



SUMMER 2016

NEWS FROM THE DESC

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SAVE THE DATE FOR



**Saturday, November 19th, 2016
6:30 at The Haskell Building**

FROM BOARD PRESIDENT CLAY MEUX



CLAY AT BUBBA'S BACK 2015

Dear DESC Supporters and Friends,

This is my first official letter as board president elect and I am excited to announce that DESC has entered a new phase. I would like to start with saying how grateful I am for our amazing staff and volunteers. We have a lot of new faces at DESC, including our interim executive director, Dave Tuttle. Dave has supported our wonderful staff, and our new volunteers (see page 7) as DESC embraces these wonderful changes.

Our Food Program Grows. As you will read on page 3, our food program has been enhanced with the addition of fresh food, some meats and perishable goods. For many years a grant from the Lucy Gooding Foundation has helped us feed the hungry in Jacksonville with basic, nutritious foodstuffs. Now those food bags leaving DESC are a little fuller and thanks to our food partners, The Lucy Gooding Foundation, Farm Share and Feeding America. Our families have been blessed with more food options.

Where's Bubba? I am excited to say that Bubba is back! That old catfish has symbolized how DESC serves the poor and hungry in Jacksonville and this year look for Bubba all around Jacksonville. Bubba is going to be making surprise appearances as we near our annual event, "Where's Bubba" scheduled for November 19th at the Haskell Building. Go to www.descjax.org/bubba to learn more.

It's Electric! Who would have thought that men in tights, aka super heroes Captain Underwear and Commander Current, would lend their superpowers to help our DESC families keep the lights on during these hot summer days? The Great Electric Emergency was a big success and we were proud to announce that we were able to help families stay in their homes, with electricity, during these dangerous summer months.

As a preacher's kid, I look back over all the good things happening at DESC and I know it is the hand of God that both sustains and blesses this ministry. My thanks to all supporters, for DESC would not be able to serve God's children without your support.

Gratefully,
Clay Meux



MAKING
A DIRECT
DIFFERENCE

By fulfilling Jesus' mission to the poor and homeless by bringing peace and hope, DESC, a faith-based organization, uplifts families and individuals in real-time crisis. By providing emergency food, clothing, and financial assistance, our dedicated staff and volunteers offer our neighbors a helping hand during hardship.

We provide care responsibly.

For more than 30 years, we have refined our process to serve countless individuals. Through strategic partnerships with key organizations and thoughtfully managed systems, we maximize our impact within the community. descjax.org



BETH WILSON

FARM FRESH NUTRITION

For many years the heart of our food program has been funded by the Lucy Gooding Charitable Trust. Families on the brink of hunger have received bags of food filled with nutritional food items like peanut butter, milk, macaroni and cheese, stew and cereal to feed their children and family members. Every day families have lined up at the DESC doorway to receive this food. We could not have helped so many without this generous grant.

A long-held dream of DESC has been that we could also provide fresh food and produce for our clients, but we never had the refrigeration needed for these food items. Thanks to the generous donors Linda and Vince Ferrigno and Harriet Dame, we were able to purchase additional cold storage for our clients. As a result of this increased storage capacity and a partnership with Farmshare and Feeding America, we are now able to provide fresh eggs to our families, as well as more fruits and vegetables.



DESC NEEDS YOUR EGG CARTONS

Next time you finish a carton of eggs, don't throw it out! DESC is in need of the cartons in order to distribute eggs to your neighbors in need. DESC receives the eggs in bulk, so the cartons are wonderful because the cartons provide a safe and convenient way for the clients to transport the eggs home. If you can help DESC with a donation of egg cartons, they can be dropped off at 215 N. Ocean Street, Jacksonville, FL 32202 Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to noon and 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.



THE GREAT ELECTRIC EMERGENCY

Thank you to everyone who supported The Great Electric Emergency!

We were so excited to introduce a new hero in DESC's mission, Commander Current. Along with Captain Underwear and many of you, we were able to raise money needed to keep more than 70 families in their homes this Summer.

The event, held on May 17th and hosted by Mellow Mushroom in Avondale, brought together ten teams to raise money and increase awareness for DESC. Team supporters were able to "Text-to-Donate" in the weeks leading up to the event. Together with attendees, we "lit up" homes for families, raising more than \$26,000.

Along with raising money for financial assistance, we also met our stretch goal of raising money to buy DESC a Whirlpool 17.7 cubic feet freezerless refrigerator and a Whirlpool 17.7 cubic feet upright freezer. Thanks to our partnership with Farm Share and Feeding America (see article on page 3), we are able to provide more farm-fresh food to our clients. These refrigerators will help us store more fresh produce for our clients, including eggs and chicken.

We can't wait for next year when we introduce another DESC hero.



THERESA BENNETT HILL AND HER DAUGHTER, EMMA



COMMANDER CURRENT (SAM MITCHELL) AND CAPTAIN UNDERWEAR (ROBERT REID) WITH HARRIET DAME



JULIE HANDLEY WITH LINDA AND VINCE FERRIGNO



JUDY DAVIS AND BILL DUNFORD



COLE PEPPER



ROGERS TOWERS CAME OUT IN FULL FORCE



FRAN MOULDER WITH HER GRANDCHILDREN, ANNA, ASHTON, AND CHRISTAIN MOULDER



TRISTA AND DANIEL CARRAHER



JEANNE SHOBER



JIM MOSS, BILL AND JUDY FACKLER (LEFT TO RIGHT)

RICE IS NICE!



SCOTT MEYER FROM CONGAREE AND PENN DELIVERING FARM FRESH RICE



Late in the spring DESC got a call about the need for rice. While macaroni and cheese is one of the all-time favorites and most requested food items, rice is often requested by our families. "I believe as many as 40 out of 100 people who ask for food want rice," commented Roger Snyder, the man behind the food storage organization. "When people see that they are getting rice, they are thrilled."

The rice DESC sourced for our clients is grown and milled by Scott Meyer, a local rice farmer. Mr. Meyer mills fresh rice every Thursday and, each week, delivers 300 pounds of rice that DESC's distributes to our clients.

"As much as people who are hungry often want meat and potatoes," reports Dave Tuttle, "our clients are almost speechless when they see those bags of rice in their shopping bags." Each client receives at least two pounds of rice which can make up to seven meals for a small family. When mixed with other vegetables or meats, families get healthy, fresh, nutritious and tasty foods.

SOLES 4 SOULS: THE NEED FOR MEN'S SHOES

By Beth Wilson

Here at the Clothing Center of DESC we serve the homeless and needy population of all of Jacksonville three mornings a week, average 50 families each morning. Approximately one third of our clients are homeless. As we are centrally located between about 6 downtown shelters, we service most of their clients. They all know about us. A lot of them come regularly because they cannot keep up with much personal stuff. As many do not have anywhere to store their personal items, their things are stolen frequently. Our biggest requests from this population is for jeans & t-shirts, warm coats, blankets, backpacks, toiletry items and SHOES.

The majority of our new clothing comes from Dignity U Wear. The rest of everything comes from generous donors and clothing drives. We find that we receive a lot of women's clothing donations, but very few men's things, and hardly ever MEN'S SHOES! Our clients are literally walking the streets in "holy" shoes, flip flops or barefoot. Many suffer from diabetes and have swelling, blisters and serious foot problems. Our men's most requested item is either for tennis shoes or work boots. Many labor companies will not hire them unless they already have boots.

90 days ago, we requested approximately 100 pairs of men's tennis shoes and boots in sizes 9-12 from **Soles 4 Souls**, a non-profit out of Tennessee. We received 100 pairs of some of the NICEST, NEW men's shoes in excellent condition, for which we paid only the shipping. A couple of these pairs were brand-new steel-toed work boots! The rest were brand new tennis shoes. In the first day, we gave away about 33 pairs. Needless to say, our supply of shoes will not last more than about three weeks.



DESC clients, Bobby, Tony, and Pravin, excited to receive new shoes.

Still, the biggest surprise and expressions of gratitude are from the guys asking for work boots!!! As many of our clients attempt to be employed by the labor pools each morning, it is only the men with work boots that are recruited for the higher paying construction jobs. And without boots, they have no expectation of being hired on to any ongoing temporary or permanent building jobs. We were able to give away several pairs of work boots to clients who were extremely grateful and eager to go to work!!! Also we gave away dozens of new tennis shoes. I cannot adequately express how grateful our team of volunteers and our clients are to Soles 4 Souls for the opportunity to share 100 pairs of brand new men's shoes.



BRIGHT NEW FACES

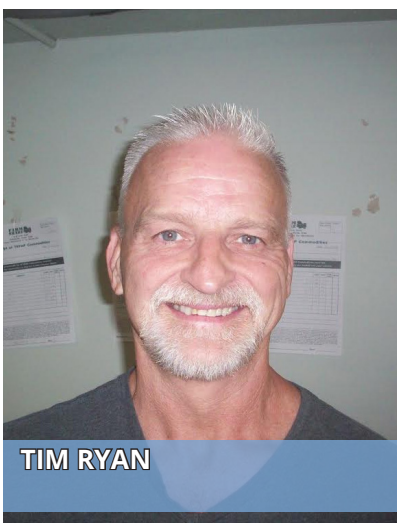
We love our volunteers and cannot operate without them. That is why we are so blessed to welcome new volunteers this summer. DESC was featured in an article in the Florida Times Union and in a TV spot on Channel 4. These features brought several volunteers to DESC. Along with our other volunteers, they are helping us in the food pantry & clothing ministry and by transporting food, taking financial assistance calls & bringing discipline to our clients through listening and compassion. DESC is extremely grateful for their roles in helping DESC proclaim the love of Jesus Christ.

Please visit our Facebook page at facebook.com/DESCjax and join us in welcoming our new volunteers.

- ♥ Paul Bent
- ♥ Joye Finch
- ♥ Chase Jenks
- ♥ Tim Ryan
- ♥ Eileen Smith
- ♥ Laura Smith
- ♥ Sherrie Webb
- ♥ Warner Webb
- ♥ Mia Williams
- ♥ Marvin Wiltshire



WARNER WEBB AND CHARLIE REID
(FROM LEFT TO RIGHT)



TIM RYAN

When Care Creates Opportunity

By Nancy Chablin

A young woman came in needing shoes. She was living at IM Sulzbacher but had a job interview. We were able to give her shoes, a purse and a nice dress. She came over to show them to me before she left. She was so excited.

She didn't get that job – but she kept coming in. Every now & then she thanked me for letting her come in to cool off, get some water and read a magazine.

I didn't see her for about a month. When she came back, I didn't recognize her. She was clean, well groomed and smiling. She had worn her DESC clothes to four more job interviews and had been hired at a temp agency.

She now has moved into her own apartment with two girlfriends and says she "thanks God all day everyday" for the kind people at DESC.

OUR ALWAYS NEED LIST

There are always core items that our clients ask for when they come in. Below is our current list.

- Children's clothing for all elementary school age sizes
- Men's work boots
- Men's large shirts and jeans
- Backpacks and Totes
- Toiletries like deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and shampoos and conditioners

You can see our updated Always Need List on our website at www.descjax.org/needs.



DESC

Downtown Ecumenical Services Council

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elvamarketing.com



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Jacksonville, FL 32202

(904) 358-7955

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facebook.com/DESCjax

WE HELP...

DESC was founded in 1981 by churches in urban Jacksonville to be an emergency service ministry striving to provide food, clothing and financial assistance to working families struggling to live at or below the poverty level.

PEOPLE IN NEED.

DESC helps those with emergency needs regardless of age, gender or race. Financial assistance is limited to cases involving children, the elderly or those afflicted with disabilities or illness.

Downtown Ecumenical Services Council
215 N. Ocean Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202

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U.S. POSTAGE
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Permit No. 2881

Return Service Requested

LET YOUR CHRISTMAS SPIRIT SHINE BRIGHTER!

Support families in need this holiday season by sending DESC Christmas cards. Order online at descjax.org/christmas.



As we celebrate the birth of our Lord, may we share with others the love He came to bring.