

The Bridge 2009 – *Honorable Mention*

Jean Lamberty - Dallas, TX

At the Pine Street Food Pantry

Each Thursday morning they line up early. They bring all kinds of hunger. Some bring thin children. Some limp. Some fidget. Others stand quietly, covered with secondhand clothes and the dust of resignation. A man with missing teeth says Have a blessed day. A woman with an armful of tattoos and track marks struggles to focus.

Volunteers place plastic bundles with hand-me-down food-canned spinach and sweet potatoes, bags of rice, chocolate bits and vanilla icing, candy bars and a lot of what nobody else wants-into open hands. The homeless get a Snack Pack-chips and candy, nothing that requires a can opener or cooking-to accompany an already swallowed life. By 10 o'clock Mrs. Baird's thin sliced white bread is gone. "No bread? Have ya' got any cookies?"

Operation Hope runs the Pine Street Food Pantry, right next door to Opportunity Park in the shadow of downtown. Outside people sit on a low brick wall and look through their bags. Maybe they will have something better to eat before next Thursday.