

Bamboo Collection Tubes: circulating of love

Written by
Sun, 16 Dec 2012



City of Ipswich showered with love during the auspicious month

In 2011, the City of Ipswich was heavily inundated by a devastating flood the City had ever experienced over a hundred years. Since then, volunteer workers from Tzu Chi Foundation Gold Coast have been looking after the Primary and High Schools of Ipswich, offering care and assistance while introducing the concepts of vegetarianism, environmental protection, conservation and Tzu Chi humanities education into these schools.

The unconditional and unceasing support by Tzu Chi was highly commended and approved by Ipswich Councillor Cheryl Bromage. At the same time, Bonnie Huang, manageress of Brassall Shopping Centre, spends much time and effort in helping Tzu Chi to coordinate and liaise with Ipswich City Council to launch the first Food Aid Distribution at her shopping centre car park on Sunday, 2nd September, 2012. Early that morning, Bonnie voluntarily offered assistance with the supermarket manager to deliver food items such as eggs, bread etc to the car park. Cheryl had also publicized this meaningful event in the local newspaper on Wednesday, 29th August, 2012.



Preparation for Ipswich Food Aid began as early as three months before the due date. During that time, many meetings were convened, both large and small. Veronica Siao, aged 74, is a retired science teacher from Hong Kong. She is a volunteer worker at Jing Si Hall of Tzu Chi Gold Coast, taking care of the paperwork in connection with Food Aid Distribution and had also been doing translation for many important projects. They call her Siao grandma or Siao Ma Ma. As she is living by herself, Jing Si Hall is regarded as her second home. Realizing the importance of record keeping for this event, she often had to purchase the necessary stationeries for the Ipswich Food Aid from shopping malls by taking public transport alone.

Siao Ma Ma had undergone a permanent colostomy few years ago because of anal carcinoma. Now she has to wear a colostomal bag all the time and she must take with her spare colostomal bags wherever she goes. On the day of Ipswich Food Aid, she even got up before 4 o'clock in the morning and got herself ready for the event. Throughout the course of Food Distribution, she was conscientiously and restlessly supervising the entire operation from start to finish to see if further improvement could be made. Her meticulous working spirit sets a good example to other volunteers.

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There were four tables assigned for registration of applicants for the Food Aid. Volunteer Nicole Huang spoke about how Siao Ma Ma clearly labelled every stationery item such as pencil case, pen, pencil, plastic folder, plastic envelope etc. with a Table No.



During the Ipswich floods, a couple David and Pauline Baolin, had their house so severely damaged that it was uninhabitable. With the assistance offered by Tzu Chi they were able to repair and renovate it so that they could go back home. They are now comfortably off and feel the need to give something back to the community. When they learned from the newspapers about the Food Aid they came on purpose to express their gratitude. They also offered to Tzu Chi donation collected in a bamboo piggy bank.

Care recipients, Lynette Johnson and husband, brought their vision-impaired daughter along to apply for Food Aid. During the flood, Tzu Chi gave them an aphorism card which they liked it very much and are still keeping it. They are much impressed by the courtesy and respect to people shown by Tzu Chi volunteers which may not be felt in other charitable organizations.

There were four enthusiastic Australian 'care recipients' from Gold Coast offering assistance at this Food Aid and helped to introduce Tzu Chi humanities education into the Ipswich community as they have assimilated the Tzu Chi etiquette and mien, being affectionate, polite, respectful and loving. During the Food Aid, volunteers and 'care recipients' embraced and being grateful each other. They also behaved as one family, like helping parents to push prams or to carry food for them. The blue Tzu Chi food bags were loaded not only with food but also with blessings from all global Tzu Chi branches.