



# The Link

*A quarterly publication of the Oklahoma City Food Bank*

The Food Bank is a member of Second Harvest National Food Bank Network

Vol. 13 No. 6

## INSIDE

- ♦ Check out the incredible donors who sprang into action for disaster relief.
- ♦ The Food Bank celebrates "Community Unity" with donor, agency and volunteer spotlights.
- ♦ Rodney's Reflections plus our new Board of Directors.
- ♦ The Food Bank is setting precedents: Read about record-breaking results for Taste of the Nation, the Letter Carrier's Food Drive and lots more!
- ♦ Personals: Active, enthusiastic Food Bank seeking volunteers with similar characteristics.

The Oklahoma City Food Bank is a private, nonprofit organization that distributes food to 430 charitable feeding programs in 50 central and western Oklahoma counties. It is a member of Second Harvest National Food Bank Network. The Food Bank sponsors the following:

### Events

Harvest Food Drive  
Taste of the Nation  
Various Food Drives

### Programs

Kid's Cafe  
Rural Distribution Sites  
Second Helpings  
Reclamation

The Link is published quarterly by the Oklahoma City Food Bank.

Rodney W. Bivens,  
Executive Director  
Cara S. Smith,  
Editor  
Mary McGivney,  
Layout

## Food Bank Responds to Federal Building Bombing

When a tremendous boom shook the Oklahoma City Food Bank, two miles south of downtown Oklahoma City, staff members thought a plane had crashed nearby.

In retrospect, a plane crash or any disaster we could have imagined may not have been so devastating as the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building that Wednesday morning. Added to the trauma of 400+ injuries and 168 deaths are the public's anger and fear stemming from this terrorist act.

By Wednesday afternoon, the Oklahoma City Food Bank was already operating at full capacity assisting in the large-scale emergency feeding operation serving rescuers and displaced families.

This feeding effort, anchored by the Oklahoma Restaurant Association's large food show-turned-cafeteria at the Myriad Convention Center and the Salvation Army mobile kitchens, grew to include many more serving sites scattered across downtown. Serving up to 18,000 meals daily, disaster feeding sites succeeded through the efforts of area nonprofit organizations including the Food Bank, chefs, food companies and many volunteers.

Within 24 hours of the disaster, the Food Bank was serving as a drop-off point for donations of food and other items and was picking up donations that could not be brought to the Food Bank. Additionally, the Food Bank stored food and other products to be supplied to the disaster areas as needed. When the Food Bank's 37,000 square foot warehouse overflowed from the influx of donations, a temporary warehouse was acquired. Soon after, the 2,900 square feet of freezer space became inadequate, prompting several local corporations to arrange for the use of refrigerated trailers to store donated food items requiring refrigeration.

The Food Bank's Second Helpings program also played an integral role in the effort, collecting 7,500 prepared meals from chefs wishing to donate to the relief effort. These were then delivered directly to the disaster site.

Thursday, April 20, Food Bank trailers were left at KOCO Channel 5 for five days as donation drop-off sites. In addition to their outstanding, 24-hour commercial-free coverage of the disaster, KOCO provided a donations drop site, volunteers and the publicity necessary to mount such a massive relief effort. Cars lined up for miles to drop off food and supplies, which were sorted on the spot to earmark items needed immediately at the disaster site. Items not needed immediately were taken to the Food Bank for sorting, inventory and storage or distribution to the appropriate disaster-related location. By distributing current inventory lists of these estimated twelve semitrailer loads of donated food and supplies, disaster-related needs were able to be met quickly.

In addition to donations of food and supplies, the Food Bank received monetary donations totalling more than \$54,000. \$36,000 of this money was collected at the Channel 5 drop site. Monetary donations earmarked for the Food Bank disaster operations have been used to defray costs incurred.

For twelve days following the disaster, Food Bank staff and volunteers worked virtually without stopping, often continuing work throughout the night. In addition to handling the estimated 360,000 pounds of food that poured in during the disaster, the Food Bank was able to meet its day-to-day distribution schedule servicing 430 agencies in 50 Oklahoma counties. This would not have been possible without the dedicated staff and volunteers who gave their time, and also the generous monetary donations made by individuals and corporations.

When the first weeks of May saw disaster relief efforts drawing to a close in downtown Oklahoma City, the Food Bank continued to provide food and supplies to agencies affected by the blast. The Salvation Army was still feeding volunteer relief workers while food closets located near the blast continued to serve families left homeless by the explosion. Additionally, the Red Cross asked the Food Bank to take 11 semitrailer loads of food product left over from the disaster relief effort.

## Oklahoma City Triumphs after Federal Building Bombing

The April 19 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building changed more than Oklahoma City's skyline.

The blast horrified us and broke our hearts, but as rescuers and volunteers worked around the clock at their hideous task, we learned about pride and caring for our neighbors in a way we'd never thought possible. As we mourn our dead and cheer on the injured in their recovery, we can't forget that we are Oklahomans.

In the past, some Oklahomans wailed of disdain for their state, bemoaning a lack of culture and sophistication. No longer. The same bomb that destroyed countless material things caused Oklahomans to build an unshakable sense of community. That old discontent for what Oklahoma does not have has been replaced by pride in the strength and spirit we do possess.

As people came from around the country to help Oklahoma City, they were amazed by our triumph and by our people who in gratitude to our rescuers, never stopped giving.

Oklahoma City thanks those who gave us so much - you gave of your time, your energy and money. We are proud to have something to share with you -- our Oklahoma pride and spirit.

Volunteers, rescue workers, and everyday people who did all you could; people from around the country and also from right here at home -- your work made this terrible disaster a time of positive growth for Oklahoma. Thank you.

## Financial Contributions

Tina Abramowitz  
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James and Kathy Park  
Barbara Jean Parris  
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Pearl Harbor Survivors Assn.  
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Joe and R.M. Kateri Peeler

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**The Food Bank  
appreciates your  
generous donations  
during the disaster.**

I.A.T.S.E. Local #134  
J.W. Exploration, Inc.  
Wendy Jeannot  
J.W. and Elizabeth Johns, Jr.  
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St. John's Episcopal School  
Statewide Painting Contractors, Inc.  
Cheryl Steckler  
John and Karen Steelman  
Raymond & Joan Stephens  
Donna Stephenson

## In-Kind Donations

American Red Cross  
Broadway Distributing  
Boars Head  
Buddy's Produce  
Burlington Motor Freight  
Car Cab  
Cardinal Paper Company  
Casady School  
Children's Tomorrow House  
Church of the Servant  
Church on the Rock  
City Church  
Clayton Supermarket  
Community Harvest Food Bank  
Dana Corporation  
Diamond Crystal Specialty  
Donco Carriers  
Fleming Companies, Inc.  
Food Brands Of America, Inc.  
Fox Smithe  
General Mills Inc.  
Gilardi Foods  
Great Plains Coca Cola Bottling  
Ground Floor Cafe  
HEB Grocery Company  
Hormel Foods Corporation  
H.J. Heinz  
John Christener Trucking  
Kansas Foodbank Warehouse  
Keebler Company  
Kimberly Clark Corporation  
KOCO-TV Channel 5  
Le Sam Restaurant  
Love Box Company  
Marianne's Rentals  
McCorkle Truck Lines  
McKee Baking Company  
Medley Material Handling  
Oklahoma City Freightliner  
Oklahoma City Golf & Country Club  
Oklahoma Restaurant Association  
Orbit Finer Foods  
Pratt Foods  
Sitton Motor Lines  
Southwestern Bell Mobile Systems  
SYSCO Food Services of Oklahoma  
Tambrands Inc.  
Tanaka Produce  
Thompson Books & Supply  
Tom Lange, Co.  
Trammel Crow  
Tropicana Products, Inc.  
Unisource  
Van Den Berg Foods Co.  
Vaughan Foods Corporation  
WHATABURGER

## Food Bank Board of Directors

### Officers elected for the 1995-1996 year:

President	Ronald V. Perry, <i>Prime Time Travel</i>
Vice-President	Jim Priest, <i>McKinney, Stringer and Webster</i>
Secretary	Peggy Garrett, <i>Presbyterian Urban Mission</i>
Treasurer	Glen Shipley, <i>Union Bank</i>
Past President	Charles Merrick

### The Food Bank is pleased to welcome new board members for the 1995-1996 year:

Steve Bailey, *Steve Bailey Honda*  
 Ed Beltram, *AT&T*  
 Phil Fitzgerald, *Fitzgerald & Associates*  
 Susan Hermes, *Cox Cable*  
 J. Mark Patton, *Gerald L. Gamble Co.*  
 Ed Stanley  
 Kathy Walker

### Returning to the Food Bank Board after a hiatus:

Adelaide Liedtke  
 Marion Joullian Story

### Board members continuing their service to the Food Bank:

Kirk Hagan, *Oklahoma City Freightliner*  
 Byrdell Hardeman, *Lindsay RSVP*  
 Richard Keeney, *Fleming Companies, Inc.*  
 Joyce Outhier  
 J.B. Pratt, *Pratt Foods*  
 Sherri Price  
 Mary Reneau  
 Nancy Sawvell  
 Jim Smelser, *Control Restaurant Management*

### Ex Officio:

James Buchanan, III, *James Buchanan & Company*

## Rodney's Reflections

by Rodney Bivens, Executive Director

A senseless act of terrorism causes our hearts to go out to the victims and the injured of our community. Yet we are thankful for the outpouring of support from everyone, including those outside our state.

While the emotions and pain inflicted upon our city and state will continue for many months, the Oklahoma City Food Bank was humbled and proud to be part of the disaster relief effort. Although it has been difficult to get on with our day to day business, we will not let this tragedy keep us from looking and moving ahead.

Indeed, the Oklahoma City Food Bank is honored to exist in a city and state where people care about each other. I was touched by how *everyone* wanted to help. People just arrived at the Food Bank and asked "What can I do?"

On the Saturday following the bombing I drove to KOCO-TV Channel 5 and saw hundreds of cars lined up for miles, the drivers waiting hours in traffic to donate time, goods and money. There were countless volunteers standing in the cold rain collecting items from passing cars.

We are deeply appreciative to the Oklahoma Elks Association for presenting the Food Bank with \$11,000, the Pillsbury Company Foundation for sending \$7,500 and the many individuals and companies who sent checks or drove by Channel 5.

To the hundreds of other volunteers and rescue workers who spent days assisting in disaster recovery, we say thanks. Your contribution to our community and state cannot be measured. A special thank you to KOCO Channel 5 for its commitment in the disaster relief efforts.

Oklahoma has shown the world its strength, bringing to mind my ninth grade school motto: "Forward ever, backward never." Let's never forget, let's heal - let's move forward.

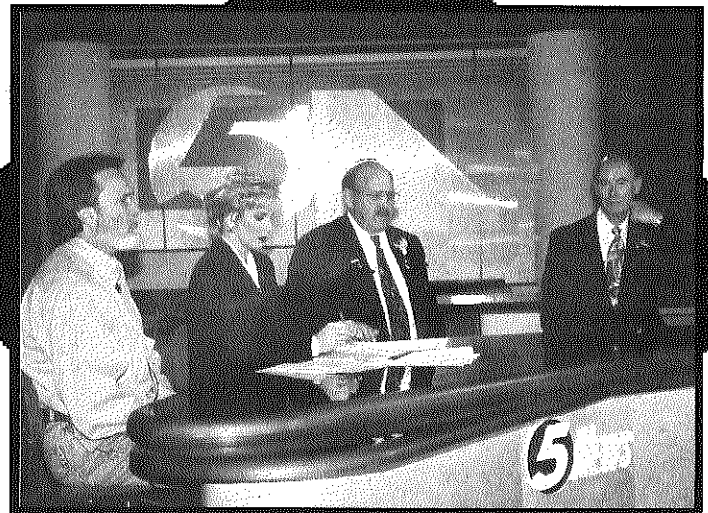
**THANKS FOR CARING - THANKS FOR SHARING**

## Elks of America Meet The Challenge!

National civic group the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks generously took action following Oklahoma City's tragic bombing, collecting over \$11,000 to aid the Oklahoma City Food Bank in disaster relief efforts.

Elk leaders on both the national and state level worked together urging comrades to "Meet the Challenge" in Oklahoma's hour of need. Within 48 hours of the bombing, an Emergency Relief Fund was established to collect donations which poured in from all over the state.

The Oklahoma City Food Bank is grateful to the national and statewide Elks members who generously gave to assist the relief effort.



April 22: The Oklahoma Elks Association presents Food Bank Executive Director, Rodney Bivens, with \$11,000 for disaster relief.

## Pillsbury Grants \$7,500 to Disaster Relief Effort

The Pillsbury Company Foundation made a generous grant of \$7,500 to the Oklahoma City Food Bank to assist with disaster relief efforts associated with the April 19 bombing in downtown Oklahoma City.

Following the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, the Oklahoma City Food Bank worked around the clock to collect, sort and distribute over 500,000 pounds of donated food and supplies to rescue workers and people displaced by the explosion.

David Leibensperger, Plant Manager of Pillsbury's Chickasha plant presented the \$7,500 check on behalf of plant employees, saying "We commend the rescue workers and the Oklahoma City Food Bank for their vital role in this recovery process. The prayers of our employees are with the families, loved ones and victims of this senseless tragedy."

The Pillsbury Company Foundation's grant helped the Food Bank meet disaster needs as well as continue daily distribution of food to 430 statewide agencies.

## Food Bank Aids Louisiana Flood Victims

Flood-stricken Louisiana residents received 15,000 pounds of disaster-relief food and supplies from the Oklahoma City Food Bank.

"After the OKC bombing, we knew the critical importance of immediate assistance for those people left homeless or otherwise affected by the Louisiana floods. We wanted to respond immediately to their food needs," said Oklahoma City Food Bank Executive Director Rodney Bivens.

Springtime storms battered Louisiana coastal areas throughout April and May, causing heavy flooding and destruction concentrated in the New Orleans area...



## Letter Carriers Triple Their Special Delivery!

Saturday, May 13, 1995, Oklahoma City-area letter carriers tripled expected drive results by collecting 180,000 pounds of food for distribution to the state's hungry by the Oklahoma City Food Bank.

500 local letter carriers collected food items along postal routes then volunteered their time delivering it to the Food Bank. Letter carriers, Boy Scouts and other volunteers sorted donated items for distribution by the Food Bank to over 400 agencies across central and western Oklahoma.

1995's Letter Carrier Food Drive involved 150,000 letter carriers in 3000 U.S. cities and topped last year's collection of 31 million pounds of food, making it the largest one day food drive in the United States.

The drive began in 1993 and collected 160,000 pounds of food in the Oklahoma City area in its first two years. The 1995 drive surpassed collections in 1993 and 1994 combined.

Oklahoma City residents gave 1 1/2 times more food items than people in other cities our size, showing the nation our legendary "Sooner Spirit."

The Food Bank thanks Letter Carriers and residents of Oklahoma City, Bethany, Del City, Midwest City, Moore, Mustang, Nichols Hills, Spencer, the Village and Warr Acres for their donations of time, energy and food.



Letter Carriers prepare to unload collected food at the Food Bank.

## Training Program is a SUCCESS!

In its second year, the Summer Youth Employment partnership between the Oklahoma City Food Bank and American Indian Training and Employment Program (AITEP) is a resounding success!

Doubling in size since its inception in 1994, the program enables eighteen American Indian teens to receive hourly pay and gain full-time work experience in the Office, Warehouse or product Reclamation/Salvage areas of the Oklahoma City Food Bank. Three additional summer youth workers are assigned to the Kid's Cafe program located at Presbyterian Urban Mission.

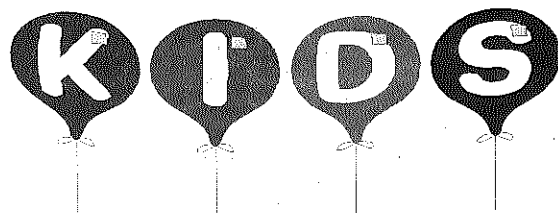
Sally White, Program Director of the Oklahoma City Food Bank, finds the program profitable for everyone, saying "Teens receive the work experience needed to enter today's job market, while the Food Bank gets the summer workers necessary to distribute food to 430 statewide agencies."

**AITEP/Food Bank Success Story:** Roy Blueback was a 1994 AITEP Summer Youth Worker at the Food Bank. When a permanent Warehouse position recently became available at the Food Bank, we were thrilled to hire Roy because of his warehouse experience and proven track record.

## Charity Golf Classic

The Oklahoma City Food Bank thanks the Tom Lange Company for sponsoring the United Foodbank Charity Golf Classic April 29 at Silverhorn Golf Club. The Oklahoma City Food Bank received \$1000 of the proceeds to benefit two local Kid's Cafe sites. Additionally, Presbyterian Urban Mission Kid's Cafe received a pledge of \$2500 for the purchase of playground equipment. Christ United Methodist Kid's Cafe received a pledge of \$2500 to purchase kitchen equipment.

The Oklahoma City Food Bank appreciates the work of Ted Carroll and the Tom Lange Company!



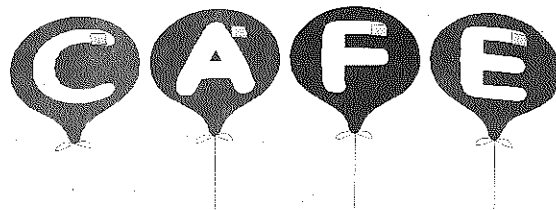
Franky was the laughingstock of my school cafeteria. He arrived for the subsidized school meals earlier than anyone else, outrageously unfashionable clothing barely covering his scarecrow body. In the buffet line he begged the workers for extra scoops of oatmeal or additional hamburger patties. The pitiful picture created by his huge eyes and shaggy hair must have aroused generosity in these women, because Franky always came away with a heaping tray of food.

Within seconds his plate was empty and he was circulating among the other students. "Do you want that biscuit?" he would ask, frantically rushing from table to table, bread spilling from his pockets and filling his arms. If someone offered him partially-eaten food he would take it hungrily. Poor Franky was a daily spectacle, enduring laughter both in the cafeteria and later in the day, when he would invariably be scolded by teachers for sleeping during classes. In 1981 Franky's undersized, embroidered, bell-bottomed trousers burned him into my memory; I'll always remember his hungry glances as he gathered and hoarded food scraps.

I wonder what Franky went home to at 3:20 pm every day. Evidently there was no food in his house. The school's free breakfast and lunch were likely his only meals of the day. Franky was often ill; at age twelve, numerous absences and poor performance had already forced him to repeat two grades. A program like Kid's Cafe would have transformed Franky from a malnourished object of ridicule to a healthy student benefiting from daily tutoring and attention.

Kid's Cafe programs daily provide a nutritious hot meal and after-school tutoring for needy children in at-risk areas. Participating children learn to prepare meals from items likely to be in their kitchens at home, plus they learn table manners, personal hygiene and daily living skills. During the summer months, Kid's Cafe ensures a hot meal for them as well as daily educational programs and a safe haven from the drugs and gang violence prevalent in their neighborhoods.

Presbyterian Urban Mission and Westminster Presbyterian Church are established Kid's Cafe sites, with remodeled kitchen facilities allowing them



to safely prepare and serve food for 60 and 30 children each (respectively). Christ United Methodist Church has completed its first school year as a Kid's Cafe site but is in need of extensive kitchen updating in order to meet City code standards.

Christ United Methodist served 25 children during the school year and 40 are expected for summer, if needed funding can be raised. All participating children live near the church in a Northeast Oklahoma City neighborhood where drugs and gang violence are rampant. Church and program leaders feel that the combination of Kid's Cafe and Christ United Methodist provide a supportive environment that is a safe haven for these kids. Kid's Cafe coordinator Valerie Bishop schedules her own job around Kid's Cafe, knowing that she "is the only supportive adult these kids have. Many of their parents are strung out on drugs and can't give them the care they need." Unless funding is provided for her program to continue through the summer, children who depend on Kid's Cafe during the school year for nutritious meals and guidance will have nowhere to go but the street.

If you would like to donate your time, expertise or funds please call Sally White of the Oklahoma City Food Bank at 236-8349.

## Chef & the Child National Coordinator Visits OKC

Pat Thibodeaux, National Coordinator of American Culinary Foundation's *Chef & the Child* program, visited Oklahoma City in response to the April 19 bombing disaster. She joined with a local ACF chapter in presenting \$1,500 to Presbyterian Urban Mission's Kid's Cafe program.

Casady School Chefs Geni Thomas and Debbie Adams joined Thibodeaux in touring two Oklahoma City Kid's Cafe locations where site leaders were available to discuss needs specific to each organization.

Thank you to Chef & the Child for their donation!

# Spotlights...

## COMMUNITY UNITY: SYSCO and the Oklahoma City Food Bank

Nationwide food distributor, Sysco's Norman offices, make a conscious effort to give back to the community, choosing the Oklahoma City Food Bank as one beneficiary.

Paul Morgan, President of SYSCO in Oklahoma, said "It is important for us to be responsible to the community. SYSCO participated in the Oklahoma City Food Bank's *Taste of the Nation* event because it benefits great causes like Kid's Cafe and the Second Helping's program."

What would a tasting event be without food? Food items for the 1995 *Taste of the Nation*, the Food Bank's elegant food tasting event attended by a record crowd of 900, were generously donated by SYSCO. SYSCO also provided all paper products and cutlery used at the event, plus a generous cash donation.

More recently, SYSCO was a major participant in the massive feeding effort mobilized to feed rescue workers and people displaced by the April 19 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. SYSCO was taking

part in the food show at the Myriad the week of April 17. Immediately following the bombing, SYSCO and other exhibiting companies converted their show into a large-scale feeding operation providing hot nutritious meals to thousands of people involved in the disaster. SYSCO donated leftover unserved food product to the Oklahoma City Food Bank for continued distribution in the disaster relief effort.

SYSCO continued to be involved in relief efforts. Knowing that outpourings of disaster donations to the Food Bank were causing our 2900 square foot freezers to burst at the seams, SYSCO saved the day by generously lending refrigerated trailers.

The Oklahoma City Food Bank truly appreciates SYSCO's community involvement!

## BritVil Pantry

The Food Bank spotlights one of OKC's largest food pantries, BritVil Pantry. BritVil, located at 8051 N Classen, was founded in 1991 by a coalition of eight churches located in the Village and Britton areas. These churches realized they were not able to respond individually to increasing numbers of people asking for food, but as an alliance they could form a high-volume feeding agency.

Ernestine Thomas, in cooperation with many volunteers, played a large role in the founding of BritVil and now wears many hats within the organization, including Chief Buyer and Treasurer. Ernestine comes to the Food Bank often, usually to supervise the band of pickup trucks and men who weekly descend upon the Food Bank to load BritVil's food; sometimes as much as 4500 pounds per week. Recently, the Food Bank visited BritVil to learn more about the fantastic agency run by Ernestine and her fellow volunteers.

BritVil Pantry serves between 1100 and 1400 people per month within three ZIP codes, grouped as families, individuals, elderly people and those associated with nearby mental health and drug recovery facilities. According to BritVil's records, 41% of their clients come for assistance one time only. 54% of clients are single mothers.

Families coming to the BritVil Pantry for assistance are screened by interviewers to determine their family size, food needs and preferences. The pantry provides food staples to families who then use the items to prepare their own meals. Families and interviewers together work from a "shopping list" to determine exactly what food items the client can best use. A typical order might contain packets of flour, sugar, rice, and beans, containers of peanut butter, jelly, syrup, and canned goods. Dairy products, eggs and baked goods are often available.

The pantry is completely volunteer-run, and is supported entirely by donations of money, equipment and some food. Mrs. Thomas says "Even though we've bought nothing but food, God had provided what we needed, sometimes before we knew we needed it. We are so blessed." BritVil receives discounted rental rates in their 2000 square foot warehouse and office space at 8051 N Classen, and keeps 1500 square feet of additional storage space.

Mrs. Winifred Owen, Co-Director and Coordinator of Interviewing, noted that many families come to BritVil when their food supplies run low, about two weeks after receiving their monthly food stamps and financial assistance. Owen and Thomas agreed "nothing raises our blood pressure so much as the popular notion that these women on government assistance are making lots of money by having children." 54% of BritVil's clients are single mothers with an average monthly income of \$458.58. After rent and utilities are paid, they have an average of \$155.51 left for food, medicine, clothing, etc.

Mrs. Thomas said "I keep asking myself, 'What would Jesus do?'"



Ernestine Thomas, co-founder of BritVil Pantry, and her husband Ray.

## Volunteering Around the World

Second Helpings Driver Gene Haney has a unique philosophy about his part-time job at the Oklahoma City Food Bank. "It's not work! God gave me this job," says Gene, who retired last year from a 30 year career as a forklift driver at GM, "so it's a blessing and a privilege to be able to help other people."

Though Gene works twelve hours per week at the Food Bank picking up donated prepared foods for delivery to local feeding programs with the Second Helpings program, he is also one of our most dedicated volunteers. During food drives and other events he puts in many extra hours volunteering at the Food Bank.

During the recent disaster, Gene worked late into the nights with other Food Bank staff and volunteers, picking up prepared food and delivering it to the rescue workers downtown. Though the Food Bank collected, sorted and distributed over 500,000 pounds of disaster relief donations, the efforts of volunteers like Gene ensured that no regular agency orders were missed.

"Seeing all the love downtown as people were helping with the rescue effort made me cry inside," said Gene.

The Food Bank will miss Gene during the month of June when he joins 15 Oklahomans travelling to Bosnia-Herzegovina to help rebuild war-damaged areas. "After our tragedy here, I'm looking forward to going there to help people who live through bombing every day," Gene says, "I hope that I can take them a little of the love that we felt here."

Gene has worked hard in preparation for his month-long mission trip, collecting donated items for the people he'll soon meet in Bosnia-Herzegovina, such as toys, toiletries, Bibles and baseball hats. Though his luggage is sure to be heavy, we are sure that his step will be light as he travels across the world to help other people.

# Taste of the Nation Triples Expectations!

"Taste of the Nation," the Oklahoma City Food Bank's annual food tasting event held in conjunction with Share Our Strength, occurred March 31, 1995 at the Cowboy Hall of Fame, and raised \$44,000 for hunger relief in Oklahoma and around the world.



A record 1200 people reserved places at the elegant buffet tasting event, skyrocketing attendance from 380 guests in 1994. "Entry 5" provided background music while guests sampled hors d'oeuvres, salads, soups, and entrees including ostrich, beef and quail. Twenty area chefs were on hand to dish up their creations for guests flocking around buffet tables.

Guests won many prizes including a trip to Las Vegas, a \$500 gift certificate from Harold's and items autographed by country music stars Lori Morgan and Vince Gill. B.C. Clark's "Diamond Mine" table sold special ice cubes containing cubic zirconium stones, but one lucky woman was especially thrilled when her husband's ice cube held a \$2000 diamond!

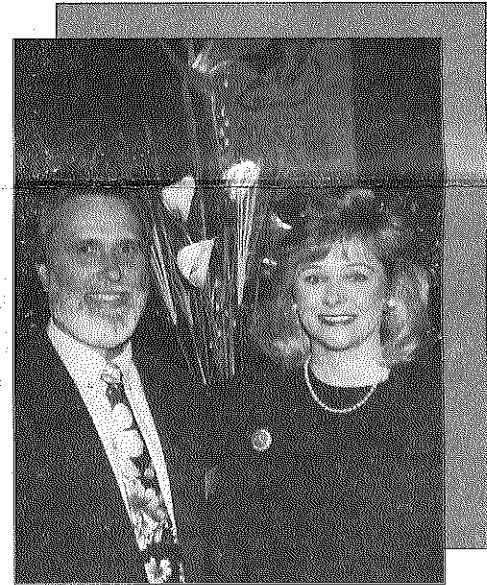
While chefs donated their time and artistic abilities, local food distributor SYSCO made available the "raw materials" needed for chefs to work their magic. The Oklahoma City Food Bank also wishes to thank American Express, B.C. Clark Jewelers, Liberty Bank, Great Plains Coca-Cola Bottling Company, 98.9 KYIS Radio, Reliance Wines and Spirits and Lipton for their generous underwriting of the event.

Eighty percent of proceeds from Taste of the Nation will be directed towards the local efforts of Second Helpings and Rural Distribution Programs. 20% is channeled to national and international programs through Share Our Strength, co-sponsor of the event.

This year's participating chefs include: Mark Acheson of Portobello; John Bennett of John Bennett Catering; Steve Bramon of Webster Wine Bar and Bistro; Ken Bradford of The Metro; Larry Brannon of Alberta's Tea Room; Ken Burkemper of Ideas in Ice; Alain Buthion of La Baguette; Michel Buthion of Cuisine 43; Mark Carpenter of OKC Medallion Hotel; Dustin Crenshaw of Iguana Lounge; Rebecca Fasseler of Legend's Restaurant; Laura Fenicchia of Ground Floor Cafe; Kurt Fleishfresser of The Coach House; Julio Gonzales of Twin Hills Golf and Country Club; Salah Omaira of OKC Golf and Country Club; Jim Sellers of The Catering Company; Don Thiery of Quail Creek Golf & Country Club; Geni Thomas of Casady School; Augustine Tito of Remington Park; Martin David von Stolk of The Eagles' Nest.



*Chefs: The culinary masterpieces created by these chefs made 1995's Taste of the Nation a success!*



*Food Bank Executive Director, Rodney Bivens visits with Oklahoma Lieutenant Governor Mary Fallin at Taste of the Nation.*



*Guests at Taste of the Nation sampled some of the best food in the Oklahoma City area.*

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