



...THE NEWS!

SERVING HUNGRY AND HOMELESS LONG ISLANDERS

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INN THIS ISSUE

LEGACY OF SUPPORT
page 2

REFLECTIONS
page 3

FELICIA TUCKER
page 4

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT
page 4

UPCOMING EVENTS
page 5

WISH LIST
page 5

CTC STAFF
page 6

VOLUNTEERS
page 7

**Save
THE
Dates:**

(see page 5)

- November 8th – Day of Thanks and Giving
- December 3rd – The INN Luncheon

GUEST STORY

Expression Through Art

The Art Group at the Mary Brennan INN soup kitchen started about three years ago. The idea of an art experience taking place in the actual soup kitchen came from a group of local artists who had been friends of The INN for over 25 years. Art had played such an important role in their lives and they felt strongly that it could also enrich the lives of guests.

At first the group was a monthly offering... they would bring in different art materials with different themes that could be inspiring for the group. As the group went on, the ideas for the processes grew out of the ideas and needs of the guests themselves. Some guests became consistent attendees in the group. One such member is David.

The first group that David attended involved painting wooden three-dimensional houses. David sat down quietly with his hoodie pulled down over his face. It was hard to tell how old he was and difficult to see his expression (we at first thought

he was in his twenties). He accepted the offering of the wooden structure and immediately started to paint. He sat off by himself in total concentration and created what appeared to be a barn. He worked on the outside first with a camouflage motif and the group leaders imagined that he was a veteran. He only spoke to ask for materials and left his piece behind without any goodbye.

The group leaders were all surprised when he showed up for their next group. This process was "Walk a Mile in my Shoes". The image that he drew speaks volumes of his current experience. We did not realize at first

(continued pg 3)



David's art expressed

TO SPONSOR A MEAL, PLEASE CALL (516) 486-8506, EXT. 115

CONTINUING A LEGACY OF SUPPORT FOR THE INN

Daniel and Linda Weil are longtime friends and supporters of The INN. In his own words, Daniel describes how the inspiration from his parents makes it important to continue their legacy.

“My siblings and I grew up in Westbury, where my parents settled after starting their family. My parents immigrated to this country with very little and so were always thrifty. In spite of this, or maybe because of it, they had a strong conviction that they also instilled in their children; that it was our collective responsibility to help those who were not as fortunate as we were. Over the years, my parents found several charities that they wanted to support that truly matched their principles and ideals. At the top of that list was The INN. For several decades, my parents made annual contributions to The INN, which continued even after they moved out of state almost 20 years ago. In addition to their annual contributions, both of my parents left significant bequests to The INN in their wills. My father passed away 14 years ago; my mother passed this past October. Their support of The INN and the greater Long Island community remained steadfast over the years and it certainly had an impact on me. Inspired by my parents, my wife and I also came to support The INN’s mission as a meaningful way to give back to our community. Over the years my wife and I have been fortunate enough to be able to provide monetary donations



Dorle and Fred Weil

and donate several vehicles that have been given to INN guests or used for their operations. Through our continuing support of The INN, we continue to support our neighbors in need and honor the memory of our parents, Dorle and Fred Weil.”

Dan & Linda Weil

In Times of Crisis, The INN Can Count on YOU! **THANK YOU**

Because of your generosity, we were able to do THIS, from March thru August 2020



94,475 meals were given out to over 22,000 guests



5,857 guests have been assisted by phone at the CTC



3,511 pantry bags of groceries were given out to families



44 guests have been safely quarantined in INN shelters and 34 guests have been placed in temporary housing



Serving Hungry and Homeless Long Islanders with Dignity, Respect, and Love

You Can Help!

www.the-inn.org/covid19



Jean Kelly
Executive Director

REFLECTION

In times of great uncertainty, it helps to look towards your strengths.

What gives you the courage to handle unexpected change? How do you overcome unforeseen

obstacles or handle grief from a sudden loss of a loved one?

Everyone is currently facing many changes, and yet, here we are. Still hopefully standing. Still showing up. Still engaged. Congressman John Lewis, in an apolitical way, so beautifully suggested that, in order to help our society, you need to “find a way... to get in the way”. (Not out of the way, but “INN” the way).

For 37 years, The INN, and all of you, have helped us get “INN” the way of hunger. And then get “INN” the way of homelessness. (From the beginning of the pandemic to mid-September, at the Mary Brennan INN we served 120,000 lunches... last year for the same time period it was 40,000 lunches.) Many guests come to pick up meals for their family and friends who are unable to leave their homes. We have even been able to install portable toilets for the guests to help them feel comfortable while waiting on line. They, and all of us, are helping to get “INN” the way of their hunger and hopelessness. Thanks so

much for your exceptional generosity which made this possible.

We need to realize in these changing times, that working together is the best path forward.

Unfortunately, this summer we did lose one guest of The INN. Not to the virus, but to violence.

A wonderful man named Andre had gallantly fought his way out of living on the streets and, with the help of The INN, had turned his life in another direction, where there was hope and a future. He had so inspired us with his resilience and strength. May he now rest in peace.

Your support, your contributions and your prayers give us the courage to continue through the unexpected changes and unforeseen obstacles and even the grief of losing one of the guests.

Thank you for your continued belief in our efforts. We are here representing you to those who have nowhere else to turn. May you all be forever blessed for your kindness and courage. May you all also stay safe and healthy. You are precious beyond words.

Love,

Jean Kelly
Executive Director

P.S. Thanks for understanding our need to reschedule our major fundraising events in 2020! Hope to see you in-person next year!

Guest Story (continued from pg 1)

that David was living on the street.

As the months went on, David attended almost every group that was offered. He started to come by early for the session and help set up the materials ... always interested in “what we were doing today”. His appearance also changed. His hoodie eventually came off in stages and we realized that he was a fifty year old man who had probably been living on the street for a long time. He started to share bits about himself while still not wanting us to know that he was on the street or had severe emotional issues.

After working with David for over two years, we saw the art group had become David’s place to shine. He enjoyed painting and he enjoyed helping others in the art group.

The INN’s staff successfully placed David in the Donald Axinn INN men’s shelter. Here his personal journey of becoming a “new man” continued. He found a job. After that, The INN was able to find him affordable housing near where he worked. David’s journey from painting a toy house in the art group to moving into his own home was complete.



FELICIA TUCKER, INN BOARD MEMBER

"This year has been eye opening for everyone I am sure. When I think about The INN and what it means to me as a board member it brings a lot of thoughts to mind, of

which I will focus on just one. I am forever thankful for what God gives me every day. Even though we have all re-evaluated our lives because of COVID-19 it also makes me think of how important The INN is to our guests and Long Island in general. So many people have lost their jobs and sources of income. When we think about how many people were

and still are worried about feeding their families and securing employment, it means the world to me that I am a part of an organization that assists those in need every day and does so with dignity and respect. In addition to The INN guests being served when the world is not in complete turmoil, it is comforting to know The INN is assisting those in need that never thought they would need The INN. Most likely, some of those people have contributed to The INN in the past. I am so honored and humbled to be on the Board of Directors for an organization that provides for those in need during times like now and during times when most people do not think about The INN being a resource for them."

Felicia R. Tucker, *Principal*
KPMG LLP

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT

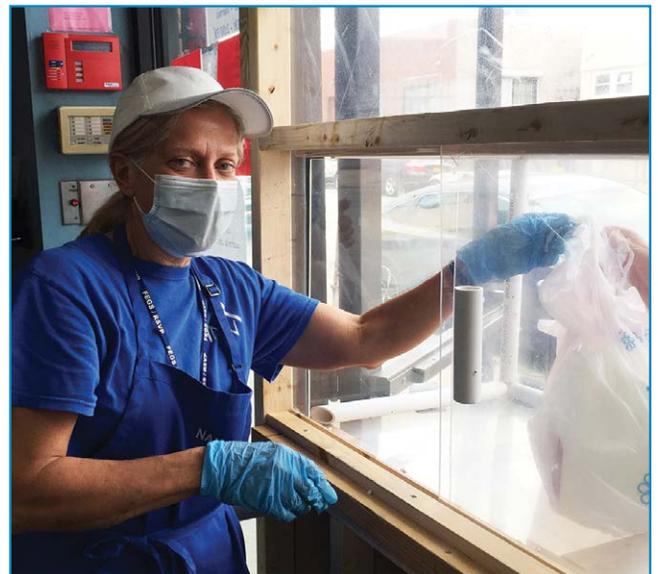
Using her skills to make a difference – Nancy Silver's first year at The INN

In 2019, Nancy Silver retired from a career in architecture. Like many volunteers who find their way to The INN, she was looking for something meaningful to fill her time. With a flexible schedule for volunteers and a wide range of positions and ways to help those in need, Nancy decided The INN was right for her. One year later, she has become a valued member of the volunteer team. At first, interacting with guests and organizing donations had become her niche, but last August, she decided to use her background and professional skills to expand her role and assist with writing grants to raise money for The INN, which proved to be a great decision. To date Nancy has helped The INN submit proposals

for over \$1 million in funding, the impact of which can already be seen with current renovations to the Mary Brennan INN. Nancy has also utilized her design skills to produce graphical fact sheets demonstrating The INN's impact on the community.

When Covid-19 hit, Nancy stepped up and helped to make sandwiches and pack lunch bags. As more volunteers have returned to help over the following months, she took the role of distributing "take-to-go" bagged lunches to guests at the front door.

"It has been extremely rewarding



to work together with such a wonderful staff and group of volunteers to contribute to The INN's important mission," she says.

Nancy has cheerfully accepted whatever challenge she has been asked to help with and has done so enthusiastically. Nancy, thank you for your extraordinary effort and commitment to The INN over your first year as a volunteer!

FALL EVENTS AT THE INN

Events are important to The INN for many reasons, including fun with friends, sharing time with people who have a common interest and the chance to express support for the work done by The INN's volunteers and staff.

We realize current safety standards restrict in-person events. The fun with friends and sharing time together may be limited, but the importance of expressing support for the work of The INN's volunteers and staff remains. At The INN, we have moved to "virtual" events for the balance of this year.

The following three events will be taking place this Fall. While they will not be taking place in the traditional physical sense, they will be taking place virtually*. The descriptions below are meant to honor the intentions of each. Perhaps one or more may appeal to you.

Day of Thanks and Giving

Sunday, November 8. For many years the **Day of Thanks and Giving** has brought families together for an early Thanksgiving celebration at the Mary Brennan INN soup kitchen. Strong in purpose and vivid in symbolism, this event provides for holiday meals and activities at The INN.

Diwali

November (date to be determined). Each year the India Association of Long Island celebrates **Diwali**, the Indian "festival of lights" together with The INN. This celebration of "brightness over darkness" takes place at the Mary Brennan INN and is appropriately and ceremoniously bright and colorful.

INN Luncheon

Thursday, December 3. The INN's **2020 Luncheon** honors Ernst & Young — Long Island for their impressive efforts on behalf of all those served at The INN. In addition to supporting the work of volunteers and staff, this year the event will also provide holiday gifts for The INN's youngest guests.

**For more information on how to participate in any of the above virtual events, please contact Nora White at nwhite@the-inn.org or (516) 486-8506 ext. 108.*

We are keeping our fingers crossed for in-person 2021 events!

Thanksgiving WISH LIST

- Frozen Turkeys
- Frozen Hams
- Canned Yams
- Cranberry Sauce
- Canned Fruit
- Canned Soup
- Canned Vegetables (Corn, Peas, String Beans)
- Canned Gravy
- Stuffing
- Boxed Macaroni & Cheese
- Boxed/Packaged Mashed Potatoes

Donations may be dropped off at
Mary Brennan INN
100 Madison Avenue | Hempstead, NY 11550
Mon-Fri 9am-2pm

For additional information, kindly contact:
(516) 486-8506, ext. 114, or info@the-inn.org



The graphic features a red background with white polka dots. At the top is the INN logo (a blue house shape with 'INN' inside). Below it, the text reads 'Help INN Guests this Holiday Season' in white. The main title 'ADOPT-A-FAMILY' is in large, bold, white letters. Below the title is a white silhouette of a house containing a green heart and a family of four (two adults and two children) in white. At the bottom, contact information is provided in white text: 'Contact Cynthia Sucich details about families INN need in our shelters and soup kitchens and how you can make their holiday season a little brighter!', 'csucich@the-inn.org', and '(516) 486-8506 ext. 115'.

In the previous Newsletter, the staff at the Mary Brennan INN (MBI) soup kitchen was introduced. In this Newsletter **we introduce the staff at the Center for Transformative Change (CTC)**. The CTC is located adjacent to the Mary Brennan INN, and here guests are helped with housing, jobs, health needs, clothing, computer skills and much more. There is a “profound synergy” between the MBI and CTC. As with the MBI staff, the CTC staff work very closely with each other and with the guests. **They are the ones who energize “transformative changes”.**

We asked the CTC staff three questions: 1) Have you noticed a change in the needs of the guests since the start of the pandemic?, 2) have you had an unusual, or memorable interaction with a guest, and 3) what do you enjoy when not at work?



Katie Beach – Case Management Associate. “There used to be a big focus on job searching, resume building and identification. *Since the pandemic, we assist people mostly with emergency services.* This includes things like emergency shelter placement, helping people fill out paperwork for emergency SNAP and public assistance, along with emergency clothing. We’ve also noticed an influx of new guests who have recently lost their jobs due to the pandemic and require rental assistance.” “There was a guest I started working with who is deaf. We were able to communicate pretty effectively thru email and writing on

(continued pg 8)

Eileen Burke – Administrative Coordinator. “I notice two main differences. The first is that it is so much more difficult to help guests obtain documents like birth certificates because so many government offices were closed or working remotely at the start of the pandemic. There also has been an incredible increase in the number of guests seeking rental assistance. So many have lost their jobs or were furloughed without pay. Through the generosity of the Grafer Fund, Mother Cabrini Foundation and other donors, *we were able to help by providing small “good faith” payments to landlords to prevent eviction.*” “Two guests stand out. A long-time guest, came to me with a special request: the only help she needed



(continued pg 8)



Jackie Castellanos – Case Management Associate. “I have noticed the guests have been asking for more emergency services such as rental assistance, recertification with the Department of Social Services and clothing.” “The guest interactions that stand out the most to me are with the men at the Oscar Romero INN. I have been fortunate to see a group of men become, in a sense, a family. *Watching them work together as a unit to make sure everyone is safe and healthy during the pandemic is very special.*” “I enjoy spending time with my niece whether that is painting or watching shows she loves.”

Pat Martin – Director of Guest Services and Long Term Housing. “Since some of the guests lost their jobs, we have received numerous requests for rental assistance. The clothing boutique has had to be closed (due to the pandemic) since March, but our guests continue to need clothing and shoes. I think many families are starting to worry about clothing for their children to go to school.” “On Christmas 2019, Jackie and I spent the day cooking and making sure the gentleman at the Oscar Romero INN had a great holiday. We ate together and were able to give them gifts and enjoy their company.” “I enjoy reading and HGTV.”



Volunteers, donors, staff and Board members work together to make The INN possible. The volunteers at the Mary Brennan INN (MBI) have seen dramatic changes take place since March. Here we feature six MBI volunteers who have been serving since day-one of the COVID-19 crisis.



Gail Carr Although Gail had to put her pandemic volunteer work on temporary pause to tend to family needs, she started volunteering at The INN in March, right after the pandemic hit. It was pure coincidence. We needed some extra hands at the

same time her retirement gave her the flexibility to give back. She knew how important it was to be able to help at a time when so many were in need. Gail says, *“To be on the side of the door where we give of ourselves to help others with such a great organization and a wonderful group of people is truly a blessing.”*



Robert Dolan Every morning that Robert (Bob) Dolan pulls up to the soup kitchen, he sees the line of people forming out front, which proves to him that there is a great need to help others. He is another volunteer who got involved with

The INN right before the pandemic shut everything down in February of this year. He has been volunteering twice a week ever since on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Bob says, *“When I realized The INN still had to supply meals through the pandemic, I offered to help. I felt comfortable with the safeguards put in place and knew not everyone would be able to volunteer during this difficult time. It has been a great pleasure of mine to meet and work with all the wonderful staff and volunteers.”*



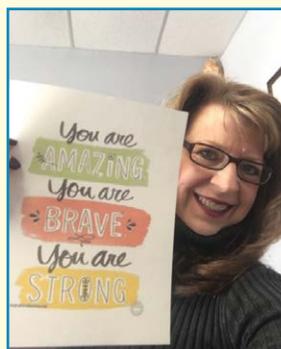
Anne Marie Ely Anne Marie has spent the last decade volunteering for The INN, either during special fundraising events or as a regular soup kitchen volunteer. With caution, she decided to continue to volunteer through the Covid-19

crisis, filling in where she is needed, making sandwiches and assembling lunch bags every Wednesday. For Anne-Marie, volunteering when so many are in need, *“provides the opportunity to not sit at home and worry, while doing something for others.”*



Paula Maturo Every Tuesday for a year before the pandemic, Paula had been volunteering at the Mary Brennan INN. Since March, she has been a staple at the soup kitchen for at least two days each week. Like the other volunteers, Paula

assembles and hands out as many bagged lunches and pantry bags as time allows. She says, *“For me it’s about gratitude and kindness. I absolutely love interacting with the guests, and I am honored to serve them.”*



Eileen Wangner Eileen started volunteering in the soup kitchen two years ago on Christmas Day. She returned for several other holidays after that, but her full time work schedule as the owner and operator of a children’s dance studio

(continued pg 8)

Staff (continued from pg 6)

Katie Beach

a notepad. One day he came in and needed help purchasing some batteries. When I looked up the battery number, it showed they were for a hearing aid! In all the months working with him, he never once mentioned he needed such a necessary thing. Although his hearing aid doesn't make him hear perfectly, it helps him hear (really important) things like car horns and sirens. We were able to order the batteries for him and he was so thankful." "I enjoy embroidery, taking care of my houseplants and live music."

Eileen Burke

was to go online and order a "Barbie Dream House" for her granddaughter. We were able to go online and Amazon delivered it right to her door. When CTC says we help with housing, we mean it, even if it's for a Barbie. Another guest, a recent cancer survivor, was having difficulty furnishing her new apartment and paying off some bills because of her medical conditions. CTC was able to connect her to two Breast Cancer Support groups which provided help and support. I was able to get some furniture donations through FaceBook and my husband and son helped her family move all the new furniture in." "I like to travel and have made getting to all 7 continents the top of my bucket list. 4 down, 3 to go!"



"Serving Hungry and Homeless Long Islanders"
211 Fulton Avenue Hempstead, NY 11550
(516) 486-8506 • www.the-inn.org

OUR MISSION

As a not-for-profit, volunteer-based organization, The INN provides a broad variety of essential services to assist those challenged by hunger, homelessness and profound poverty. We partner with those in need in a dignified and respectful manner to help them achieve self-sufficiency.

Follow us on:



Volunteers (continued from pg 7)

Eileen Wangner

and work in a public school didn't allow her to commit to a weekly volunteer schedule. When her business was forced to close during quarantine, Eileen began volunteering three days a week making countless sandwiches and assembling lunch and pantry bags. "I was able to return to work in July, but I was so glad I was able to lend a hand. I met some wonderful volunteers and I felt great knowing I was using my time for something so needed. I already miss my time spent at The INN. I'm happy to be back to work, but I look forward to returning to The INN in the near future."



Jay Zinger For two years, Jay has been volunteering at the Mary Brennan INN, mostly on school holidays and during the summer. Since the pandemic began, he has been coming in twice a week to give out lunch bags and help wherever he is needed, including helping

to document some of the pandemic experience in the soup kitchen on video. In Jay's words, "I get a huge feeling of satisfaction when I help at The INN. Seeing the guests waiting in line for hours for a bagged lunch makes me realize how much I am blessed and how I need to give back."

We thank you for your extraordinary effort which allowed The INN to continue to serve guests who come to us in their time of need.

These six individuals represent the hundreds of Mary Brennan INN volunteers who have had to temporarily remain at home. We miss them all, keep them in our prayers of gratitude, and look forward to the date when it will be safe for them to return.