



Christine Allen Helping the Needy



This year's Turkey Trot will once again be held in memory of Christine Allen of San Luis Obispo, who died in 2013. Christine left behind a legacy of countless hours of community service benefitting the SLO County Food Bank and those that it serves.

Christine was born and raised in San Luis Obispo, the fifth of seven children in a blessed and loving family. From an early age it was clear that Christine was destined for big things and to leave her mark on the world around her. Also from an early age, all you had to do was open her wardrobe to see that her favorite color was any shade of purple!

Growing up, Christine was home-schooled and involved in many youth activities and sports, including swimming, junior guards, soccer, club basketball, snowboarding and backpacking. She was active in her church, and also enjoyed public speaking and debate, always welcoming the opportunity to present her ideas on subjects she cared



about. As a teen, she embraced a healthy lifestyle, and enjoyed participating in various 5k runs and the SLO triathlon each year. She



would have loved the Turkey Trot run, as its course is on one of her favorite stretches of beach... a place where she and her family have spent many treasured hours walking, running, tossing a Frisbee, or just enjoying a wonderful sunset. Thanksgiving was also one of her favorite holidays. Not only did she treasure time spent with family and friends, but also was quite an accomplished cook. Her home-made apple pie was award-winning and always a treat!



Christine was also proud to have been active in 4-H for eight years, her last three years as president of the Edna 4-H club. After several initial years of lamb and horse projects, she was searching for a higher purpose and a way to benefit the community, when she learned about the possibility of raising an animal to donate to the Food Bank from a local breeder. This began a passionate series of projects that benefitted many local hungry families over the following years.



To give you an idea from Christine's own words about her devotion to this community need, below is an excerpt from a scholarship application that Christine wrote in the back seat of the car on her way off to Wyoming to start her freshman year at college:

"During my 4-H career, I was fortunate to have participated in many community service efforts, ranging from serving meals to the homeless to giving horseback rides to children. However, one particular project has been most impacting to me--and the community. Inspired by the fact that about 30,000 people go hungry in our county each year, I set a goal to donate my steer to the Food Bank after the Fair, by fundraising enough money for the Food Bank to purchase my steer at the Junior Livestock Auction.



Through a lot of hard work giving presentations and the generosity of many neighbors, businesses and groups, I was able to raise thousands of dollars to make this project work.

To multiply these efforts, I then gave presentations to other 4-H members to consider doing it themselves. This resulted in a few others joining me, including a 4-H member from Santa Cruz who saw my presentation in Sacramento at 4-H State Presentation Day! In 2010, three of my siblings joined me for a project we called The Fab Four. KSBY and the Tribune (and others) ran our story and the message spread that 4-H market animal projects could also be raised to benefit the community if buyers purchased them for the Food Bank.



My community service involvement with steer projects for the Food Bank has taught me so many life skills and challenged me to think creatively about how to help the community within a project I have a passion for. The whole experience has influenced my life in ways that I am sure will manifest themselves in the future, but immediately challenged and taught me to think of ways to help the community today."

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On May 7th, 2013 Christine and her family were returning from her freshman year at college. They had stopped at a favorite spot in Utah and had taken a short family hike after dinner. Christine's mother had just snapped a photo of her standing on a bluff with her open hands stretched to the sky as the sun set behind her. Moments later, Christine was lost in a tragic rockslide when the 15-foot boulder she was standing on gave way.



Christine's spirit is still with us, however, encouraging us to continue her legacy by helping the SLO County Food Bank to provide for the needy.

Please contribute what you can to support this good cause, enjoy your run or walk on this beautiful course, and... remember to wear your purple!

