



AS IT IS

Customers Buy Meals for Others at Oklahoma Restaurants

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In the small town of Miami in the central U.S. state of Oklahoma, people do not have as much money as they used to. Many lost their jobs because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some are even homeless.

At two restaurants – Zack’s Café and The Dawg House – customers are now doing their part to help others. When they are ready to pay for their meals, they can add another food item.

On the walls in each restaurant are **receipts** for the donated meals. A receipt is a paper showing what has been purchased. Someone who is hungry can come in, choose a receipt, sit down and have something to eat.

Jennifer White owns The Dawg House, which opened last September. She sells hot dogs with extra items like meat, cheese, and bacon. She started the idea of the giving wall during the pandemic. Within eight hours, she said she had a wall filled with receipts.

The Dawg House only has eight tables, so not that many people can visit at one time. But in six months, customers have purchased 600 extra meals. Some who had no money at the time took down the receipts to eat and then returned to pay for more meals so someone else could eat. Others would buy their own meal and then pay for another 10 or 50.

“That says a lot about how **amazing** our community is,” White said.

Lasay Castellano recently left Zack’s Café to return to school. She said the restaurant serves about 600 people a day. And she has been putting up the receipts for two months.

“We have a lot of homeless people here,” she said. “We’re having a hard time keeping [the receipts] on the wall.”

The town of Miami has not just been hurt by the health crisis. Two large snowstorms in February forced many people without homes into hotels. However, the town is beginning to return to normal activities. The area’s **casinos** have reopened and restaurants now welcome people for in-person meals.

White remembered when two parents came in with their children recently. She said, “They seemed like they had a lot going on and got to sit for an hour and a half or so to just have a meal, have fun and laugh, and not worry about how much they were having to spend.”

I’m Dan Friedell.

Emily Leshner and Leanne Italie wrote this story for The Associated Press. Dan Friedell adapted it for Learning English. Hai Do was the editor.

How have you been helping other people during the pandemic? Tell us in the Comments Section and [visit our Facebook page](#).

Words in This Story

receipt *-n.* a piece of paper on which the things that you buy or the services that you pay for are listed with the total amount paid and the prices for each

amazing *-adj.* causing great surprise or wonder

casino *-n.* a building or room that has games (such as roulette or blackjack) for gambling