

TEEN'S EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT BRINGS LOCAL COMMUNITY TOGETHER:

SHALLOWFORD FOOD PANTRY RECEIVES 3,000+ DONATIONS

In September Shallowford member Thomas Maki planned and executed his Eagle Scout project that delivered a goal-topping 3,000+ units of food to the Shallowford Food Pantry. The drive-thru donation event filled the SPC pantry shelves that had been depleted during COVID-19.

"I wanted a project that actually made an impact on our community," said Thomas. "Giving food to the food pantry helps food-insecure people, especially during the pandemic."

"I was grateful for, but not surprised at, Thomas's choice for his Eagle Scout project," said Vaughn Dunnigan, co-chair of the SPC Food Pantry. "Thomas has been a regular volunteer for the Food Pantry for years, and his work there over the summer was invaluable."

Thomas is the youngest child of Eero and Angela Maki who along with sons Henry and Charlie joined the church years ago. From Sunday School and worship to choirs and youth groups, they made it an active part of their lives. Scouting is also a Maki family tradition. Henry and Charlie are both Eagle Scouts. To share more about his project and scouting, Thomas answered some questions.

Q: WHEN DID YOU JOIN THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA?

A: I joined Troup 77 at Oak Grove Methodist Church when I was in sixth grade. I love camping and the outdoors, and my favorite scout activity is backpacking. I've been on a handful of trips including one 12-day backpacking trip to New Mexico.

Q: WHAT IS REQUIRED TO EARN YOUR EAGLE SCOUT BADGE?

A: To achieve the rank of Eagle Scout, you have to earn every rank leading up to Eagle, have a position of responsibility in the troop, complete all Eagle-required merit badges plus additional badges, and complete an Eagle Scout project, all before the age of 18. You must also be a leader and help others.



Q: WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE FOOD PANTRY?

A: I wanted to impact our community. Also, Mrs. Vaughn Dunnigan, co-chair of the SPC Food Pantry, inspired me to work on this project. She gives so much of her time to the food pantry and I sometimes think it goes underappreciated. I see her volunteering there a lot helping people, some of whom don't speak English.

Q: HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE THE PROJECT?

A: Lots of emails were sent. I needed to get approval from multiple people to set up my project. I needed to advertise and convince people to give. Finally, I needed people to work the day of the event to help me receive and organize all the food and then sort it into the food pantry. My goal was to collect 1,000 units of food. **We collected over 3,000 units!**

Q: WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

A: Organizing an event is hard. There is a lot of planning you need to do beforehand and permissions you need to get to accomplish anything. Organizing emails and other materials were the hardest things for me to do.

Q: WHO HAS INFLUENCED OR INSPIRED YOU?

A: **My parents.** My mother has taught me to be more compassionate and to set a good example for younger scouts. My father has taught me to be successful and has given me the skills I need. I'm thankful for the people who

give so much of their time to the church whether they volunteer their time or whether they work there. I spend a lot of time at the church and doing church-related activities and the people who keep the church running mean lots to me.



TOP: Thanks to generous donations from community members, Thomas Maki rolls a full cart to the Food Pantry.

LEFT: Following brothers Henry and Charlie, Thomas entered scouting at an early age.

BOTTOM: Thomas set up a drive-thru donation event and all volunteers wore masks to unload cars and stock SPC Food Pantry shelves.

