

Abbi Samuels, FNB activist, on the June 18 Emergency Breakfast

Hi everyone!

...Jessica York from the Sentinel called me about an hour ago asking me what happened at our breakfast today. She was on her way to another appointment when she got the call (thanks to the person who made the call!), so she sent her photographer there but, according to her, when he passed by, the police had left and all of the tables were on the edge of the sidewalk. She wanted to know what happened so I explained and asked her if she wanted some pictures so she can count the police cars herself. I was able to get a hold of Zav who did take pictures, which I'm extremely grateful for! Hopefully, he'll be sending the pictures to the Jessica....

When I got there about 9:30, there was one CHP there. I wonder how he got notified so early???? He asked us to move our tables down the street and out of his jurisdiction. He was very polite. In fact, he supported Food Not Bombs in what we do letting us know during his childhood he experienced being homeless a lot! He actually was very kind! He asked us to simply get a permit and the process was quite simple. I proceeded to tell him that we don't get permits and our permit was our first amendment and we were protesting the Criminalization of the Homeless.

So, we moved our 5 tables about 30 feet down. He said he would ask his Sargent if that was the Highway Patrol's jurisdiction. The Sargent arrived and told us it was still within their jurisdiction. Even though we explained that we would be leaving in about an hour, around 11:00am, they said they would be writing out tickets for trespassing and taking our food away. I frantically started making phone calls since I didn't want our arrests to be all for nothing.

At that point, I asked someone to move the literature table back in a more prominent position (back to the original place) and said, 'I may as well set up here waiting to get arrested'. I made sure Sammy, my dog, was safe, and that the most important items would get packed away with Robert's help. Thanks, Robert! I would say about 20 cops lined down the sidewalk on Route 9. Then Lee came by and suggested to move our tables to the sidewalk. So we did.

At that point, the police moved away, conferred, asked to speak to me and others and explained that they would be leaving and if they get a call complaining about blocking the sidewalk, they would come back and try and work it out with us. They also asked if we would be having another breakfast next week and I told him we didn't have plans but I'm not in charge.

The group may decide differently but I wasn't aware of any plans for a breakfast next week. I told them I was sorry they wouldn't be arresting me, cause I was sure looking forward to having an interesting press day with pictures of them taking away food for the homeless! They smiled, shook hands, and thanked us for being polite and left! Now I know everyone will have their own version of what happened. This is my experience. :)

My lesson today is to be more prepared with people with more cameras and still cameras! Tried getting a hold of Alex... John Colby was there but I don't believe he got any video of our actual breakfast which shared food with about 40-50 people today!

THANK YOU SO MUCH for your SUPPORT! Even though I was the only one, I believe, who was willing to get arrested, I could feel the support from several people around me! Thanks Robert, Lee, Pat, John, Kevin, Ray, Steve and Keith(on the phone), Meredy, Coral, Cat, and others! Sorry if I left out your name. Some don't want to be mentioned so I'm excluding them! Don't have Lee's email address!

THANK YOU!

Abbi