

Article 15.

In memoriam for Alan Drennen, our Hero for Hunger.

August 30, 2014 Nancy Sheffield | Special to The Citizen

My mission to help hungry people, one individual at a time, would not exist without my volunteers. I count on these wonderful men and women to do simple acts of kindness, daily. In the pantry, they gather the food for each family and make sure families have what they need to sustain themselves for a week, each month. It is a brutal world for some of my people who do not know where their next meal comes from when the food stamps (SNAP) run out.

I accept the challenge to help but my volunteers, showing up for their daily shifts, acknowledge their part of what it takes to be on my team. The greatest volunteer, in service to this pantry, was Alan Drennen, who just died; a kindly, selfless man with unlimited spirit and stamina. He exhibited to all much joy from his heart. He was vital to my mission. I am in my 28th year here at Calvary Food Pantry. Al was my rock for a great deal of that time. Because of his strengths, letting nothing get him down under all different situations, as a volunteer for over 25 years, he knew what I thought of him and his unflinching assistance. I can not honor his work without acknowledging his persistent presence all these years. He will be missed by many. I will miss him always, and do, daily. Thank you, Al.

Our summer garden at the Fraatz-Croft Home is producing vegetables through the hard work of Don R., head gardener, and Elizabeth and Vicky, who also water. The residents of the home now keep a sharp eye on the raised beds after they learned that some one was picking for themselves and not for the pantry community. This month, no vegetables are missing. Our output is slow, but I am very pleased with the initial results. It is a grand start in our new home, and I can't thank everyone personally, but all of you and your help makes the difference. New from the pantry: We are ready for the start of school. Miriam, our Hero for Hunger volunteer in article 11, has gotten together two huge racks of children's clothes, for kindergarten through seventh grades. She spent the summer looking in on businesses, garage sales and thrift shops. She asked for help from friends with children and, remarkably, she has some splendid outfits (one per child from the pantry's area), ready for girls or boys. Washed and ironed, the clothes look new. Thank you, Miriam, for your continued success in my pantry.

We also have packs of school supplies ready for all K-7 school-bound children in our pantry's area. Several of our volunteers, who work here, donated approximately \$270 for these packets. Thank you.

Our first major fundraising campaign is set for Oct. 1. Do you know of someone who can help in our campaign? For instance, we have a grant for anyone who knows Mail Merge. Know a high school or college student who can create one mailing list for us, using Excel? Call Elizabeth at (315) 253-4535.

Reminder: Our chicken barbecue is scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 30. In the past we have been told that it is exceptionally yummy chicken. We haven't increased the \$8.50 per meal in three years. Tickets for advanced sales are available at the pantry. Come in and get some tickets! TomatoFest is Sept. 6 and 7. Please support this festival because all profits go to Auburn's community food pantries and soup kitchens. It has been a staple in the community for many years. Remember: Volunteer, donate or reciprocate, in kind, by giving back.