

Congratulations to Dave, one of our many Unsung Heroes at the Franciscan Center!

UNsung HEROES

Food bank volunteer has discovered his niche

By KELLY ROYAL
kroyal@news-sentinel.com

David Sensenich always wanted to volunteer his time but could not seem to find the time. Now, five years after retirement from a 32-year career with Verizon, Sensenich has found plenty of time — and a niche, with St. Anthony's Food Pantry.

A program of the Franciscan Center, 1020 Capitol Ave., the food pantry provides food from Community Harvest Food Bank. Clients can come in monthly for items such as bread and pastries, canned food and cereal. St. Anthony's serves about 300 clients a week.

"The center is open to anyone," Sensenich said. "You don't have to be Catholic. If you have a need, you can come. ... It's just about helping other people."

When he started volunteering with the nonprofit Franciscan Center, he helped with its sack lunch program for kids two hours a week. The pantry opened shortly after, and Sensenich saw another opportunity to help.

How to help

For more information on how to volunteer with the St. Anthony's Food Pantry or any program through the Franciscan Center, call 744-3977 or go to www.thefranciscancenter.org.

Sally Ley, founder and chief executive officer of the Franciscan Center, recalls that when the pantry opened Sensenich donated shelving and helped install it.

"Whatever we need him to do, he's there. He's been so faithful and always so dependable; he's just an all-around good volunteer." Sensenich volunteers three days a week for about three hours a day. On Mondays, he helps unload delivery trucks and stocks shelves. Tuesdays and Thursdays, he helps distribute food and restock the shelves.

The time he has spent at the pantry has left Sensenich with some lasting impressions. He recalls one client in particular that came in on a very cold day wearing a short-sleeved T-shirt. Sensenich remarked about the gentleman's at-



David Sensenich, a volunteer at the Franciscan Center's food pantry, helps unload delivery trucks and stock shelves.

By Brian Tombaugh of The News-Sentinel

tire and realized that he was not wearing a winter coat because he did not have one. After talking to the director of the program, he was able to set him up with some warm clothes and a coat.

"People said to me, 'You really made that guy's day.' I told them no, he made my day because I was really able to help someone. That's why I keep coming back; I'm doing something good."

As someone who sees the positive effects of giving to and helping others,

Sensenich believes everyone can do something to help. "If people can't donate their time, they can donate food. God gave us all a gift. All we have to do is find it and use that gift."

Unsung Heroes recognizes someone in the Fort Wayne area doing something for the benefit of someone else. Call Kelly Royal at 461-8284 or e-mail kroyal@news-sentinel.com with suggestions. Be sure to include your name and phone number.