

Bill Fulton, Ventura City Council

Bill Fulton, Deputy Mayor of Ventura, California, discusses current city issues and explains his own positions on matters before the City Council

On Deck

- Next Meeting, Monday 12/8 6 pm

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2008

Help Means More Than Slopping Stuffing

The idea of Thanksgiving Day’s “One City, One Meal” event at the Knights of Columbus was wonderfully innovative: Instead of throngs of volunteers coming to feed the homeless, the idea was that everybody in town comes out to dine together. Yeah, lots of volunteers were still needed. But bonding and companionship, more than feeding people, was the goal.

So when we arrived at around 11, there were more than enough volunteers - and not a whole lot for us to do. My council colleague Neal Andrews, one of the godfathers of this event, told us to sit down and have a meal. We felt a little funny about this but we did it anyway. The result was a very meaningful Thanksgiving that helped me understand the “One City, One Meal” idea better.

I sat across from a guy named Denny, who appeared homeless or at least on the economic margins. At first we shared our meal in silence but after a while he struck up a conversation with me - and it was mostly about drag racing, which is his passion. We chatted for 10 or 15 minutes, after which he said, “I gotta go”. At the end of it, I knew more about drag racing than I ever thought possible. But I also realized that I had given Denny something that all the stuffing-slopping in the world couldn’t achieve - a real conversation, however brief, with a real person. So many of our homeless folks struggle with mental health and with healthy social interaction.

Meanwhile, my girlfriend Allison sat down next to a Spanish-speaking woman who was struggling to eat her meal while holding her grandson. Again for 10 or 15 minutes, Allison held the boy and played with him while the grandma ate her meal in peace.

Neither of us did what we expected to do when we showed up. Yet by sharing the “One Meal” with the “One City,” we both were able to give and share far more than we anticipated.

Welcome to my blog!

Hi -- welcome to my City Council blog. I hope this helps you understand where I'm coming from. I also want to know where you're coming from too, so email me at fulton4ventura@gmail.com.



Labels

2007 Election (4)

Arts (2)

Budget (4)

Downtown (7)

East Ventura (1)

Economic Development (3)

Environment (1)

Housing (1)

How We Do Business (8)

How We Do Business;Budget (1)

Implementing the General Plan (4)

Midtown (8)

North Bank (1)

Public Safety (2)

Public Transit (1)

Saticoy and Wells (10)