

TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2009

Mission Tuesday #13 and Steve!

It's Tuesday again...these weeks are flying by! I spent my day today at Mission of Hope, like I do every Tuesday. I was especially excited about today because my friend Steve, who has brain cancer, was going to join me for lunch at the Mission today!!

Arriving this morning, Phyllis informed me that she gave Tom the day off, Scott had found a full-time day job--so he won't be in much anymore, we were making and serving



lunch today, and she was glad I was there! Wow...I immediately knew it was going to be a busy day with a few less hands to help!

A wonderful cook who brings in a few meals a month, had already made up two roasters full of beef and noodles. They were warming in the roasters when I arrived at 9:30. Phyllis is the queen of seasoning, so she seasoned as I stirred the beef and noodles. It looked and smelled so good! :-)

As the morning went on, I restocked things like toilet paper, garbage bags, and things like that which we use on a daily basis. I made coffee (of course), and made sure the pastry tray stayed full. I made an attempt to say hello to every single person today. That felt good to do!

At 10:40, we began to put the rest of the meal together. Cottage cheese, hard rolls, desserts and we needed some sort of vegetable. Someone mentioned corn, and I had the idea of making my sister-in-law, Kelly's, corn casserole instead of just serving plain corn. Phyllis and I quickly went through the ingredient list (I was going from memory--not always a safe thing for me to do!), and we had everything on hand but the corn muffin mix. Will ran across the street to the grocery store and brought back eight boxes, as I began trying to more than quadruple the recipe in my

head. Two other volunteers, Jackie and Stefan, opened corn cans, sour cream containers, and muffin mix boxes, as I melted the butter and beat the eggs. We quickly combined everything together, put the mixture in two large pans and put them in the oven. I was praying it would turn out and taste like it should, and also for it to be done in time! (I was a tad-bit stressed!)



It was then time to go get Steve. I needed help in transporting Steve, so Steve G. and Stefan rode with me to the nursing home where Steve is staying...just a few blocks away from the Mission. We loaded Steve up in my car, put his wheelchair in my trunk, and the four of us headed back to the Mission, hoping to be in time for lunch! When we walked in the back door, the smell of corn casserole overtook me! It smelled so good...which I was happy about! :-)

Everyone was so happy to see Steve. He used to spend many afternoons at the Mission, so many people knew him. He ate lunch with a few of his friends, had a few cigarettes in the back alley with these friends, and he seemed to really enjoy himself. When the lunch line disappeared and I could eat, I joined him at his table. He can't move his left side, and he says he can't see. Just a few months ago he was fine...it's humbling to me to see how this cancer has really taken a toll on his physical body. However, he seemed mentally sharp today, which I was thankful for.

I have to say, lunch was great! Big Ray, Steve, Jackie, Stefan and I served lunch. The beef and noodles were amazing, and the corn casserole turned out very well (only by the grace of God...I was pleased)! Many people came back for seconds! We served 89 people lunch today, and there were NO leftovers at the end!

We took Steve back around 1:30. He was tired and ready for a nap. It was great to see him smile today and to hear him laugh. I cherish each time I get to see him. I thank God for Steve and his life today, and for the many lessons I have learned through him!

After cleaning up the kitchen and helping Jackie with dishes, it was time for me to leave and go pick up Ali and Zach from school. What a rewarding day it was for me...to have a hand in making the meal today, and to help make Steve's day extra-special! I will never forget the smiles on his face today! It's a day I will remember for a VERY long time!