

Full Stomachs, Open Minds

Cabot, AR—Signs of hunger are easily recognized by teachers. Children who did not eat the previous night, or over the weekend, are unable to pay attention, disruptive to other students, and too distracted by hunger pangs to focus on doing well in school.

Steve Jackson, immediate past president of the Cabot Civitan Club, describes Cabot as a school-driven community. So it was only natural for the club to get involved with Food for Kids at Westside Elementary. Food for Kids is operated by Arkansas Rice Depot and provides new backpacks and “kid-friendly,” ready-to-eat food to participating schools. The food is distributed to students who display educational, physical, or emotional problems at school due to hunger at home.

“The cost to sponsor one school for the entire school year is \$2,400,” said Steve. “Our Civitan club donated \$1,200, and my employer donated the remaining half. Westside Elementary provides food for 96 children each week, and the need is growing. It’s very rewarding to know that we’re making a difference in the lives of children in our community.”

“Our participation in this project opened the door to meet yet another need,” continued Steve. “During a recent delivery to the school, the assistant principal mentioned a grandmother’s need for car seats for her grandchildren. Later that day, I delivered the much-needed car seats to the school. When the assistant principal saw them, she cried tears of joy. So did I.”



Cabot Civitans (left to right) Steve Jackson (middle), Kelly Nolting, and Pat Graham deliver food for the club's Food for Kids project.