MIRACLE ON HARVARD AVE.

For a year Ophelia has been coming to Elevate Church's food distribution in Santa Paula. Every month she looked forward to the opportunity to get the groceries she needed to feed her children. With three young children to take care of, Ophelia is a stay-at-home mom while her husband works hard as the sole provider of the family.

And then came a time when Ophelia needed more than just food. Her mom had been diagnosed with breast cancer, and that day Ophelia needed a miracle. Sharing her concern with one of the food distribution volunteers, Ophelia realized she was in the right place.

The volunteers of Elevate Church prayed for Ophelia's mom, Thomasa, and trusted God that she would be healed.

One month later, Ophelia returned with amazing news. A trip to the doctor showed that Thomasa's cancer was completely gone. But God didn't stop there. There was still the $20,000 medical bill that had to be addressed. The doctor, realizing that the family didn't have the funds to pay, wiped away the bill completely. He only asked that Ophelia and Thomasa keep him in their prayers.

When asked what this food distribution has meant to her, Ophelia got choked up. She wanted to endlessly thank the Valley Food Bank for their generous donations. And she said thank you for giving her a place to come for food, hope, and to feel God's tangible presence.

WHAT IS THERE TO SNACK ON?

Summer is here, and children are home from school on summer break. Summer is the fun, enjoyable season that merits, without guilt, relaxing and playing, frolicking and BBQ'ing. It is all so American, snacking on chilled watermelon and fruit salad and, of course, the BBQ aroma of hamburgers and hotdogs wafting in the air. With children out of school, food resources diminish quickly as they are more often looking for snacks, treats, and beverages in their pantry. Unfortunately, too many families are not able to enjoy these basic provisions. These everyday food items should be available to families.

Think about your childhood summers and the memories come flooding through. I suspect they include playing tag or hide-and-seek outside until dark; and enjoying juice boxes, popsicles, and lots of ice cream. It's important all young people enjoy this summer to the fullest. So let's help make this summer break special as well as, memorable in a good way. Your donations make this happen!

CARING CONSISTENT SPECIAL DONORS

The Valley Food Bank depends on financial support from people who care and wish to make a difference; Nicholas and Claudia Bomicino are just such donors. The Bomicinos have been involved with the food bank since 2004 because they trust and believe in us. A non-profit organization becomes trustworthy with honesty and transparency, and that includes developing and cultivating trustworthy relationships. Nicholas says, "You guys do a good job. With some charities a fair amount of your donation is chewed up in administrative costs and doesn't go to the needy." He says, "It is important to see how your donation is being used and I see that clearly with the Valley Food Bank."

Nicholas and Claudia Bomicino, have been involved with the food bank since 2004.

GIVING 'CAUSE IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Ralph and Gloria don't want to draw attention to themselves by having their picture published. They have been supporters for more than 12 years – giving their time as volunteers as well as financial support to the food bank. Both are precious folks because they so embody what giving is all about. They don't do it for recognition, but because they know helping others in need makes a difference to so many. Ralph and Gloria have worked many days helping sort cans and dry goods and give faithfully, so we can help families in need. Ralph makes time in his busy schedule to help strategize upcoming events. He prays and discusses process improvements by sharing his expertise with the food bank director. Thank you Ralph and Gloria for your faithfulness.

♥ Health Benefits of VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering reduces the body's stress and also releases endorphins (the brains natural painkillers)
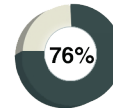
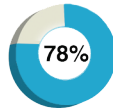Volunteers report that volunteering helps them build teamwork and stronger relationships

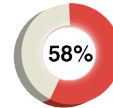**96%** said volunteering makes them feel happier

76% said volunteering makes them feel healthier

78% said volunteering makes them feel less stressed

58% said volunteering makes them sleep better

Call Today
818-510-4140

Source: Health and Volunteering Study. United Health Group.

ECFA