

WEEK THREE

Jean Webster of Jean Webster's Kitchen

What kind of person feeds Atlantic City's hungry everyday for over twelve years out of her own home? Jean Webster.

Born on January 7, 1935 in New York City, Jean moved to Atlantic City in 1939. She received her GED in 1954. She began her career at the Marlborough Blenheim Hotel in 1952. Through hard work and dedication, Jean became Atlantic City's first female professional cook in 1956. In 1980 she accepted a position with Caesars and became the city's first female Sous Chef. From 1984 to 1994 Jean worked with the Playboy Hotel and Casino, Atlantis Hotel and Casino, and Trump Taj Mahal Hotel and Casino as a Sous Chef. She retired from the Trump Taj Mahal in 1994; however, her dedication and hard work does not end there.



In 1986, Jean saw a man searching for food in a garbage can and she invited him into her home for a hot meal. From that day to the present, she has been assisting the hungry and homeless in Atlantic City. (Jean refers to the homeless and hungry in Atlantic City as her guests).

Presently, Jean is serving breakfast and lunch to up to 400 guests daily. Despite having twelve heart attacks, Jean has foregone having the much needed open heart surgery so she can continue to care for her 'guests.'

Jean prepares the "heartiest food in town" in the newly refurbished kitchen of the historic 1856 First Presbyterian Church at Pennsylvania and Pacific Avenues in Atlantic City. The church's beautiful chapel doubles as a warm, friendly dining room where 150 people at a time are served hot, generous "sit-down meals" in a family-like setting. (two or more settings, Monday through Friday). She personally supervises and trains her volunteers, who are always needed, to prepare and serve meals. Inspirational sing-a-longs and messages precede each meal. Jean treats her guests with the greatest dignity, knowing that self-respect is vital to self-improvement.



But the story doesn't stop here - Jean's hard work goes beyond cooking and serving meals. Jean provides her guests with much needed love, hope, concern, self-esteem, faith, generosity, and human kindness. It should be mentioned that Jean has an amazing record of leading her guests to jobs, alcohol and drug abuse counseling, housing and job training opportunities.

Jean's tireless efforts have impacted many people in Atlantic City. This past year alone, she has cooked and served 100,000 meals and has counseled several thousand people helping each in her own way. When asked why she feeds and comforts her guests, she states: "*She does this for the Glory of God.*"

Thought for the Day

Sunday: Thirty-one million people live in households that experience hunger or the risk of hunger. This represents one in ten households in the USA (USDA)

Monday: The Food Research Action Council estimates that four million children under the age of twelve go hungry in the United States and that another 9.6 million are at risk of hunger.

Tuesday: The Second Harvest National Food Bank Network released a study in 1998 showing that the food bank network of emergency food providers serve more than 25.7 million people daily.

Wednesday: The same 1998 Second Harvest National Food Bank study found that children make up a significant portion of emergency food clients. Nearly 38% of emergency food clients are 17 or younger.

Thursday: And, the 1998 Second Harvest National Food Bank study found that 38.6% of those seeking emergency food assistance were from working families.

Friday: In the USA, one out of eight children under the age of twelve goes to bed hungry every night.

Saturday: Inadequate food energy intake can cause problems with attention, concentration, learning and other important daily activities. Repeated episodes of inadequate food energy intake can lead to cumulative deficits in learning, lower academic achievement, higher rates of school failure and even cognitive impairment.

Getting Involved

Jean Kim's "End Homelessness" Program



Jean Kim, a Presbyterian Minister whose ministry has focused on working with homeless women, has been traveling across the country to encourage PC(USA) congregations to become involved in efforts to end homelessness. For more information on how to get your church involved email Jean at: jeankim@seanet.com

Ask Jean for her 7 steps to end Homelessness

Get involved or get your church involved in your local food pantry or soup kitchen by making regular food donations and by volunteering to work in the food pantry or soup kitchen.

Get involved in Jean Webster's Kitchen

- send a volunteer group to work in Jean's Kitchen
- make a donation to the Friends of Jean Websters

For more information log onto our local Hunger Program website:

www.geocities.com/donegalpbyhunger (scroll down & click page two)

or contact Donegal Presbytery's Hunger Action Enabler

Rick Schmidt at 717/252-2970 or frederick_schmidt@yahoo.com