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**Save
THE
Date:**

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- May 6 –
INNkeepers' Ball

GUEST STORY: A Triumphant Return

This is the story of Billy. Billy first came to The INN as a guest in 2018. He was 18 years old.

In 2016, Billy was just entering the tenth grade. He was an average student with big ambitions. His sister was one year older. She was an excellent student and Billy looked up to her.

Their comfortable, typical American life changed suddenly in January, 2017. Their father was robbed and beaten as he walked across a darkened parking lot. He was left behind a dumpster. When the police found him the next morning, he was conscious but very cold. Eight of his toes had to be amputated.

He recovered as best he could, but it was never enough for him to return to work. He became depressed and the family became dysfunctional.

Billy, his sister and mom were excited to move into the Edna Moran INN (EMI) emergency shelter. After more than a year of trauma while homeless, there was finally relief from the endless, bitter and consuming worry. They now had a bed, a bathroom and meals. And a support system of loving, encouraging staff.

Naturally, Billy's school grades had "dropped off a cliff". He was now a senior and desperately wanted to graduate. He had not lost his ambition, but it was on life support.

The tutors at the EMI recognized Billy's academic potential and worked steadfastly to have him graduate on time. It was a team effort – Billy, his sister, his mom, The INN staff, and tutors.

Eventually, Billy's family moved on from the shelter. That is the goal for all the families at EMI. Like Billy's graduation, this, too, was a team effort.

For a while after that, Billy would visit The INN's "Center for Transformative Change"; because he knew this would be a very stabilizing influence on his life, the people there genuinely cared about him, and he would receive good guidance.

The INN does not track past guests. For them this was a very difficult time in their lives, and we have found they prefer not to have any reminders. That being said, in January 2026, Billy "triumphantly" returned to The INN. He had graduated from college with an engineering degree and now has a good job with an architectural firm. Billy said,

"When my mom, sister and I were at our lowest and most hopeless, you took us in and gave us unconditional love, you gave us life. We can never thank you enough."

We realize we could not do the above without the support of you, the reader, so, thank YOU.

This guest story was written by a long-time friend of The INN.



Jean Kelly
Executive Director

REFLECTION

Treated Like Family

We recently had Chinese food and opened a fortune cookie that read:

Show kindness to a stranger as if they were a loved one.

At The INN, we welcome every guest as if they are our loved ones. In doing this we are able to instill trust, and with this, guests become open to sharing their concerns. With this starting point, we can partner with them in making a positive difference in their life.

Earlier this year, after a prolonged effort of partnering, we convinced a guest (John) that his social security check might not be large enough to cover his expenses for living on Long Island. Thinking about moving off Long Island had not been easy for him, but he has now come to accept he has no choice.

Shortly after this, John took a bus up to Albany for a family funeral. When he returned to Long Island, he told us he visited his adult daughter

who lives upstate. We thought this was more than a coincidence, and part of some divine plan. Perhaps John could be convinced to move upstate, and be near his daughter. And would she be comfortable accepting the responsibility of having an elderly parent, with both COPD and stomach cancer, living nearby? She was thrilled at this opportunity to spend more time with her father. John travelled back upstate and together they looked for a room he could rent. They found several they liked and he hopes to select one soon. He is hopeful to move upstate this Spring.

All this happened because John was welcomed at The INN as a loved one. And he soon (fingers crossed) will be living near one of his very own loved ones.

Thank you for sharing the belief that treating everyone as a loved one is the right way to go.

May you be forever blessed for being kind, caring and compassionate.

Love,
Jean

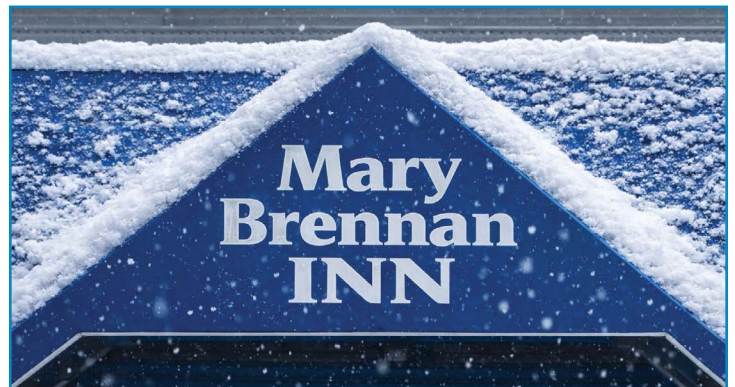
STAYING WARM AT THE INN

Winters are always cold, including this past winter, especially the 19 days between January 24 and February 11 when the temperature did not go above the freezing point. (As a historical reference, in 1984, The INN opened its first emergency shelter in response to two guests succumbing to hypothermia while sleeping outside.)

During the cold spell this past winter, The INN boutique provided coats, hats, gloves and woolen socks. The Mary Brennan INN opened its doors early to welcome guests into a warm, comforting space (including a cup of hot chocolate). Throughout the day the guests were asked if they had a safe (warm) place to spend the night. If not, the INN staff worked with them to find a safe place — whether it be one of The INN’s emergency shelters (assuming there was a bed available), and if a bed was not

available, The INN provided transportation to one of Nassau County’s emergency warming centers, or depending on the particular needs of the guest, they may have been placed in a local hotel for the night.

We are glad to report that no guest lost their life due to the low temperatures.



VOLUNTEER STORY: Keeping it 'INN' The Family

Dorothy Strynkowski began volunteering at the Mary Brennan INN in 2002, the same year her granddaughter Kristina was born. For the past 24 years she has served guests in every possible way — cooking, dishwasher, boutique, donations, take-out, and more. She holds the title as The INN's longest-running, active volunteer.



L to R: Mom Kristin, Grandma Dorothy, Kristina, and The INN's COO, Cynthia Sucich

Kristina has grown up knowing her grandma Dorothy is a selfless woman who loves to help her neighbors in need. "My Grandma Dorothy is the main influence and inspiration behind me giving back to the community. She has been so giving with her time, efforts and monetary donations, it would be impossible not to be inspired by her! I aspire to be

her students to make a donation to The INN.

For the past six months, Kristina has been volunteering with Dorothy every Monday at the take-out window. She says it is the highlight of her week, "Spending time with my grandmother and giving to the community all in one go — it doesn't get better than that!"

as giving and active when I am her age."

Last summer, Kristina, her mom Kristin, and Grandma proudly presented The INN with a donation of nearly \$1,000 which she raised from her yoga students. As a newly certified yoga instructor her classes were free, but she decided to ask

YOU CAN HELP THE INN THIS SPRING

- 1. Plant a Row of Vegetables.** If you are planning to start a vegetable garden this Spring, you could plant a row of string beans, or cucumbers or a few tomato plants for The INN. Fresh vegetables are always a big hit, and healthy too. When they are ready to pick, you can drop them off at The INN (M–F, 9 am – 2 pm at 100 Madison Avenue in Hempstead).
- 2. Donate an Item for the Silent Auction.** The 2026 INNkeepers' Ball will include a Silent Auction — new items are always welcome. Popular ones include "behind the scenes" tours of museums and Broadway theaters, tickets to sporting events and concerts, and restaurant gift certificates. Please call Nora White, before April 27th at (516) 486-8506, ext. 108 if you have an item you would like to donate.
- 3. Spring Cleaning.** You may be someone who enjoys giving your home a thorough Spring cleaning. If you are, you may discover some things you no longer need, but The INN could put to good use. Gently used clothing (Spring or Summer clothing), gently used bath towels,



unused toiletries, diapers and unopened cleaning products are always needed. They can be dropped off at The INN.

- 4. Schools Out.** After classes end for the semester, high school students (over 16) and college students are invited to try something new (and meaningful) — volunteer for a day at The INN. Maybe you love to cook, or enjoy fashion and would like to volunteer in the clothing boutique, or maybe you would want to do whatever needs to be done. Please go to the-inn.org/volunteer to sign up. Of course, non-students are also welcome to try volunteering for a day.

Coming Soon – 2026 INNkeepers' Ball

Wednesday, May 6, 6:00 – 9:00 pm, Opus Mediterranean Steakhouse (new location), Jericho



Pictured above are Rob Kammerer (Ball co-chair), Honorary Chairs Mike Watson & Mary Mellis, Honorees Cheri Rice, Ilyse & Joseph Zangri, and INN Executive Director Jean Kelly (not shown in photo is Honoree Rick Volpe). Ticket, Journal, and Sponsor information is available at the-inn.org/2026ball (or see QR code to the right). For additional information, please call (516) 732-6009.



Cheers to the 2026 Wine Tasting!



A spirited (pardon the pun) and successful Wine Tasting was held at "Opus" in February. Shown are Rob Kammerer and Jean Kelly with event co-chairs JoEllen McKenna, Ray Sikorski and Lisa DeVito. Thank you to JoEllen, Lisa, Ray, our talented musicians – The INNspirations, and all who made it a fun, memorable evening.



"Serving Hungry and Homeless Long Islanders"

211 Fulton Avenue Hempstead, NY 11550
(516) 486-8506 • www.the-inn.org

MISSION STATEMENT

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:



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

May 2 is The INN's 43rd birthday.

For those of you who may not know, The INN was founded in reaction to a class of Hofstra students seeing someone eating out of garbage can. A small group of community members met, and within three months the soup kitchen was opened (later to become the Mary Brennan INN). The INN's goal was to be fully responsive to community needs, and that goal continues to this day. Congratulations to co-founders Pat O'Connor and Mike Moran.