

POVERELLO NEWS



Poverello
House

SAVE THE DATE

**POVERELLO
HOUSE 2016**

— FOURTH —
ANNUAL

5K

WOODWARD PARK
FRESNO

**RUN FOR
MEALS**



TIMED RACE START TIME - 7:15AM
SATURDAY, MAY 14, 2016

WOODWARD PARK
FRESNO, CA

Register online at

POVERELLOHOUSE.ORG/5KRUN

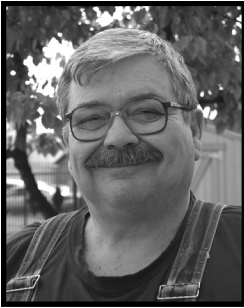
or call **559-498-6988** for event details.



#RunForMeals

APRIL 2016 (559) 498-6988

WWW.POVERELLOHOUSE.ORG



Thanks to the High Speed Rail Authority, vast swaths of Chinatown, where I began Poverello in the 1970s, have ceased to exist. I've walked and driven Chinatown streets and alleys so often, for so many decades, that I've probably covered a trip or two around the world in sheer mileage. Thus, it's odd, and kind of distressing, to see how altered it all is.

These days, I don't drive, but as Mary tools me around, we pass my old haunts. There is empty space and rubble where there once were bars or businesses, and it makes me a little sad.

Lately, life itself seems like a high speed rail train whizzing by me, and I sometimes feel like it's leaving me behind. Here's an example: I trained for years in an apprenticeship to become a photoengraver. It was a good profession that paid the bills and enabled me to provide for my family while I was getting Poverello up and running. I got out of the business just before it changed. With the advent of digital graphics, photoengravers became like buggy-whip manufacturers after the invention of the automobile—master craftsmen in a trade that was no longer required. It was a little shocking when I learned that my old profession was no more.

Poverello was a good cushion for me after I retired from the Fresno Bee, because it gave me purpose. It seemed as though I would always be needed here; and I suppose I still am. But lately I've felt a little disconnected as my health gets worse. I have less

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energy, I'm certainly not nimble on my feet, I hurt all over, and I'm generally more impatient.

So, I sometimes ask myself, am I washed up? Is my presence even necessary here anymore? We have a great executive director, a board, and a staff that would keep the place running if I dropped off the edge of the world, and frankly, I'm baffled and overwhelmed at how complex the organization has become.

I comfort myself by choosing to think that I'm "seasoned" by maturity rather than being over the hill. Working here for forty-three years, I've seen enough tragedies to fill several lifetimes, and had countless disappointments. Some of the dreams I had for Poverello proved to be just fantasies of a young, enthusiastic but naïve mind. I've had to accept that I was often wrong, do things in ways I would have not initially chosen to do, and I've eaten a fair amount of crow.

If age and experience breed wisdom, then I suppose I'm wiser. The funny thing is, I know I'm old (trying to get out of bed each day is a great reminder), and I know I'm not as inexperienced as I was ten, twenty or forty years ago, but there's something that nags at me: I feel old physically but not emotionally. Although the insecurities, anxieties and fears of my young self are in the past, they aren't entirely absent from my present life.

So when I feel like maybe I don't have a role here anymore, I have to remember that part of that feeling is the old tapes playing in my head. I also have to accept that with age, roles change, and it's not necessarily a bad thing; it just is what it is.

Whenever I can hobble over to Poverello (or drive my golf cart), people are glad to see me, and there's always some homeless person to whom I can tell a joke or two and cheer up. I still can listen to someone no one else has the time for, and because I don't move too quickly, that person has a captive audience. I may be old, but I still seem to be able to make people smile, and at a place where smiles are rare, that's something, at least.

Maybe it's time to change my job title to "Founder Emeritus," still connected, but a little less involved. I'm encouraged by the quotation from Mother Teresa: "Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love." I may not be capable

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of great things anymore, but I still can do those little things, and maybe that will make a difference to someone.

Amici Del Poverello Presents: Dinner with Elvis!

Elvis may be running for city council this year, but he still has time to swivel his hips for Poverello House! On Friday, May 6, 2016, join us from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Pardini's (located at 2257 West Shaw Avenue, Fresno 93711) for another **Dinner with Elvis**, featuring the FABULOUS Jeremy Pearce! Tickets for the event are \$50.

Lots of food and fun will accompany the music of The King. There will be a raffle and silent auction. The raffle tickets are \$2 each, or six tickets for \$10 (what a bargain!). The prizes for the raffle are \$500 for first place, second place \$250 and third place \$100.

Don't miss this great event sponsored by the Amici Del Poverello Guild. All proceeds go to help the mission of Poverello House.

RSVP by April 20,

2016 to Mary Lou Cancio, 658 W. Ashcroft Avenue, Clovis 93612, or call Mary Lou at (559) 291-8375.



Charity, America and the Central Valley

Karl Zinmeister is vice president for publications at the Philanthropy Roundtable. In a recent article in *Imprimis* magazine entitled

“Charitable Giving and the Fabric of America,” Zinmeister chronicled the rich history of charity in America, and the deep impact it has had on the people of our nation. Charitable contributions to science, the arts, religion and a host of organizations devoted to helping the poor have shaped our country and blessed the world outside of our borders, argues Zinmeister. He concludes, “Private charitable giving and the spirit of volunteerism have been essential bulwarks of the American character, and they remain indispensable to our national success.”

Zinmeister has spent much of his professional life examining the unique role of charity in America, so he would not be surprised by the extraordinary generosity of the California Agricultural Leadership Foundation when their Class 45 presented Poverello House with a \$110,000 donation. The money will be used to purchase a food truck that will further expand Poverello’s reach.

The California Agricultural Leadership Program is an advanced leadership development experience for mid-career agricultural leaders. California Agricultural Leadership fellows, as the organization calls participants, study leadership theory, effective communication, motivation, critical and strategic thinking, change management, emotional intelligence and complex social and cultural issues.

This food truck that will be purchased with this donation will have a very specific purpose: to be used in providing hot meals and fresh produce to rural areas in the San Joaquin Valley, where some of the most under-served and poorest communities in the Central Valley are located. In addition to purchasing the food truck, the funds will be used to provide stipends for the men in the Resident Program operating the truck and any project expenses, until it is self-sustaining. Justin Morehead of Class 45 stated that “We’ve fundraised for the upfront cost to get it going and eventually the Poverello House will take on the annual maintenance costs and everything that goes into keeping the truck going.”

The money for the project was donated to Class 45 by individuals and organizations throughout California. “The project has been so successful because of the help we received from the agricultural community across the state—it’s a real testament to the generosity of

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people in agriculture and their willingness to help those who are in need,” said Morehead.

“Our biggest concern is that not enough rural areas are getting nutritious meals cooked, prepped and served,” said Cruz Avila, executive director, Poverello House. “We want to reach the ag community and we know we can help them on a bigger level by providing hot nutritious meals.”

We’re grateful to The California Agricultural Leadership Program for this extraordinary donation. Agriculture is a vital part of the Valley’s heritage and economy, and at Poverello we’re keenly aware of the generosity of the ag community, from this donation to the countless food and monetary contributions we receive from farmers, packing houses, and every imaginable kind of agricultural concern. Charitable giving and volunteerism have not only, as Zinmeister says, “...been essential bulwarks of the American character,” but they are also part and parcel of the Valley agricultural community’s character.

Volunteers Help Beautify Poverello

On Martin Luther King Day, January 18, 2016, over 120 volunteers from Kaiser Permanente, Hands On Central California, and The Home Depot met at Poverello House for a day of donated labor. These great folks painted and cleaned at Poverello House, and weeded, installed planters, and put in new foliage at the Village of Hope, our transitional shelters for the homeless. All this, in spite of a steady rain!



Often, the day-to-day operations take up so much time and energy that maintenance of the facility gets neglected. That’s one of the reasons volunteers are so precious to us. They come and do the sometimes tedious work that we often don’t have time to do, and in



the process of sprucing things up, lift the spirits of both our staff and the homeless people who use our services every day.

So our thanks go out to not only the individuals who came out in January and gave of themselves, but also Kaiser

Permanente, Hands On Central California, and the The Home Depot for encouraging their people to help. It was a blessing to us and to our clients.

5K Run for Meals May 14, 2016

Come to Woodward Park Saturday, May 14, 2016 for a spring run/walk to help the homeless! Registration will begin at 6:30 a.m. The 5K run will take off at 7:15 a.m. and the walk will begin at 7:30 a.m. Refreshments will be provided for runners/walkers at the end of the race.

Join us for a pancake breakfast at Applebee's (8430 N. Friant Road) after the event. Purchase a \$10 pancake breakfast ticket and enjoy pancakes, eggs, sausage, juice and coffee. When you buy this ticket you will be providing an additional 14 meals to those in need. Breakfast will be held from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Packet pick-up information: Thursday and Friday, May 12 & 13 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Sole to Soul River Park, 160 E Paseo Del Centro, Fresno CA 93720. We encourage packet pick-up, but will have them available on race day.

Need more information? Give us a call at (559) 498-6988.

To donate online, visit our website at www.poverellohouse.org

Remember, we now take credit card donations. Please see the enclosed envelope for instructions.

Poverello House

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P.O. Box 12225
Fresno, CA 93777-2225
(559) 498-6988

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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

Who Are We? A nonprofit, nondenominational organization.

Our Mission: Believing in the dignity of every person, at Poverello House we work to enrich the lives and spirits of all who pass our way by stewarding the resources made available to us through Providential and community support.

Governance: We have been operating since 1973 and are governed by a Board of Directors, consisting of local volunteer men and women.

Future Goals? To provide additional facilities for increased services.

How Are We Funded? Primarily through private donations from individuals, churches, businesses, and community organizations. Rules for acceptance and participation in the programs of Poverello House are the same for everyone, without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability.