



## Table of Plenty in Chelmsford Newsletter

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### Dinner and a Show

A delicious meal, efficient and friendly service, lovely conversation and dinner companions...what could be better? Beginning this past December, Table of Plenty has one more reason to brag. On the last Tuesday of each month, pianist Cathy Martin and singer Julianne O'Keefe can be found entertaining our guests during dinner. Cathy is the music director at St. Mary's church, where Julianne also serves as cantor. Their repertoire ranges from popular music, oldies-but-goodies, seasonal songs, to even "Frere Jacques" in honor of a French speaking family



that attends the meals. It is heart-warming to see the Table of Plenty family gather 'round the piano for a sing-a-long after a hearty meal.

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### Volume 1, Issue 2

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#### By the numbers:

- 7 guests at our first meal
- 60 - average number of guests now served weekly
- 1478 - number of meals served through January
- Over 120 volunteers
- \$200 - \$250 average cost of one week's meal
- 2 cancellations due to snow

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### TOPIC in the News

- On February 16th, Board members Jerry Serra (Vice President), Mary Moriarty (Secretary), and Pat Schroeder (Chef) represented TOPIC on Dennis Ready's Chelmsford Cable TV show "**Town Talk**". Be sure to check Chelmsford's cable listings for upcoming showings.
- In December, TOPIC was featured in an article on reaching out to those in need in **Chelmsford Patch**, an online news service.
- **Chelmsford Patch** also gave a shout-out to TOPIC in February as one of five charities doing great work in Chelmsford.

View news stories about TOPIC online at:  
[www.tableofplentyinchelmsford.org/Pages/news.html](http://www.tableofplentyinchelmsford.org/Pages/news.html)

## Benefit Concert

### **SAVE THE DATE!**

**Saturday, April 9th, 2011**

Each year, **Henry and Janice Tervo** perform a concert of chamber music with the proceeds going to a charity of their choice. This year, they have chosen Table of Plenty as the recipient of their generosity. Often accompanied by their son, Mark, as well as various other friends, Henry and Janice entertain on the oboe and cello.

The concert will be held at The First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church in Chelmsford (where TOPIC serves its meals). Following the benefit concert there will be a reception and refreshments. More information on show times and how to purchase tickets will be available soon.

Many thanks to Henry and Janice! We look forward to spring and an enjoyable evening of music and socializing.



## Many Thanks Go Out To...

- **The Meat House in Chelmsford** for their donations and wholesale pricing.
- **Tom Coffey** for donating the freezer for the kitchen.
- **The Benoit/Russell Family** for donating the kitchen shelving.
- **Bagel Alley** for their bagel donations.
- **Chris and Mary McKeown** for



donating a commercial gas range.

- **The Danish Pastry House** for their bread donations.
- **John and Ann Coddaire** for donating the new pot racks and

pans.

- **Girl Scout Troop 79** of Tewksbury for the wonderful Thanksgiving centerpieces.
- **Kelly Boshar** for donating a birthday cake for dessert each month.
- **The First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church** for a "Faith in Action" grant.

## Spotlight on Talent



Although it takes many "on-site" volunteers to make Table of Plenty successful, there are others who contribute their time and talents behind the scenes.

We would like to recognize three of them: our Accountant, **Gerry Paollili**, and our attorneys, **Kevin Sullivan** and **John Byrne Carroll** (deceased). Gerry, Kevin and John

were instrumental in helping us set up and incorporate Table of Plenty. We continue to consult with them from time to time on issues that come up.

If you have an area of expertise that you would like to lend to Table of Plenty, we would love to hear from you!



## What is it?

It doesn't take very long when you are working in the Table of Plenty kitchen or dining room to notice that we have a lot more rules than you do in your kitchen at home. As a program serving food in Massachusetts, we fall under the MA State Health Department's Food Code. This gives us a few more rules to follow.

- *Why do we wear hats or hair-nets?* Guests don't like to see hair in their soup.
- *Why no open toed shoes or sandals in the kitchen?* If boiling water or a knife falls on your

foot wouldn't you be glad you aren't wearing sandals?

- *Why all of the fuss about gloves?* Gloves are to protect the food from you. This means you need to watch what you touch when you are wearing gloves.
- *Why does it matter which sink we use to wash our hands, and why do we wash them so often?* Hand washing is also very important to keeping our food safe. We require everyone to wash their hands with soap in a sink devoted only to hand wash-

ing before starting to work.

The people who help us follow these and other rules took an 8-hour class with a test and are ServSafe certified.

One certified person is scheduled each week. In addition to helping the volunteers stay safe, the ServSafe person also watches food temperatures while the food is cooking and held for serving, oversees the sanitation of the tables, counters, and dishwasher, and makes sure food is safely stored. We appreciate everyone's help in keeping our food safe.

## Dinner and a Show (continued from page 1)



On the third Tuesday of each month, Table of Plenty guests enjoy the singing and guitar-playing talents of **Jeff Peterson**. A Chelmsford native, Jeff offered his services after he heard about the weekly meal from his neighbor, Joe Hehn, a board member of Table of Plenty. His music brings a

smile to the faces of our guests and is a wonderful way to give back to the community where he grew up.

## Sponsoring a Meal

Is your business interested in sponsoring a meal? The cost of each meal is \$200, and we will advertise your support at the dinner you sponsor as well as in our literature that is distributed throughout the Chelmsford area. We would also welcome employees of your business to come and help our volunteer team serve the

meal. The reward is special, and the need is great.

Call Joe Hehn at 978-250-5954 for more information or to reserve a date to sponsor.



## A Note from our Host - In lieu of a President's Message this month, we are pleased to share these thoughts from Reverend Ellen Rowse Spero of The First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church.

As a Unitarian Universalist, I believe that God is love, that every person is a beloved child of God, and what God wants most is for us to take good care of one another. When we do this, we help create heaven on earth. And so, for me, our congregation's participation in Table of Plenty offers us a slice of heaven.

Hospitality and gratitude are the two core religious practices in our church. So we were delighted when TOP asked if they could use our building. We continue a tradition that began with the founding of our congregation in 1665: as the place in town where people from the whole community, not just the congregation, have gathered. We have learned about the importance of communication in sharing space. TOP

has helped us see our kitchen with new eyes. They worked with us to remove unneeded items, open up space, and find new equipment so we can more easily share our space. We have worked together patiently through the natural ups and downs that come with trying to serve a weekly meal to sixty people out of a kitchen that is used during the rest of the week for all kinds of other things. I have appreciated everyone's willingness to listen, and to give of their time and talent to make things work, from both my congregation and TOP.

I enjoy so much about being TOP's "home base." As an avid cook and baker, I love being able to come down to the kitchen on Tuesday afternoons, even when it is not our week to cook, to help Pat Schroeder and to learn from her,

whether it is how to make green onion florets or emergency bread pudding for sixty. I love the energy and camaraderie of the conversation between the guests, and that of the volunteers working side by side. I am in awe of the commitment and generosity of spirit of the TOP Board members and have really enjoyed getting to know them. I love that people of different faiths or perhaps no particular faith gather together at our church to welcome others for that most basic but most important spiritual practice: the breaking of bread together. And amidst all this that I love, I pray too that a time will come when we will not need to have such meals: that no one will be lonely or hungry.

### Board of Directors

**President:** Maureen McKeown

**Vice President:** Jerry Serra

**Treasurer:** Deborah Kendrick

**Secretary:** Mary Moriarty

Craig Bonaceto

Joe Hehn

Nancy Grove

Marianne Hutchins

Mike Kendrick

Caithlin O'Brien

Pat Schroeder

Merri Serra

Nancy Stadlander

Diane Taylor

### Committee Members

#### Cooks Committee

Pat Schroeder, Chef

Nancy Grove, Nutritionist

Jim Comeau

Adele Stavis

Angie Taranto

#### First Parish Representative

Bonnie Rankin

#### Fundraising Director

Joe Hehn

#### Inventory Coordinator

Sharon Hehn

#### Publicity Director

Diane Taylor

#### Technical Communications

Craig Bonaceto

Caithlin O'Brien

#### Volunteer Coordinator

Marianne Hutchins

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#### Facebook:

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Ask a friend to join our mailing list by emailing us at: [tableofplentyinchelmsford@gmail.com](mailto:tableofplentyinchelmsford@gmail.com)