Food Trucks At The Museum Returns

Shreveport Water Works Museum offered visitors another great Food Trucks party on June 9. We usually seem to have to worry about rain at our parties, but this time the day arrived sunny and hot and upwards of 400 people braved the heat to stream through the gate for lunch and an afternoon at the museum.

The array of food trucks on hand changes every time we do this, and the visiting food emporiums this time included Hot Dog Hut, Gary’s Cajun Cuisine, Farley’s BBQ (a repeat vendor), Sweetport (a popular stop for ice cream on a hot day), May the Cheese Be With You (another popular spot), and Candy Crush.

After enjoying lunch or an afternoon snack under the museum’s one hundred years-old live oak trees, attendees could tend to any calorie guilt by stopping by the Camp Gladiator information table to find out how to get into a fitness program. Caddo Animal Services was nearby with information about their program and a collection of friendly pooches that were up for adoption. One lucky dog did go home with a new family. Walter Jacobs Nature Park made a return visit to exhibit some of the little critters to be found around here that included……..huge roaches!

As always, touring the museum was what everybody wanted to do. Tour guides Kevin Haines, Charlie Johnson, Paul Williams, and Tatjana Cotton stayed on the go throughout the afternoon showing off Shreveport’s National Historic Landmark. Thank you for the good work!
Also on the “thank you” list for generously volunteering their afternoon to help party-goers enjoy their afternoon are Linda Tonnies, Keith Tonnies, Casey Tonnies, Christopher Tonnies, Sandy Jones, Marilyn Joiner, Jeff Little, Pam Ward, and E.D. Stewart. On hand for the Railroad Society to staff an information table and provide museum tours were Kathy Dumas, Gary Fox, Conway Link, and Dave Bland. Last, but definitely not least, thank you to Liz Swaine and her team from Downtown Development Authority that made it all possible.

Volunteer Helpers Welcomed!

During the Spring, the museum was contacted by Tatjana Cotton who inquired about a position at SWWM as a volunteer intern while on her summer break as a student at Denison University in Granville Ohio. We didn’t have to think about it very long before agreeing!

Tatjana graduated from Southwood High School in Shreveport before traveling to Denison to work on BA degrees in History and Anthropology. She wanted a hands-on, inside experience with operating a museum that would go on record as intern hours in her college program. Tatjana came out every day for almost a month to be a tour guide for visitors and do whatever else was needed and was a lot of help, as well as a lot of fun to have around. Some of you may have met her at the Food Trucks party on June 9, which was unfortunately her last day at SWWM before moving on to another job as a camp counselor.

Thank you very much to Tatjana for the good work at SWWM. Come back any time!
About the time Tatjana was leaving, a young man named Cody Vaz called and wanted to know if we had anything he could volunteer to do as community service for his Boy Scout program (merit badge?) He got a quick “yes”, and he came out one day to tackle a yard work job. Thank you Cody!
There are still plentiful odd jobs around SWWM that volunteers could work on, so if any of our readers know of an individual or organization that is looking for community service projects, please send them to see us!
Visitors

The museum has been very busy lately with visiting group programs. We’ve been pleased to show the museum to a Volunteers of America summer program, Bellaire Church, Girl Scout Troop 1337, the Upward programs from Minden and from Southern University-Shreveport, and others. We love surprising visitors with the story of where our water comes from and the amazing history of the water works!

The museum recently welcomed a special visitor who is part of the history of the water works, former employee Odis Johnson. Mr. Johnson and his brother Robert both worked at the water plant during its active years using steam power and can be seen in the 1969 staff photograph on display at SWWM. Odis was a boiler operator, then moved to the maintenance crew, then moved to the water department office to help with administrative work. Mr. Johnson left before we got all done chatting with him “for the record” about his experiences at the water works, but hopefully he’ll be back soon so we can talk some more!

Give For Good 2019 Wrap-Up

This year’s campaign on May 7 was a good one for Shreveport Water Works Museum. There were 41 donors, including 5 new friends, and the total net received including the contribution from the Community Foundation was $7,396, which was up slightly from last year. This amount is almost 14% of our budget for 2019, so Give For Good has once again proved to be an important boost to the museum’s finances. Another interesting statistic is that our receipts ranked #51 out of 223 nonprofits and bested quite a few organizations that are larger with a higher profile locally than SWWM. Thank you very much to Kristina Gustavson and the rest of the hard-working staff at the Community Foundation for making it all possible.

More Money

Speaking of money, your newsletter is delighted to report that the museum has received a $25,000 Civic Appropriation Grant from the City of Shreveport. This, plus other fundraising like Give For Good, is exactly the amount projected to be needed to eliminate the looming deficit in the 2019 budget that was mentioned in the Winter 2018 edition of the newsletter. Whew, maybe we’ll be “in the black” this year after all if donations keep coming from elsewhere!

Thank you very much to the City Council and the City of Shreveport!