Words to Live by: ‘Have fun, do good’

The volunteers in the Wednesday hunger-relief kitchen crew at Second Helpings are bound by an unofficial motto: Have fun, do good.

The affection this group has for each other is apparent after spending a few minutes with them. They clearly enjoy each other and the work they are doing. Their friendship and camaraderie are apparent and very contagious.

But more important, as volunteer Dale Tenet says, “We are doing good.”

While the Wednesday crew varies each week, there are definitely regulars, including long-time friends Dale Tenet and John Spitznogle, both retired GM workers. On a recent Wednesday, Dale and John joined with Jim O’Brien, Maria Kretschmer and Nancy Dobbins to dice up roughly 42 10-pound hams and cut up whole turkeys. Their morning-long shift is the first step in preparing the next day’s meals.

Maria Kretschmer’s stint in the kitchen was her second time volunteering at Second Helpings. “I have time and wanted to do something that makes me feel good,” she said. “This is very rewarding.”

For Nancy Dobbins, who wrestled whole turkeys, she noted that the meals provide nutrition to children and adults who otherwise would not have the kinds of meals Second Helpings provides. She’s been a volunteer for a year and a half.

Another volunteer, Jim O’Brien, was recruited by fellow Lebanon resident John Spitznogle. He filled the morning shift, his third time volunteering, chopping meat.

Dale and John are not only Wednesday mainstays in the Second Helpings kitchen; they contribute in other ways. Through his own and local Knights of Columbus member activities, Dale provides more than 4,000 pounds of tomatoes, zucchini, green peppers and green beans to the Second Helpings Kitchen last year. John also delivers meals on his way home to St. Joseph Catholic Church and Hattie Stokes Elementary School in Lebanon.

To become a volunteer or for more information, contact Becky Fox, director of volunteers, at 317.632.2664 Ext. 11 or email her at becky@secondhelpings.org.

For an expanded version of this story, check out our blog at www.secondhelpings.org/blog.
Chef Ralph Comstock of Ivy Tech presents Class #54 graduate Wynette Nance with an award for her winning soup. As formidable as Chef Carl may be to Second Helpings students, he says, “Chef Ralph is the only person who could call me out in my kitchen and get away with it.”

On November 20, 2009, Second Helpings Culinary Job Training Class #56 graduated. Along with the audience of families, friends and Second Helpings staff, Chef Jeff Bricker from Ivy Tech Community College applauded and congratulated the new graduates. Chef Bricker had a special place at the graduation, not only as a regular guest instructor for the culinary program, but also as representative of Class #56’s key financial sponsor, Ivy Tech.

Over many years, the partnership between Ivy Tech and Second Helpings has grown into a complex and multi-layered relationship. At its core, however, the partnership is simple—it’s about opening new doors to people ready to transform their lives.

In addition to the financial sponsorship of Class #56, Ivy Tech generously participates in Second Helpings annual food and wine event, Harvest. Chef Paul Vida and Chef Bricker served delicious pastries and hors d’oeuvres at the event.

Through Ivy Tech’s long-standing contribution to the Culinary Job Training program, students gain special insights into critical skills, as well as exposure to other culinary professionals. Ivy Tech instructors serve as guest teachers, providing special lectures and hands-on practice in everything from soups to breads to cake decorating.

Ivy Tech takes this support of Second Helpings students one step further by opening the door to additional education and career preparation. Each Second Helpings graduate receives six hours of college credit, should he or she decide to attend classes at Ivy Tech.

As Ivy Tech says goodbye to their Chancellor, Dr. Hank Dunn, Second Helpings is also bidding a fond farewell to him. Dr. Dunn has been an essential community partner and a member of the Second Helpings board of directors. As Second Helpings Culinary Job Training Program in his bread-making class. Among Second Helpings staff and volunteers, the day of the bread-making class is a favorite. The building is filled with the scent of delicious fresh-baked rolls and loaves.

Chef Jeff Bricker demonstrates proper rolling technique to Class #57 of Second Helpings’ Culinary Job Training Program in his bread-making class. Among Second Helpings staff and volunteers, the day of the bread-making class is a favorite. The building is filled with the scent of delicious fresh-baked rolls and loaves.

Congratulations to Class #56
(Front row, left to right): Gina M. Powell, Angela L. Huggins-Gainer, Raymond O. Westmoreland Jr., Shawn N. Weaver. (Back row, left to right): Chef Carl Conway, David V. (Vinnie) Hyde Jr., Andre K. Tompkins, Tyrone L. Burris II.

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Colts in the Kitchen

Last November, the students of Second Helpings Culinary Job Training Program had two special celebrity visitors. As part of their team’s community commitment to service, Mike Hart (#32) and John Gill (#69) from the Indianapolis Colts learned alongside students as Elizabeth Garber taught a class on making chocolate truffles.

Elizabeth, who owns the Best Chocolate in Town, serves on the Second Helpings Advisory Council and contributes special instruction to students, welcomed Mike and John to roll up their sleeves and learn about the life of a Second Helpings student.

They wasted no time getting their hands dirty, chopping chocolate with students and providing some valuable lessons on how not to toast coconut. (Some snobs may have been burned in the truffle-making process.)

Patty comes to Second Helpings with a background in marketing and a passion for food. Previously, she worked with Red Gold, Stokely Van Camp and CFS Continental, which became Sysco. In her spare time, she also founded the Slow Food Indy group, along with her husband, Conrad.

With her expertise and energy, Patty looks forward to reaching out to each recipient agency in the coming months. Ensuring that individual agency needs are being met, Patty will check in on key aspects of Second Helpings service like nutritional needs, as well as quantity and frequency of meals. She’s also excited to explore new partnerships with agencies in need of Second Helpings meals.

This focus on agency needs, combined with her experiences and passion for helping others, makes Patty a perfect match for this position. Or, as she puts it, “This role is just wonderful for me.”

New Agency Liaison

Second Helpings welcomes a new staff member, Patty Cortellini, to the position of agency liaison. Essentially, the agency liaison makes sure that Second Helpings does the best job to meet the needs of the agencies we serve. With meal production up 20% over last year and demand growing, it’s essential for us to work closely with our recipient agencies.

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Second Helpings by the Numbers

IN 2009, SECOND HELPINGS:
Rescued: 1,688,937
Distributed: 619,037 meals
Redirected: 931,069 pounds of food
Graduated: 36 students

SINCE INCEPTION WE HAVE:
Rescued: 12,778,707
Distributed: 4,649,992 meals
Redirected: 6,109,511 pounds of food
Graduated: 371 students

www.secondhelpings.org

Eliminating Hunger. Empowering People.