



# CRESCENT VALLEY ROBOTICS TEAM 955

CORVALLIS, OREGON

## Rules of Thumb for Bringing Meals

July 2011

From Barb Ward:

I have my child call me about 3:30 with the dinner count if I'm making something I could adjust the quantity of (like open another can of beans or spaghetti sauce...).

Remember to add some numbers for mentors who will come after work. I usually take some filler like bread or tortillas where I can have extra loaves in case we need them and then I take them home and freeze them if we don't need them.

Calling ahead is the best way since it can be difficult to tell how many will be there. The crowd number often ranges from 25-30 ish, but can be more or less—it can be up to 50 people if all the students and mentors come on a given day. For pre-planning I would plan on 25-30 for most meals.

You bring a prepared meal, as there are no cooking facilities, not even a microwave. There are sinks in the bathrooms and one in the shop. I have one crockpot, and then I borrow crockpots around my neighborhood to have enough to keep everything warm.

The team has about 5-7 vegetarians, so I always bring a portion that is vegetarian. (An entire vegetarian meal is great, too) For example, I sometimes take chili or spaghetti in crock pots, so I just leave the meat out of some of the batches. I put a little note by it on the counter that this pot is vegetarian, and I watch as they dish up. I ask the other kids to not take the vegetarian kind until all the vegetarians have dished up. On kick-off Saturday with 49 people, I just told everyone that the vegetarians needed to be first, and then others could use the rest of the vegetarian batch.

There are huge varieties of possible meals. I usually take enough for the expected crowd and about 5-6 more people and just plan on my family eating that for the next few days if there are leftovers:

The crowd needs drinks, too, and they really appreciate a dessert (often for me the dessert is a couple of bags of cookies)

Here are some things that have been brought:

- Soup and bread and bagged salad
- One vegetarian family brought a noodles and cheese dish and diced roasted potatoes and some salad/raw veggies.

July 21, 2011

- Some people have done chicken meals from Winco or Albertson's
- My husband and I actually have cooked a turkey, stuffing, potatoes, gravy, with some garden burgers, part of the stuffing and gravy vegetarian...
- Spaghetti (For me it's easier to mix the sauce into the spaghetti and put it all in a crock pot rather than have the noodles and sauce separate—then the amount of noodles and sauce matches), one pot vegetarian, bread, bagged salad
- Lasagna
- Burritos: a crock pot of meat, a crock pot of beans, lettuce, tomatoes, cheese, taco sauce, onions...I only put out a certain amount of cheese and then keep adding more because even with serving utensils, the kids put their hands in, and I just throw out what's left in the bowl, especially with this flu season. For me, this is an easy one to have extra of. I can have extra bags of tortillas and extra cheese to put out if everything else runs out, and I can take it home if we don't need it.
- Some families bring pizza—they often get the \$5 cheese pizzas and pepperoni pizzas at Little Caesars. The goal is to not do that too often, as it's a good solution for everyone when they are pressed for time, and the team gets tired of pizza.
- Chili (which we took on Saturday for kickoff)
- sub sandwich makings
- hot dogs and hamburgers (some veggie)
- a wonderful variety of ethnic foods—many families have cooked wonderful stuff that I don't know what it was, as my kids tell me.

Some bring it hot in regular pans, some bring in crock pots. The counters have room to plug in electrical appliances.

With the number of teammates this year, no one should have to provide the meal more than once, if everyone will do it once. I know the Anderson's have provided a few already, and the adults at the BunnyBot competition went together to provide the food there. There might be additional workdays added, toward the end of the season to finish up, so there may be more meals than the 21 already shown on the calendar.

I went back to the calendar and put on the chili that we took on Saturday so people can see what was brought and won't duplicate too much.

If I remember right, the team prefers to eat about 5 or 5:30, as they are hungry by then. Some people have to bring it later. I would just let them know what time to expect dinner that day. (Is this timing right, Will?) You just go into the lab and start setting up the food on the lab counters and ask the kids for help bringing everything in from your car, and then when it's all set up, let Will or someone know to announce it, and hang out until everyone eats, and get help putting everything back in your car.

5-5:30p is great for dinner and 12:30-1p is great for lunches.

I leave any extra sodas, and they put it in a cupboard for the team. I often leave the extra dessert and have my child bring it home with them.

There are some paper products in the cupboard at the lab—many parents leave their extras. On Saturday there were enough plates, forks, spoons, knives for at least one more meal. I recommend that a few days before you bring a meal, ask your child to check how many there are so you know how many you have to bring.

Barb did a great job. I can only add that spicy food may be fun for the kids, but the mentors for the most part aren't too keen on it.