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'Mom' feeds homeless each day



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Pedro Valentin, left, one of several homeless people who gather at the Pinewood Park pavilion, shares a moment Tuesday with Bonny Dunn, a Port St. Lucie resident who cooks breakfast every weekday morning for the crowd who gather there before she heads to work as a lawyer.

BY JONATHAN MATTISE
Correspondent

FORT PIERCE — By the time she steps foot into work each weekday morning, Bonny Dunn has already cooked up a hearty breakfast of eggs, grits, muffins and biscuits for a group of guys who otherwise might not find a meal to eat.

Since January, Dunn has been bringing out a spread and sharing her maternal affection for about 30 homeless men at the pavilion at Pinewood Park each week, Monday through Friday, before heading to work.

In turn, the group has embraced the altruistic 77-year-old as a mentor, friend, and — the moniker that resonates the most — the group's "Mom."

"I'm just trying to get some help for people," Dunn said. "For the most part they don't even have a car to sleep in. What little possessions they have get stolen because they have nowhere to keep them. I'm trying to show them

"If it wasn't for Mom and Pastor Dave coming out here to share their experiences, a lot of us would probably be up the road in prison."

Pedro Valentin, 48

Dunn first helped feed the group early in January when she brought by a simple breakfast for two or three guys, and the day after more decided to come by.

"The next day there were about four people, and the dishes kept getting bigger and bigger," Dunn said.

The group Tuesday morning arrived on foot or bicycle, held hands in a circle to join in prayer, and dug in.

"It's a blessing," said Quincy

"If it wasn't for people like her, a lot of people out here would be very hungry."

Community members Jane Rowley, Diamond Litty, Wendy Dwyer, Scott Van Duzer, Mitch Kloortan and Sydney Laebman came by to greet the group and hand out food.

Van Duzer, the owner of Big Apple Pizza in Fort Pierce, offered to serve up some pizza for their main breakfast course the next morning.

Despite their struggles finding work and stability, the group at Pinewood has grown close to and gotten some perspective from Dunn and Pastor Dave Maek, who leads them in worship on weekends.

"If it wasn't for Mom and Pastor Dave coming out here to share their experiences, a lot of us would probably be up the road in prison," said Pedro Valentin, 48, who met "Mom" with a bouquet of flowers Tuesday morning. "It's a blessing for these people to come out here and show us