

Vet-Owned C-Rations Grub Hub Food Truck Talks Family Business and Giving Back

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
August 15 2023 11:09 AM



ALTON - In the span of a few months in 2014, Christina Stanford-Harvey retired after 20 years in the military, graduated from culinary school and had a baby. What was the next step after such a monumental, stressful year?

She started a business, of course.

But the risk clearly paid off. Nine years after Christina began her catering service, she's the proud owner of C-Rations Grub Hub Food Truck, a Riverbend favorite. Alongside her husband Hoover and their children, Christina's business is doing better than ever and giving back to the Alton community.

"It's good to see the fruits of your labor after a while," Christina said. "I've been able to keep it a family business. It's been really good."

The family bought the food truck in February 2019. They were still fixing it up when the COVID-19 Pandemic hit, which brought the entire business to a standstill. Both Christina and Hoover are 20-year veterans, so they're no strangers to hard work. But with the world shut down, they were stuck simply watching the money they invested drain away.

"It felt like somebody took a financial knife and stabbed us in the side," Christina remembered. "We hemorrhaged money for the whole year of COVID and the year after. We kind of did a little bit of business, but it wasn't enough to keep us afloat. Our first year, we couldn't even get inspected because the Health Department was busy with COVID."

But still, their passion never wavered; selling the food truck was out of the question. Instead, the family prayed and committed to giving back to the community if the business worked out.

Luckily, it did. A few years later, C-Rations is more popular than ever. They have plans to expand to DoorDash by this winter and hope to eventually buy property where they can park the truck full-time. Until then, you can find them at [Flock](#), [Roberts Ford](#) and [Mr. Nice Guy](#) in Alton throughout the week, or catch up with them at other events in the Riverbend region all season, including farmers' markets and the [Taste of Black St. Louis](#) food festival in September.

And, just as they promised, C-Rations is dedicated to helping the people of Alton. This summer, they've been giving out free meals to kids and people who need them. They plan to do more food giveaways for students throughout the school year.

"We know the kids still need people who actually care. We don't want anything from you, we just want to love on you a little bit. So we started doing the food giveaways," Christina explained, adding, "Some of the people would come up to our truck and they'd say, 'Why are you doing this?' And we're like, 'Because we love you.' And they were like, 'Really?'"

To the Harvey family, this confusion is proof that people need the work they're doing. They love running their business, but they also appreciate the opportunity to help others and make life a little easier for kids and families.

"I think we as a society got away from that, got away from just being kind to one another, just looking out for one another," Hoover said. "You ain't got to be blood, but I see your needs. So that's what we need to get back to, especially as a community here in Alton."

While the family does what they can to help out, they also remember to have fun. Christina noted that she's "not very sociable," and Hoover and their daughter, Daija, immediately disagreed. Christina couldn't help laughing as they teased her.

"You're always talking to strangers. What are you talking about?" Hoover demanded as his wife and daughter laughed. "We were at a farmers' market in Maryville, and she was going around just talking to everybody. We were trying to run a business, and we had to scream across the field, 'Hey, we need you over here!'"

Christina gave in, but not before adding, "It's humbling, though, because like, people like little old me? People like little old us?"

They do. Check out their [official Facebook page](#) or [Instagram profile](#) to find C-Rations Grub Hub Food Truck around town and try it for yourself.