

State Community Award (2015-2016)

The H.O.M.E. Project (Homeless Outreach Mobilization Effort)

Congratulations to Harry J. Tucker Council 11780 for their efforts in serving homeless men in the Covington community.

Knights of Columbus Council 11780 started their involvement with the H.O.M.E. project 14 years ago. It began with a trio of Knights cooking for homeless men in shelters that were part of the CCS homeless program. Howard Baus (now deceased) and Jim Grad (also deceased) first started collecting donated food from various sources until they had enough to feed the men. Today the project is a fully operational program and facilitates the feeding of up to 30 men a full course meal 3 days a week, every week of the month.

There are five cooking teams that share the responsibilities among 30 or more Council members. Thanks to the conscious effort of the Knights they not only feed the men at the shelters but also collect enough food to keep the Covington Food Bank with full shelves, so they rarely turn away a person in need. A team of Knights go every week to local food distributors and pick up anywhere from 4,000 to 10,000 lbs of donated food. So far this year, they have collected over 390,000 lbs of donated food for use in their community.

To keep the program going, the Council has developed a familiar way of operation called "Next Man Up"..... if a brother Knight gets sick or passes there are several others waiting to take their place. This same group of men also started cooking breakfast for all the donors at the Council Blood Drives. Today the Council Blood Drives have become a great time for socializing with brothers while donating blood.

After the passing of both Howard Baus and Jim Grad, the Parish in conjunction with the Knights of Columbus held an auction to purchase a new trailer for their supplies and equipment. The most interesting thing about this program is that it just keeps giving. The joy of what the program does for the community encourages more and more Knights to get involved. The Council also sponsors a healing rosary for those in need of prayer and for other needs in their community. They hope that Brothers working together will make a difference in their community and encourage others to become active Knights.

Respectfully submitted by Michael McCloskey, State Community Program Chair