

A Fresh Serving of Community Service

At Orlando's Bikes, Beans & Bordeaux Neighborhood Café, owners Jen and Darrell Cunningham are serving up monthly opportunities to give back to the community.

By Cris Phillips-Georg

The next time you place an order at local Audubon Park eatery Bikes, Beans & Bordeaux (B3 Café), owners **Jen and Darrell Cunningham** are hoping you'll opt for a side of "save the world" to go with your meal. In addition to providing the usual menu, the Cunninghams also provide customers with a menu of great local charities. "We always envisioned B3 as a vehicle for strengthening community," says Jen. "Supporting great causes is a passion of ours and we wanted to use the café to help expose customers to some of the amazing charities and causes that we have come to care about."

Before opening their doors in March 2008, the Cunninghams came up with a community giving angle for their business, which they now call their B Nice program. Through this program, B3 Café spotlights one charity per month. The chosen charity gets a write-up in B3 Café's monthly e-newsletter, is added to the B Nice section of B3's Web site, gets several plugs on B3's Facebook page, and gets real estate to display collateral materials within the actual café. In addition, the Cunninghams make a donation to each featured charity.

Jen and Darrell Cunningham take a break at their neighborhood café Bikes, Beans & Bordeaux.



GARY BOGDON PHOTOGRAPHY

"We're trying to provide a solid menu of great charities that customers can feel good about," says Darrell, "Most of our patrons are like-minded and share our passion for giving, but it's hard to know about all of the worthy charities out there."

For B3 Café regular **Lauren White**, of **Baldwin Park**, the B Nice program has opened the door to new opportunities to give back to the community. "I first connected to B3 Café's B Nice program when I served as a volunteer leader for Central Florida Animal Pantry's 'Four Legged Food Drive,'" says White. "Jen and Darrell were so supportive and generous and happy to put a donation bin inside their café. After that experience, I used the B Nice program to donate food to the Boy Scouts. Then I signed on as a volunteer to help out at the OUC half marathon. Doing all of this through B3 Café makes it feel like I'm part of a community. They make it so fun and easy to get involved."

In addition to the featured B Nice charity each month, the Cunninghams also try to sign on to support food drives, charity rides/a-thons and other in-café events. "Life is hectic and people get busy," says Jen. "If we can support a charity right here in the café, it makes community giving that much easier for our customers. Grab a sandwich; make a charitable donation ... all in one stop."

The Cunninghams assert that the B Nice program is only a glimmer of what they hope it will become. "As we grow, the program will grow," says Darrell. "For now, while we are small and starting out, we can help most by spreading awareness. But as the business strengthens and expands, we hope to make bigger donations to the charities we feature."

As for what part of the B Nice program the Cunninghams most enjoy: "I enjoy the in-café events the most," says Jen. "Usually we are just making a donation ... a gift card for an auction or raffle to be used in an event we never see. But with the in-house events, we get to see the faces behind the charity; hear them tell their stories; see them interact with one another. That is the most satisfying; really getting to know the people out there doing all of this amazing charitable work." **L**

Take a peek at B3 Café's menu of charities at CentralFlorida-Lifestyle.com.