteers, Kristin Naour. Kristin and her mom, Kim, have been regulars on Friday morning for just over a year. Kristin and Kim are vital to the meal. They also lead the hygiene item distribution when we have items available. Thank you both for all you do, and thank you Kristin for this beautiful song. You can hear this song by going to: <http://www.youtube.com/user/Iknaour>

"They sit alone, one after another,
As people walk past, talking to each other.
Day after day, they're cast aside,
They deserve a friend. They deserve some pride.

Where is our compassion?
Where is our heart?
As children of God, we must do our part.
Cause in this world around us,
There's a need for love; it's true.
And all that it takes is you.

That man on the street corner,
Holding up his sign,
Says he needs some money,
All he wants is your time.
So say, How are you doing?
And shake his outstretched hand.
Tell him that God loves him,
And he has a great plan.

Show him your compassion
Give a piece of your heart
As children of God, we must do our part.
Cause in this world around us,
There's a need for love; it's true.
And all that it takes is you.

There's a reason for all he does.
He sent his son from above,
To die for our sins and teach us to love.

So follow his compassion,
And open up your heart
As children of God, we must do our part,
Cause in this world around us,
There's a need for love; it's true.
And all that it takes is you.
And all that it takes is you."
-Written by Kristin Naour

Sunset by the Sea 2010 *pictures by John Vaughn*



Arms Outstretched 2009-2010

The following individuals and families are members of an elite group of donors: ARMS OUTSTRETCHED. These are folks who give \$365 or more in a year to help TACO's mission. At least one-third of the world's population live on \$1 or less a day. We think anyone willing to commit that much – a dollar a day - to caring for the poor among us locally is an important marker of commitment, and is a significant act of solidarity with the poor. We have created ARMS OUTSTRETCHED as a collective way to thank and recognize you and others like you who provide such a solid foundation for TACO's work.

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