



Spring 2020

Table of Plenty in Chelmsford Newsletter

TOPIC's COVID-19 Response



In early March, as closings were taking place around the country and the state, Table of Plenty was asked by the town to shut down operations. We look forward to the day when the Senior Center reopens and it is safe to resume meals and gather together again as a community of friends. In the meantime, we'd like to share how TOPIC has remained active, what resources are available for those who need assistance, and how you can help:

- ◆ The Chelmsford Schools are serving Grab N Go Meals every Monday through Friday from 4:00—5:30 pm at the front entrance of Chelmsford High School. These meals are available to all of our Table of Plenty guests.
- ◆ Last Fall, TOPIC began working with Chelmsford Public Schools to provide bags of food to selected students in the Chelmsford School System for them to take home to reduce weekend hunger. We have expanded this program since the start of the pandemic and are packing more bags, as well as a number of bags for seniors and veterans. If you would like to contribute there are two ways: Every Wednesday from 9:00—Noon, we accept donations of food and supplies at Harrington Elementary School Back Door #6. The items needed each week are listed on our website. Monetary Donations can also be made on our website, www.tableofplenty.org, and are used to purchase food and other needed items for this program.

SOME THANK YOUs...



- * **Our Volunteers** who collect, sort, and pack food and supplies at the Harrington Drop Off. You are Heroes!
- * **Goods Donors** — a huge thank you to all who have dropped off food and supplies at Harrington School on Wednesday mornings—many who contribute on a weekly basis!
- * **Monetary Donations** - many more have made monetary donations which have been used to purchase needed food and supplies to supplement the dropped off goods.
- * **Artisans Exchange** - for directing their patrons to us to make donations
- * **ERA Realty** — for their generous donation
- * **Harbor of Hope Christian Church**- for partnering with us during the month of May to provide food, supplies, and gift cards
- * **Hana Barker - President of Council of Chelmsford Schools, TOPIC Volunteer Nancy Rager, Eileen DeChaves of the Artisans Exchange , and Amy Acker** for the donation of homemade masks which we distributed with the bags of food and supplies that go home to Chelmsford families
- * **Barbara Ludinsky**, one of our kitchen prep volunteers, for her donation of Market Basket Gift Cards for the bags.
- * **Melissa Bartos Donation**—In exchange for a photo shoot of her family on her front stairs by Alison Taylor Photography. This was part of the #frontstepsproject
- * **Amici's**—for their donation of meal gift cards
- * **Inderpreet Singh and Avneet Kaur**—for their generous donation of fresh produce

TOPIC's COVID-19 Response (continued)

- ◆ With donated funds we have on occasion purchased meal cards from local restaurants (for take-out) to be included in the weekend bags to provide meals to families in need and to support our local businesses.
- ◆ We are assisting the Food Pantry in Chelmsford with getting supplies to serve those who have need of this service.
- ◆ Table of Plenty was approached by The Establishment in North Chelmsford to identify those most in need of meals. The Establishment received a \$1000 donation from The Boston Celtic Shamrock Foundation as part of their Food For Heroes and Homes program. Meals were delivered to many of our families in need. See the story here: <https://www.boston25news.com/video/?id=4893629>. Meals will once again be provided by The Establishment to more of our identified families through the generous donation of Ken Lefebvre of Crosspoint Financial Advisors who is also a Selectman in Chelmsford.



MUSIC AT HOME

Two of the musicians who entertain us each month at Table of Plenty, Katie Vooy and Matt Curtis, have recorded some of their piano duets so that we can enjoy them from home. To listen, visit [Katie and Matt Duets](#) on YouTube. Please subscribe or check back often -- they will be uploading new videos every Tuesday!

Thank you Katie and Matt for finding this way to play for us while we need to be socially distant!

Thank You to Our Meal Sponsors and Donors

The following donors either sponsored a meal while we were open, or they contributed an amount equal to or greater than a meal sponsorship:

- ◆ **Adam Keenan Foundation**
 - ◆ **Kim Adams and Joe Janowski**
 - ◆ **Denise Angwin and Ralph Mason**
 - ◆ **Blake Funeral Home**
 - ◆ **In Honor of John and Ellie Clancy**
 - ◆ **The Danahy Family**
 - ◆ **Robert and Mary Fran Doiron**
 - ◆ **Dan and Janet Dubner for Democracy Forward**
 - ◆ **Norman Eisenmann**
 - ◆ **Elm Hill Labs**
 - ◆ **In Memory of James Fedele**
 - ◆ **Mary Fedele**
 - ◆ **Eric Foster Plumbing and Heating**
 - ◆ **Bob and Heather Green**
 - ◆ **The Girls Night Out (GNO) Group**
 - ◆ **Paul and Jennifer Hardy**
 - ◆ **Connie Hoffman**
 - ◆ **L'Hussier Insurance Agency**
 - ◆ **Kathy and Mike Hogan**
 - ◆ **Sue Jefferson**
 - ◆ **Rhodes and Donna Johnson**
 - ◆ **Diane Leath**
 - ◆ **The Lighthouse School**
 - ◆ **Kathy Lodi**
 - ◆ **In Memory of Lucy and Jillian**
 - ◆ **In Honor of Irene Masson Steinmann**
 - ◆ **The McCoy Restaurant Group**
 - ◆ **NE Medical Insurance Agency**
 - ◆ **Jim and Trish O'Donnell**
 - ◆ **Tomoko Patterson**
 - ◆ **Ted Rokas and Zesty's**
 - ◆ **Stonegate Road Families**
 - ◆ **The Thornton Family**
 - ◆ **Dan Ward**
 - ◆ **Many donations in Memory of Maureen McKeown, Founder of Table of Plenty**
- ...and many more businesses and friends who wished to remain anonymous.
- Many thanks to all for your generosity.

Happy Ten Year Anniversary to TOPIC!



On May 18th of 2010, after many months of planning, Table of Plenty in Chelmsford, Inc. opened its doors! Located in the dining room of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Chelmsford Center, we served seven guests that first Tuesday evening. Well, it didn't take long for word to get out, and now ten years later at the beginning of 2020 we were averaging over 100 guests weekly at our new location, the Chelmsford Senior Center.

In the past ten years, TOPIC has served over 40, 000 meals with the help of an army of volunteers who have given close to 70,000 hours of their time!

And now, during the pandemic, we have adjusted and continue to reach out to the community. In November of last year, we lost our Founder and President, Maureen McKeown, who passed away. Even to the end, Maureen inspired a new facet to our mission with the weekend school food program, which has expanded now that schools are closed and we cannot serve meals.

We can't wait to add to the 40,000 plus meals that we have already served. A Ten Year Celebration will take place in the future when it is safe to do so, and we look forward to seeing you there.



“Introducing” Mary Moriarty, President of TOPIC

At Table of Plenty's Annual Meeting in January, the Board of Directors unanimously elected a new President, Mary Moriarty. While this article is meant to “introduce” Mary to the TOPIC community, she really needs no introduction. Since our inception, Mary has spent countless hours volunteering at the meal site in every capacity—greeting, serving, prepping, cleaning, and more. But what we don't all see is the endless hours of behind the scenes work that she has undertaken to ensure that Table of Plenty lives its mission of alleviating hunger and social isolation in our community.

Mary met our Founder, Maureen, many years ago when they were both parishioners and marriage preparation coordinators at St. Mary's Church. A few years after that, they were in a prayer group together when Maureen asked if any members would be interested in helping to start a weekly meal in Chelmsford. Mary has served on the Executive Committee of TOPIC as its Secretary since its inception.

Well-known in Chelmsford, Mary is a recently retired McCarthy Middle School teacher, which gives her more time with her family, friends, and many interests. When not at Table of Plenty, you may see Mary and her husband, Jim, taking walks through town, spending time with their two kids and grand-kids, or competing in golf tournaments.

Every day we miss the presence of Maureen McKeown. One of her greatest gifts was the ability to recognize the talents of others and to ask and encourage them to use those talents to better the community around them. We feel that Maureen would be delighted that Table of Plenty is being led now by such a gifted, compassionate, and energetic President.

President's Message

I hope that all of you in our Table of Plenty family are weathering this pandemic as best you can. COVID-19 has certainly taken a toll on our collective physical, social and emotional health, and the impact to our economy may be with us for a long time. In the meantime, we are all becoming experts in Zoom meetings and virtual game nights!

As you read in the article regarding our response to the pandemic, even though our volunteers are not serving meals, they have stayed busy. If any good is to come out of this crisis, it is seeing our community come together to help its neighbors.

I miss our friend, Maureen, and wonder what she would think about all of this. I know she'd be proud that Table of Plenty has tried its best to continue to meet the needs of the community. And I know she'll be with us when we once again start serving a meal on Tuesday evenings. Until then, stay well and be safe.



Mary Moriarty

Founder

Maureen McKeown

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