

The gift of Thanksgiving: a Saugus tradition



Working behind the scenes of the Saugus United Parish Food Pantry were the wife and husband team of Debbie and Pastor Joe Hoyle of Cliftdale Congregational Church.



The Team: many of the volunteers who pitched in to help the Saugus United Parish Food Pantry's annual Thanksgiving food drive last Saturday.

Volunteers – including members of the Saugus High School Sachems football 'squad' and students from Saugus Public Schools and neighboring communities – assembled for four hours in the basement of Cliftdale Congregational Church last Saturday (Nov. 19) to continue the town's tradition of the Saugus United Parish Food Pantry's annual Thanksgiving food drive that makes the holiday special for local families who might not have a Thanksgiving Day meal. Each needy family that registered for the Thanksgiving Day meal received a turkey, fresh produce and other staples: boxed stuffing mix, boxed mashed potatoes, canned gravy, cranberry sauce and other food

to complete the meal. Families came by taxi and car to receive their meal donated by the food pantry, Saugus community and other contributors. (Saugus Advocate photos by Mark E. Vogler)



About a dozen Saugus High School Sachems football players turned out last Saturday to help deliver close to 100 turkey meals to needy Saugus and area homes. Here they are in the kitchen with the turkeys donated to needy families during the Saugus United Parish Food Pantry's annual Thanksgiving food drive.



Cliftdale Congregational Church Pastor Joe Hoyle checked out the bags of fixings to go with a turkey for each of the recipients of the Saugus United Parish Food Pantry's annual Thanksgiving food drive last Saturday, Nov. 19. (Saugus Advocate photos by Mark E. Vogler)



Jessica Rodriguez (center) showed up with her two sons – Jordan Rodriguez, a freshman on the football team (left) and Isaiah Rodriguez, a junior on the football team (right) – to carry out the Thanksgiving meals to appreciative families as they arrived at Cliftdale Congregational Church.

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Pictured gathering the turkeys for this year's annual Thanksgiving food drive are David Odgers, Mitch Boyer and Michael Fiscale.



Happy to help the Thanksgiving Food Drive are Dolores Barry and Michael Fiscale, longtime volunteers at the Saugus United Parish Food Pantry.



Some young kids came to help. Pictured from left to right are Alena Bruzzese, a sixth-grader at Saugus Middle-High School; Kendall Powers, a fifth-grader at Belmonte STEAM Academy; and Alena's mom, Desiree Bruzzese, who thought that volunteering to help at this year's Thanksgiving food drive would be the neighborly thing to do because they live close to Cliftdale Congregational Church.



Two volunteer regulars at the Saugus United Parish Food Pantry, Sandy Milano and Stephen Manley, are also huge advocates for veterans.



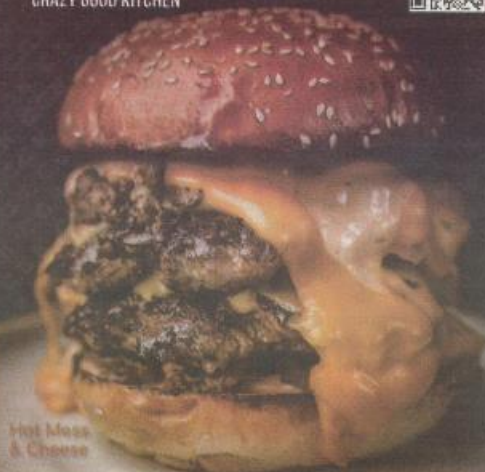
Longtime Cliftdale Congregational Church parishioner Diane McKinley picked out select food items to go with Thanksgiving meals for 100 needy families.

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