



...THE NEWS!

SERVING HUNGRY AND HOMELESS LONG ISLANDERS

VOLUME XXXVIII NO. 4

www.the-inn.org

WINTER 2022

INN THIS ISSUE

REFLECTIONS

page 2

VOLUNTEER STORY

page 2

NELSON DEMILLE

page 3

STAYING WARM AT THE INN

page 4

POETRY CORNER

page 4

INN EVENTS

page 5

FOOTBALL AND FUNRAISING

page 5

WISH LIST

page 6

Save THE Dates:

(see page 5)

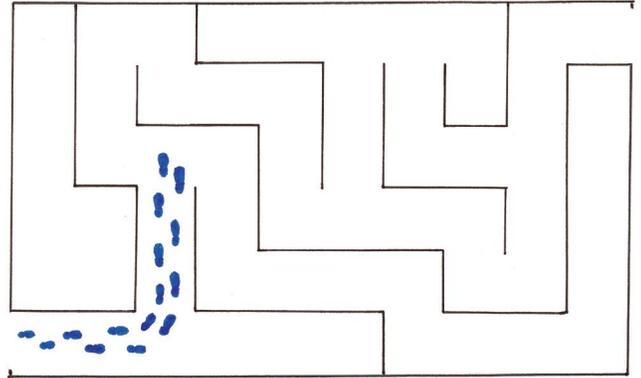
- February 10 – Wine Tasting
- May 11 – INNkeepers' Ball

GUEST STORY

Laura's Many Steps

Regular readers of this Newsletter know the lives of The INN's guests involve many twists and turns. But if one stays the course, there is a path to success.

Laura is a 28-year-old female who arrived at the Edna Moran INN family shelter (EMI) in February 2019 with her two-year-old son and her significant other. However, in December of 2019, she opted to remove her significant other from her case and add her eldest son, who was seven years old. When Laura arrived, she was employed as a one-on-one aid for a disabled child at Malverne High School. However, due

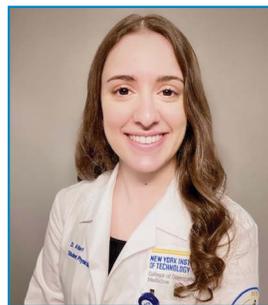


to lateness, she was terminated from that position.

Initially, Laura was upset about the termination, but she persevered and several months later obtained a position as a companion. With assistance from her father, she obtained an additional position scheduling medical appointments

(continued pg 6)

MOTIVATED THROUGH MEDICAL SCHOOL



Deena Albert volunteered at the Mary Brennan INN for three years while a pre-med undergrad student.

My name is Deena Albert and I am now a second-year medical student at NYITCOM, pursuing my dream of becoming a physician to care for those who would otherwise not be able to afford quality health care.

Volunteering at The INN has shaped my perspective on how to be a more compassionate and empathetic doctor.

During college, I made sure to reserve one day per week to volunteer at The INN. Interacting with guests and volunteers reminded me what all my difficult studying was for. The Mary Brennan INN (MBI) is always lively, happy, and energetic, filled with kind and compassionate staff and volunteers wanting to change the world for the better. It was very clear

(continued pg 3)

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

... JUST PASSING THROUGH ...



Jean Kelly
Executive Director

I was recently at the Mary Brennan INN during lunch when a long-time guest came over to say hello. I asked him how he felt things were going, and he said, "Considering the circumstances, everything is going pretty well. So many new faces among us." I said yes, with all the new guests it is hard for everyone to adjust to the extra time it takes to make sure everyone is fed. And then he said, "Well, you don't ever have to worry. You're doing what needs to be done for everyone ... on both sides of the counter ... remember to thank all those people behind the scenes who think we don't know who they are ... behind the masks ... we're all the same ... just passing through on different sides of the track." I thanked him for his kind words of encouragement and wished him a good day.

What I next realized was this guest has been coming to the soup kitchen for many years and had never spoken in this way. I knew his message had to be shared with all who support The INN, whether you help through donations, volunteering or being an employee: "thanks to all those people behind the scenes" at The INN.

As we begin our 39th year of "assisting those challenged by hunger, homelessness and

profound poverty," we are repeatedly reminded of the importance of feelings. This gentleman guest felt "everything was going pretty well." Your feelings are important too. It is important for you to "feel" the emotional place from where this guest's gratitude came.

Each of you has played a unique role at The INN and has a distinct purpose in participating on whatever level you can. I hope you know, that for each of the 5,800 people who are fed each week at the largest soup kitchen on Long Island, and the 90 people who are sheltered in the emergency shelters and long-term housing program, you are making a difference that is changing lives, and in some cases, even saving lives, because you chose to care.

Please remember your presence with The INN provides the inspiration we all need to pass through this life, regardless of which side of the track we're on. I believe ultimately both sides of the track become one. It is comforting to have you along for the journey. It is what makes every day truly meaningful and worthwhile.

May you continue to stay safe and healthy.
May you all be forever blessed. You are so very precious.

With much love and never-ending gratitude,

Jean Kelly
Executive Director



VOLUNTEER STORY – Every Dollar Counts

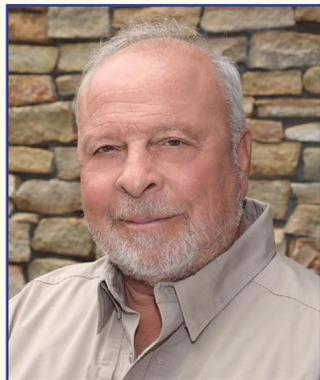
Paula Maturo is a Wednesday and Thursday volunteer at the Center for Transformative Change and Mary Brennan INN.

One afternoon Pam, a long-time guest of The INN (along with a shopping cart full of her belongings), came to the singles' window to pick up her hot lunch. After we exchanged hellos and a few words, she handed me \$2 to give a young girl in need — any young girl who needed

it. When I asked her are you sure? She said yes I am. She said she was blessed to receive a medal in the mail and showed me the medal. She said she wanted to pay it forward. It seemed to me that she was so happy to have received her religious medal, this was her way to thank someone. She happily took her lunch and off she went.

I took the \$2 and placed it in The INN donation box in the volunteer lounge, knowing that every dollar counts!

WHY I SUPPORT THE INN – Nelson DeMille



Nelson DeMille is the author of 21 novels, many NY Times bestsellers. He is best known for his John Corey series (Plum Island, The Lion's Game, Night Fall and more) as well as The General's Daughter and The Gold Coast.

The Interfaith Nutrition Network (The INN) was brought to my attention about 30 years ago by the late Don Axinn, a good friend, one of The INN's founding members and a lifetime supporter.

Don introduced me to many of The INN's staff, volunteers, and benefactors, and I was deeply moved and so impressed by the dedication and generosity of those men and women who were doing so much for those less fortunate.

Charity, they say, starts at home, and Long Island has been my home for 75 out of my 78 years. In a place like this, hunger and homelessness are not so apparent or obvious, and easy to ignore

because it's not supposed to exist. But I had my eyes opened by the men and women of The INN and that has made a lasting impression on me.

Many of my novels have Long Island settings – *Garden City, The Gold Coast, The Hamptons, and The North Fork*. This is the Long Island most of us know, and the Long Island that much of the country knows about through novels, TV, and books. But there is another Long Island half hidden beneath the affluence. This is the Long Island of those who've fallen on hard times, or who are struggling mentally, or who have recently arrived from less fortunate countries. These Long Islanders may not live in our neighborhoods, but they are our neighbors, and they are in need.

And so, though I write about the affluent Long Island, I am aware of, and I share my good fortune with those less fortunate, through The INN, and through other faith-based organizations and also civic organizations.

My support of the Interfaith Nutrition Network goes back over three decades, and I can honestly say that I've gotten more from The INN than I've given.

Motivated Through Medical School (continued from pg 1)

to me that I needed to join them in their fight against food insecurity and homelessness. During those busy days of serving over 300 people, I always tried to find time to sit down with guests when they wanted to simply talk. There was one guest, Andrew, who I would often chat with. On some busy days when I was running around trying to help many different people, he waited long after he finished his meal so we could catch up from the previous week. He shared some of his life stories, constantly asked how my studies were going, and sometimes we even participated in the art class together. Shortly before I was set

to begin medical school, I knew that I would have to take a step back from volunteering at The INN to focus on my studies. When I told Andrew that I would be taking a long break from volunteering, he said these 2 sentences that I will never forget: "Please don't forget us. Please come back as a physician and be our doctor." This conversation was the subject of my medical school applications, serves as my motivation to continue studying difficult topics during long nights, and is my inspiration to achieve my career goals to become a successful physician, dedicated to providing health care to underserved communities.

STAYING WARM AT THE INN

For most of us, the arrival of winter means putting away our summer clothing and taking out our winter clothing. This is something that comes along with living in the northeast.

For the guests of The INN, getting ready for the cold winter weather is a little different. Many of them come to The INN to ask for warm clothing – coats, hats, gloves, scarves and even winter boots. A number ask for hand warmers, those chemically activated packets that are commonly used for winter hiking and camping.

At this time of the year, The INN is fortunate to have donated winter wear on hand for the guests, and some hand warmers too. As in past years, many have donated new winter coats and others “gently-used coats”. In the past two years, with Covid, the “gently used” coats are professionally cleaned before distributing to the guests; and The INN is also fortunate there are dry cleaners who have helped with their services.



“Kids Helping Kids” donating new winter coats

Those infrequent (luckily) days when it is bitterly cold are a special concern. Even with a big heavy coat, gloves and a hat, it can be seriously dangerous outside. The INN is aware of this and takes special care on these days to make sure anyone living outside has a place indoors. Historical note: The INN opened its first emergency shelter in 1986 in response to two guests losing their lives after spending a night outside on a freezing cold day in February.

We hope you are staying safe and warm.

Poetry Corner

As I hand a plate
Of warm food
To the old woman
Who's next in line,
A large smile
Lines her face,
Her eyes sparkle
As she says “Thanks”
And I answer “it's my pleasure.”
As a young man takes her place,
I remember that anyone
In the serving line
Could be on the other side,
Tray in hand,
And I think
“There but for the grace of God...”

Dave Golbert

THE INN'S 2021 HOLIDAY SUPPORT
ALL MADE POSSIBLE BY YOU!

THANK YOU!



1,216 TURKEYS
and 999 Fixin' Bags
given to over 1,000
guests for Thanksgiving

52 FAMILIES

ADOPTED

Gifts & gift cards
donated to family members
including over 125 children



438 FAMILIES
RECEIVED TOYS

Over 2,000 toys were
given to families with
children for
the holidays



#GIVINGTUESDAY
OVER \$22,000 RAISED

For guests in need this holiday season

WWW.THE-INN.ORG/2021HOLIDAYHELP

INN EVENTS

February Wine Tasting

Thursday, February 10, 7:00 – 8:00 pm
This is a virtual event.

Introduced in 2021, the Wine Tasting proved to be a fun, interactive evening for all participants – whether seasoned oenophiles or wine rookies. **Carefully chosen bottles of wine will be delivered to your home** from Sparkling Pointe Vineyard on the North Fork. On the 10th, our friendly wine expert, Michael Falcetta, will greet you (virtually) and guide you through the delights of these wines. To register, or for further information, please visit www.the-inn.org/wine2022, or call (516) 486-8506 ext. 108.

2022 INNkeepers' Ball

Wednesday, May 11, 6:00 – 8:00 pm
Nassau Country Club, Glen Cove

The 2022 INNkeepers' Ball will be honoring Michael Dowling and Carol Silva, both inspiring friends and generous supporters of The INN. The Honorary Chairs are Frank J. & Janet DellaFera and Frank Ingrassia & Elizabeth McCaul. In 2021 the Ball moved to outdoors at the Nassau CC; this move was very well-received, and we are returning to the outdoor format for 2022.

Sponsorship, Journal and Ticket information is available at www.the-inn.org/2022ball. If you would like to receive an invitation, or have any questions, please call (516) 732-6009.



Michael Dowling



Carol Silva

FOOTBALL AND FUNRAISING IN SYOSSET

When Syosset resident Josh Berg realized that his own family, as well as families in his neighborhood, were becoming just a “little obsessed” with playing flag football, he decided to make it about more than just a game. With a goal of teaching their children the importance of giving back to those in need in their surrounding communities, Josh and some of his other friends and family members decided to create the first annual **Friday Night Lights Thanksgiving Bowl Game Extravaganza!** About 20 six and seven-year-olds and their families, all with a healthy spirit of competition and generosity, decided to participate.

They split the children into two teams. The second graders were the “Lions” and the first graders made



up the “Badgers.”

On Friday morning, November 10th on Stilwell Field in Syosset, the Lions and Badgers went up against each other, but before the kickoff, each family brought bags of toiletries and personal care items to donate to guests of The INN. Josh and all the other parents were very proud of the children.

“The kids (and parents) all braved 38-degree windy, rainy conditions,” Josh said. “Not just to play football, but to come together for a great cause. The day was a huge success as my office was stockpiled with everything from toilet paper to shampoos. It was a tremendous day for these first and second graders, and a fun way to learn about charity and giving back to your community right before Thanksgiving.”

Laura's Many Steps (continued from pg 1)

for Spanish speaking clients. She however was terminated from that position for lateness. She continues to work as a companion.

In November 2020 Laura decided she would like to further her education and obtained a certification in phlebotomy but has struggled to obtain employment due to her lack of experience. She remains working as a companion and has maintained that position for almost one year. She works five evenings per week and enjoys conversations with her elderly companion. Despite her adversities at previous positions, being a single parent of two children, and contending with homelessness, she has managed to maintain her companionship position.

Laura has participated in the Rapid Re-Housing program at The INN's Center for Transformative Change. Unfortunately, she has not been able to find a suitable apartment. However, she did apply for Section 8 through the Town of Babylon and was approved for two bedrooms. After she had a difficult time finding affordable apartments in Babylon, she successfully transferred her Section 8 case to the Queens New York City Housing Authority. Since transferring her case, Laura has been viewing apartments in the Queens area and is currently interested in a two-bedroom apartment for \$2200 per month. She is hoping she will be able to secure permanent housing by the start of the new year.

Although Laura can be indecisive at times, she is good-natured, pleasant, and willing to lend a helping hand when she can. The staff at Edna Moran INN are confident she will be successful and achieve her long and short-term goals.

A note to our readers: Laura is just one of countless guests The INN staff and volunteers work with each day. Together they work patiently and persistently on the many steps that lead to a better life for them, their children and their children's children. Guests such as Laura are an inspiration and role model for other guests.

Our Wish List

The INN is in need of:

- Non-perishable food – **no glass, please**
- New hats, gloves and scarves; new or dry-cleaned coats
- Gift Cards (supermarket and Visa) – preferred amounts, \$10, \$25 and \$50
- Diapers/wipes – sizes (3, 4, 5, 6 & pull-ups)
- Auction items for upcoming INN events – restaurant gift certificates, activities, experiences, etc. Please call Nora White at (516) 486-8506, ext. 108
- Toiletry items (family size)

*Please bring your donations to the
Mary Brennan INN,
100 Madison Avenue, Hempstead,
M-F, 9am-2pm.*

*For directions please check our website or call
(516) 486-8506, ext. 114.*

Thank you.



*"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:

