



Table of Plenty in Chelmsford Newsletter

Annual Meeting Recap



Table of Plenty Officers
Front: Jerry Serra, Vice President;
Maureen McKeown, President
Back: Debbie Kendrick, Treasurer;
Mary Moriarty, Clerk

Table of Plenty Board of Directors and Committee Chairs met in January for the 2013 Annual Meeting. President Maureen McKeown began the meeting, stating "January 2013 brings us to another year of growth. Our steady guest population, the increase in volunteers, and the continuing support of local organizations, faith groups, businesses and residents fuels our Board's enthusiasm to look for new ways to expand and reach others in our community."

In 2012, we served 3,640 meals, averaging 71 meals

each week. Since our beginning three years ago, TOPIC has served over 8,180 meals!

Last year, we had over 40 meal sponsorships with a fairly even split between businesses and private families.

We have great support from the community, including the local faith community, the Chelmsford Business Association, the Senior Center, the Chelmsford Mobile Home Park, and the Veteran's Agent for the Town of Chelmsford. All of these partners are very supportive and help us to spread the word about our dinners.

February 2013

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My Father's House

My Father's House in North Chelmsford is an independent, non-profit program which provides housing and life-skill classes to women in crisis pregnancy situations. It has been in existence since 1990. When the staff and moms at My Father's House first heard about Table of Plenty, they knew they couldn't take part in it because of time restraints and transportation issues. But TOPIC volunteer Bonnie Rankin offered to deliver each week, thus allowing the residents to enjoy the meal and relieving the burden of cooking one night a week. It's a win-win: they are truly grateful and Bonnie says, "The action of helping others lifts your spirits, tugs at your heart, and challenges you. I believe that



helping others has a powerful ability to heal you from the inside out. Doing and serving not only speaks to my humanist yearnings, but shows me a glimpse of the divine. To me, serving and gratitude go hand in hand and I am happy to do it."

Gentle Arms Daily Providing Transportation



Last fall, two of our Board members, Caithlin and Craig, had set up a TOPIC display at the Chelmsford Farmers' Market on the town common. While there, they struck up a conversation with Ann McGuigan and Edie Copenhaver of Gentle Arms Daily Transportation Company. Gentle Arms Daily is a 24-

hour per day, door-to-door transportation service catering to the needs of the adult community. Caithlin and Craig explained that for a while now, many families who are staying in the Best Western Hotel's transitional housing had been walking on Tuesday nights to dinner at Table of Plenty. During the seasons with good weather this is not a problem. However, in the winter and on rainy nights, it is sometimes not possible for them to make the trip. Ann and Edie graciously offered to provide transportation for these parents and children so they would not have to miss the meals.

~ Thank you Gentle Arms Daily! ~

Thank You to Our Meal Sponsors

- ◇ *Bob and Judy Adamson*
- ◇ *Best Western*
- ◇ *The Clergy Association*
- ◇ *Domino's Pizza*
- ◇ *Walter and Lynn Dunaj*
- ◇ *Kristen and Joe Flynn*
- ◇ *Landmark Realty*
- ◇ *Barbara Quinn*
- ◇ *Soha-Gregoire Families*

Why do they sponsor? For some, it is to give back to their community. For others, it is in memory of a loved one. Some sponsor as a gift - a birthday present, Mother's or Father's Day, Christmas. This past month, we had one family give \$260 in order to "set the table in memory of the 26 lives that were lost in Newtown, CT."

Sponsoring a Meal



If you or your business are interested in sponsoring a meal, contact Table of Plenty at 978-710-8EAT(8328).

Never Missed a Meal

When Table of Plenty first opened its doors nearly three years ago, we had seven guests. Today, on an average night approximately 60 friends sit down for dinner. John Wadman, pictured here, was one of the seven at our first dinner, and he hasn't missed a meal with us since. He even passed up an invitation to another Christmas dinner in order to continue his unbroken record!



Meet Two of Our Volunteer Teams

Note: Over the next few editions of our newsletter, we hope to introduce you to our nine wonderful volunteer serving teams at Table of Plenty.



PAM'S TEAM

Pictured: Candy Chase, Barbara Madden, Marianne Hutchins, Pam Murray (Team Leader), Donna Bates, Steve Murray, Jon Kurland. Missing from photo: Carolyn Quinn, David Hughes, Sara Kurland, Denise Daigle, Alycia Howe-Murray, Jan Dudley, Imelda Murray, Deb Freilich, Francine Gagnon, Patty Stuart.

When Pam Murray, who teaches fifth grade at McCarthy Middle School in Chelmsford, went looking to create a team of volunteers for Table of Plenty (see above), she didn't have to go far. Many of her team members are relatives, and many are other educators whose schedule allows them to set up and serve dinner.

The "Fifth Tuesday Group" (see below), under the leadership of Maggie Marshall, comes from Trinity Lutheran Church and All Saints Episcopal Church. They are the group that serves when a month has five Tuesdays, allowing the other eight teams to rotate evenly.

THE FIFTH TUESDAY GROUP MAGGIE'S TEAM

Pictured: Nancy Grove, Richard Grove, Gwen Donovan, Gail Langner, Cheryl Norgaard, Lois Freeman, Maggie Marshall, Marilyn Livingston, Elaine Jelescheff, Gene Krause



Cooks' Report

Our fearless leader, Jim Comeau, has been a wiz at finding deals for food and equipment. He and Paul Windt have been going to the Merrimack Valley Food Bank and scoring a great deal of food at a much reduced price. We also qualified for MEFAP (MA Emergency Food Assistance Program), which is a state funded program that the Food Bank uses to purchase foods that are distributed free to all eligible emergency food providers on an "agency choice" basis. The learning curve was steep as the cooks tested the Food Bank food versus store-bought, but the cost savings was remarkable. After almost three



years of trying many different menu items, our cooks are going back to basics—finding recipes that have been popular and fine tuning them. **Table of Plenty is looking for a few more people to join the Cooking Crew. If you or someone you know may be interested, please contact us.**

Jean Rowe Farewell



A longtime friend and guest at Table of Plenty, Jean (McDonough) Rowe passed away on January 22nd. Wife of the late Brian Rowe, Jean leaves her sister, Barbara Geist; nephews George, Robert, Dennis and Donald Geist; and a niece Mary Kiley. Jean was a member of the Clown Club Alley 54 in Salem, MA. She will be missed by her many friends and dinner companions at Table of Plenty.

Jean's favorite dinner was the chicken pot pie. A dinner in her memory will be served on March 5th.

Thank Yous

- Charlie Dahlgren of Evergreen Signs for providing the TOPIC sponsor signs.
- St. Mary Spirit of Christmas for the gift cards to Market Basket for our guests at Christmastime.
- Francis and Cornelia Kirkpatrick of The First Parish Team for donating a cake for dessert.
- Panera Bread of Westford for providing bakery products.

President's Message

With the continued support of our entire community, Table of Plenty has been able to expand the work begun almost three years ago. As you read on page two, our guest list this year increased with young women and children in temporary housing at Best Western. When it was no longer an option for them to walk to dinner, Gentle Arms Daily graciously offered transportation. For our guests, this is a place of comfort and caring.

I'm also pleased to share that Table of Plenty has been nominated as Non-Profit of the Year for the Enterprise Bank Celebration of Excellence (COE). Launched in May of 2008, the COE has created a forum where business and community leaders can be publicly honored and recognized for their entrepreneurial spirit, hard work, dedication, perseverance, and commitment to their organizations and communities. Many thanks to Anthony Kalil who nominated TOPIC and also to Debbie

Kendrick for all her efforts in providing the background material for this nomination. We are truly honored and humbled.



Maureen McKeown

| Board of Directors | Committee Members | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>President: Maureen McKeown Vice President: Jerry Serra Treasurer: Deborah Kendrick Clerk: Mary Moriarty</p> | <p>Accountant Gerry Paolilli</p> | <p>First Parish Representative Walter Cole</p> |
| <p>Craig Bonaceto Joe Hehn Marianne Hutchins Mike Kendrick Caithlin O'Brien Merri Serra</p> | <p>Attorney Kevin S. Sullivan</p> | <p>Inventory Coordinator Sharon Hehn</p> |
| | <p>Cooks Committee Jim Comeau, Coordinator Nancy Grove, Nutritionist Colleen Craven Fran Geurard Adelle Stavis Paul Windt</p> | <p>Publicity Coordinator Diane Taylor</p> |
| | | <p>Technical Communications Craig Bonaceto Caithlin O'Brien</p> |
| | | <p>Volunteer Coordinator Marianne Hutchins</p> |

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| <p>Contact Us</p> | <p>Mailing Address: Table of Plenty in Chelmsford, Inc. 18 St. Andrew's Way N. Chelmsford, MA 01863</p> | <p>Email: tableofplentyinchelmsford@gmail.com</p> |
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