



40 Years
1985-2025
INN

...THE NEWS!

SERVING DIGNITY, RESPECT & LOVE SINCE 1983

VOLUME XL NO. 3

www.the-inn.org

FALL 2023

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Save THE Date:

- October 20 – INN Luncheon
- November 4 – Day of Thanks and Giving
- December 2 – Holiday Open House

GUEST STORY

We are Family

William is a guest at the Mary Brennan INN soup kitchen (MBI). He is an impressively large, gentle man, with a soft voice, kind heart, and a hard-to-miss gap between his two front teeth. He loves art and spends many hours doing pencil drawings of people's faces.

Unfortunately, William's lack of a supportive social network in his earliest years was not without consequences.

When William first came to MBI he was living on the street. Whatever problems you may have in your life, they are always compounded when you are homeless. The INN staff worked hard and tirelessly to find a home for William. The INN became William's family. He was comfortable coming to The INN with any problem



he might have. He was helped. His mailing address was The INN. His next-of-kin was The INN. The people he loved were at The INN.

The INN found a home for William at a nursing home. He was one of the few men there and one of the youngest. He befriended many of the residents and, in a way, felt needed. This was good for him.

While at the nursing home, William would regularly call The INN to say Hello. He would sometimes ask if someone could drop off his favorite

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PUTTING FOOD ON THE TABLE ...

With Your Help

As you probably already know, the cost of putting food on the table has been rising. The same is true at The INN (with a lot more tables). While consumer food prices have increased nearly 20% since the start of 2020, The INN's food budget has increased more than 100% in that time, due to both an increase in food prices and the number of meals being served.

The INN is fortunate to receive many food donations, but this does not cover all The INN's food needs.

As you will read on page 2, we are asked many times by friends, "What can we do to help?" Now would be the perfect time to organize a food drive — in your neighborhood, at your school, where you work, or where you worship. Thanksgiving season is

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



Jean Kelly
Executive Director

REFLECTION Questions

In grammar, there is a question mark and an exclamation point. A good question can make you think, it leaves a "mark". An exclamation is an emotional

expression at a point in time (Ouch!), most likely thought-free.

When The INN first started it was important that no questions would be asked of anyone who came to request food. That policy continues to this day. The only criteria would be that the person had to behave in a socially acceptable manner.

However, we have been on the receiving end of many good questions, such as: Do you have any water? Can I get a toothbrush? What time is lunch served? Can you help me find a job? Do you have a baby stroller? Can I take a shower? Do you have size 13 sneakers? Can I have a lunch to bring to an elderly friend?

Separate from the meals at the soup kitchen, our social work staff has learned that in helping guests, some questions can be very beneficial. Asking them how they are doing and what more we can do to help them can lead to a clearer path of action. Guests may not be aware of options that are available – from interim benefits or housing solutions to opportunities for employment or help with a medical condition. We work together with the guests to put together the pieces of their own puzzle.

We're asked every day, by people wanting to help the guests, What can they do? What do we need? When can they volunteer? Where and what time can they drop off donations? Can I volunteer with my co-workers? Can I volunteer with my family? All good questions.

What we are especially grateful for is the guests never having to ask, "How much will that cost?" Thanks to you, and thousands of donors just like you, we can assist the guests free of charge. At their time of need, their lives can be changed for the better, because of you.

I am happy to answer this question for you, "Does your contribution make a difference in the lives of the guests?" The answer is an emphatic yes. If you have been reading The INN's Newsletters, you have seen countless examples of this. If you are a new donor, you may read copies of earlier Newsletters at the-inn.org.

The INN is happy to welcome all questions. They all encourage us to think ... which leads me to a favorite quote, "The one who knows all the answers has not been asked all the questions – Confucius."

We pray this Newsletter finds you well and staying safe and healthy. Thank you for making the good works of The INN possible. Please continue to take the very best of care. You are all so very special!

Love,
Jean

Guest Story (continued from pg. 1)

treat (corn chips), new underwear and a sketch pad. We were happy to do so. He had no one else.

William passed from this earth on Sunday, August 27.

Many people come to The INN saying they need food, or they need shelter, or they need clothing.

Occasionally, someone comes to The INN saying they need a family. They may not say it that way because it would be embarrassing, but somehow they say it and somehow we hear it, because we are all human.

We were happy to be William's family.

THE GREAT HEALTH DIVIDE: Why Social Determinants Matter Most

Health is something we all strive for, and it involves more than we probably thought. We have asked Martine Hackett, PhD, MPH, Director of Public Health Programs at Hofstra University, to provide an overview.

Late summer is when I schedule my annual physical exam with my primary care provider. Most of us know that this is a key recommendation to follow to evaluate your overall health.

My vital signs were measured and recorded, I was asked a series of questions about my family medical history, lifestyle habits, and medications. Blood was drawn to determine my levels for glucose, cholesterol, and hemoglobin A1C. These measures are necessary, but not sufficient to truly know about our health status. What was missing were questions about my zip code. Stress of financial hardship. Housing conditions. Food access. Services that I may need.

When we think about our health, we often focus on factors like diet, exercise, and genetics. While these elements undoubtedly play a crucial role, studies find that clinical care impacts only 20 percent of our health outcomes. There's an often-overlooked aspect that has a profound impact on our physical well-being – the social determinants of health. These are the hidden forces that shape our lives and can significantly influence our overall health, often in ways that might surprise you.

The World Health Organization defines social determinants of health as the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work, and age. Health related social needs (HRSN) are an individual's unmet, adverse social conditions that contribute to poor health. These needs, including food insecurity, housing instability, unemployment, lack of education, lack of access to transportation, stress and social isolation, can drive health disparities and increase health care spending.

In the United States and right here on Long Island, health inequities persist by race, ethnicity, disability, geographic location, poverty status and employment. Even life expectancy can differ by as much as a decade depending on your zip code. The first step is



Martine Hackett, PhD, MPH

to understand what the social determinants are, next we need to understand how social determinants can surprisingly impact your physical health. They include:

- **Chronic Stress:** Living in stressful environments due to economic instability, discrimination, or neighborhood violence can lead to chronic stress. Prolonged stress is associated with a range of health problems, including heart disease, diabetes, and weakened immune function.
- **Food Insecurity:** Low-income individuals often struggle to access nutritious food, leading to poor dietary choices. This can contribute to obesity, malnutrition, and diet-related diseases.
- **Housing Conditions:** Poor housing conditions, such as overcrowding or exposure to environmental toxins, can increase the risk of respiratory problems like asthma or COVID, lead poisoning, and other health issues.
- **Social Isolation:** Lack of social support and community engagement can lead to feelings of loneliness and depression, which are linked to various physical health problems, including heart disease and weakened immunity.

While it's crucial to focus on individual lifestyle choices when considering your health, it's equally important to recognize the profound impact of social determinants of health. The conditions that surround us every day have surprising and far-reaching effects on your physical well-being.

By addressing health-related social needs, we can work toward a healthier society where everyone can thrive. This requires collective efforts from individuals, communities, and policymakers to create a more equitable and health-conscious world.

You will be pleased to know The INN addresses the social determinants of health in a multitude of ways. Examples are: The Mary Brennan INN impacts positively both food insecurity and social isolation. The INN's emergency shelters reduce the crippling stress of homelessness. The Center for Transformative Change works with guests to find safe housing, access education and gain employment. This is thanks to your support.

BARBECUE BRINGS SUMMER JOY TO INN SHELTERS

(Since 1984 the Edna Moran INN (EMI) has been an emergency shelter providing housing for homeless families. At the shelter, each family is loved and supported while they work with INN staff toward a goal of finding safe and affordable housing. When this is achieved, the family moves on to independent living. Thousands of success stories have begun at the EMI.)

In July, the staff at EMI decided to do something special for the families residing there. What could possibly be more family fun in July than a barbecue. The “BBQ” featured the traditional favorites — grilled hot dogs, hamburgers and chicken, DJ (and dancing), a magic show, face painting, lots of sunshine, games for the children, and a Mister Softee ice cream truck showing up for dessert. It was a very busy and full day for all the attendees.

“We have never had a BBQ before”, said Corine Morris, Director of Emergency Housing

for The INN. “Both the guests and staff really enjoyed themselves and we hope to make this an annual event.”

The INN’s emergency shelter for men, the Donald Axinn INN (DAI), opened in 1994, also hosted a BBQ — this for the men staying at DAI. Similar to EMI, the

men at DAI work together with staff to solve their homelessness and move on to economic independence. At the BBQ, the men focused on the serious side of BBQing, the eating.

A little touch of normalcy, like a barbecue, proved to make a big difference in the lives of the guests at the Edna Moran INN and Donald Axinn INN.



Candy the Clown

SUMMER AT THE INN: New Stars and a New World

Since the curbside food drive began three years ago, the stars have always been the donors. This summer two new stars emerged – Elias and Eyden. These two brothers, at ages 6 and 4, are The INN’s youngest volunteers.

Elias and Eyden possess an endless enthusiasm to help.

If they had tails, the tails would be wagging nonstop. No task fails to excite them, whether it be learning how to unlock a door, attempting to lift a donation that outweighs them, or pushing a cart with four wheels going in four different directions. During their breaks, they can be found climbing fences, giving each other rides in a donation bin or seeking answers to their intense curiosity.

Like all children, Elias and Eyden are better than adults at living in the moment and uninhibited



Volunteers Eyden (L) and Elias

honesty. In July one of the regular donors, greeted Eyden by asking him, “Do you remember me?” His innocent response, “Do you remember yourself?”

On behalf of all The INN family, thank you Elias and Eyden.

The staff and volunteers at MBI have done an amazing job this summer.

Summer always comes with its unique “challenges” – there are school-age children to feed, staff and volunteers are away on vacations, and the guests don’t have a vacation to look forward to. On top of that, this summer has seen an eye-catching increase in the number of meals being served. Between

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INN EVENTS

A Family Day of Thanks and Giving

Saturday, November 4, 10 am – 12:30 pm

Mary Brennan INN

100 Madison Avenue, Hempstead

This is a day of meaningful, and fun, family volunteering. Filling pantry bags, organizing toiletry donations or creating holiday place mats are just a few of the ways you will be helping The INN



Family Day of Thanks and Giving, 2022

prepare for Thanksgiving. Children of all ages are welcome (with their parents). Participants are encouraged to bring along a food donation. For further information, and to sign up, please visit the-inn.org/2023thanksgiving, or call **Nora White at (516) 486-8506, ext. 108**.

There will also be a virtual “Family Day” on Sunday, November 19 at 6 pm. You may view this special presentation by going to the-inn.org/2023thanksgiving.

Holiday Open House

Saturday, December 2, 10 am – 1 pm

Mary Brennan INN

100 Madison Avenue, Hempstead

New! All are welcome to the Mary Brennan INN for the 2023 Holiday Open House. The INN has been renovating and expanding in the past year and this is an opportunity to see all that is new, plus meet INN staff and fellow INN supporters in a friendly and festive setting. If you can bring a donation of a winter hat, or a pair of warm gloves, or a gift card (suggested value \$25), that would be appreciated. Light refreshments will be served. Please call **Nora White at (516) 486-8506, ext. 108** or visit the-inn.org/2023openhouse for further information.

YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD RETURNS

With schools re-opened after a summer break, The INN’s Youth Advisory Board is now back in action.

This Board is comprised of high school students from across Long Island. They are compassionate and motivated to serve the community. The Advisory Board meets in the evening, monthly – October through April, at the Mary Brennan INN in Hempstead. It is an opportunity for the students to support The INN, meet students from other high schools, develop leadership skills and acquire community service hours.

If you know a high school student who would like to join, or would like more information, please visit the-inn.org/youthadvisoryboard, or contact Dana Lopez – (516) 486-8506, ext. 138, dlopez@the-inn.org.

Summer at The INN (continued from pg. 4)



Volunteers serving lunch at MBI

June 21 and August 31, 79,760 meals were served, this in comparison to 42,840 in the same time period in 2022. It’s been an entirely new world for the staff and volunteers as they prepare almost twice as many meals as last year. They have dedicated exceptional time and energy to accomplish this. We are very grateful.

For the record, the staff and volunteers do an amazing job year-round!

If you are interested in volunteering, you can learn more at the-inn.org/volunteer.

Help INN Guests
this Holiday Season

ADOPT-A-FAMILY



Contact Cynthia Sucich for details about families INN need in our shelters and soup kitchen and how you can make their holiday season a little brighter!

csucich@the-inn.org
(516) 486-8506, ext. 115

Thanksgiving WISH LIST

- Frozen Turkeys
- Frozen Hams
- Canned Yams
- Cranberry Sauce
- Canned Fruit
- Canned Soup
- Canned Vegetables (corn, peas, string beans)
- Pies (apple, pumpkin, etc.)
- Canned Gravy
- Boxed Macaroni & Cheese
- Boxed/Packaged Mashed Potatoes
- Stuffing
- 64 oz Apple Juice

No Glass Items Please!

Donations may be dropped off at
the Mary Brennan INN soup kitchen
100 Madison Avenue, Hempstead, NY 11550
Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm
or
You may donate online by visiting
www.the-inn.org

For additional information, please call (516) 486-8506 or email info@the-inn.org

Food on the Table (continued from pg. 1)

always a great time for a food drive. If you need guidance in organizing a food drive, we can help, please visit the-inn.org/fooddrive.

If running a food drive is not practical for you, you could drop off a personal food donation at the Mary Brennan INN (MBI), any weekday is fine. All food donations are important, every item makes a difference.

Thank you very much.

FROM OUR MAILBOX

“As a long-time contributor to and admirer of The INN, I just want to thank you for the organization’s newsletter. I have the Summer 2023 issue in hand, and it has had the same effect on me as earlier issues. It is a healthy reminder that The INN deals with people, people who have the same feelings, abilities, and desires as everybody else.”



Serving Dignity, Respect & Love since 1985

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:

