

Volunteers assist area's homeless

By John Olivera

Special to the Statesman Journal

February 8, 2012

Marci and John Olivera, fresh from helping homeless members of the community displaced by the flood, organized their second Help the Homeless event Jan. 29.

More than 50 volunteers showed up at Steeles Karate school, a business the Oliveras own in northeast Salem, to help feed the homeless and get them some much needed provisions.

The volunteers set up a "karate cafe," where the needy were treated to free sandwiches, French fries, soup, apple juice, fruit, cookies, chips and other treats.

Tables were set up in lower level of the karate school, and clothing, shoes, blankets, boots, gloves, hygiene items, food and other provisions were displayed in retail fashion.

The needy were given shopping bags and could select essential items at no cost.

More than 50 men and women were served the lunch donated by Craig Savidge, owner of Half Time Bar & Grill, which is next door to Steeles Karate.

Vic Branson, an employee of Betty Lou's Inc. of McMinnville, a maker of healthy snacks, got the company to donate a pallet of snacks worth more than \$500.

John Olivera estimates more than \$600 in cash donations, more than \$800 in food and at least \$2,000 worth of new and used items were given to help people in need.

"It really was a wonderful day, and exceeded my expectations," John Olivera said. "We will be doing it again and have already received more donations for our next event."



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More than 50 volunteers helped the Steeles Karate school in northeast Salem set up a karate cafe to serve the area's homeless on Jan. 29.