

**MISSION**

Loaves & Fishes exists as a mission of love and faith by providing food and temporary support services to residents of Ayer, Devens, Groton, Harvard, Littleton and Shirley and advocates for changes by its clients that will promote independence and self-reliance.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Cynthia Thomas, *President*  
 Kathleen O'Connor, *Vice President*  
 Doug Lee, *Treasurer*  
 Lauren Farrell, *Secretary*  
 Aaron Gesin, Jane Logee, Aleta Manugian, Mary Markham, Deb Pappas, Temple Staples

**STAFF**

Patricia Stern, *Executive Director*  
 Paul Niemira, *Food Coordinator*  
 Theresa Wilson, *Client Advocate*  
 Karen DeGagne, *Volunteer & Office Coordinator*

**OPEN PANTRY HOURS**

Wednesdays and Fridays  
 9:45AM – 12:30PM *Doors open at 9:30AM*  
 First and third Saturdays of month  
 9:00AM – 11:00AM *Doors open at 8:45AM*  
 Second Tuesday of month  
 6PM – 8PM *Doors open at 5:45PM*  
 Closed when Ayer-Shirley Regional School District is closed or delayed due to inclement weather.

**FOOD DONATION TIMES**

All Open Pantry Hours and Mondays and Wednesdays  
 7PM – 8PM

**CLOTHING DONATION TIMES**

Mondays 10AM – 12NOON and 7PM – 8PM

**LOCATION**

234 Barnum Road  
 Devens, MA  
 Mailing address: P.O. Box 1,  
 Ayer, MA 01432  
 Phone: 978-772-4627  
 Fax: 978-772-7395  
[www.loavesfishespantry.org](http://www.loavesfishespantry.org)

**Over 30 years of service to the communities of Ayer, Devens, Groton, Harvard, Littleton and Shirley**

LIFTING AND FEEDING OUR NEIGHBORS

# Clients Say Thanks and Give Back

*"Our family wants to thank everyone at Loaves & Fishes for all their hard work and for making our Christmas a wonderful one. Thanks to organizations like yours families like ours can enjoy gifts and food."*

*"A huge thank you to all of you for everything you do all year to help us and always with a smile."*

*"Thanks so much! I feel "rich" and truly blessed!"*

*"Thank you for all of your help. You have been a ray of sunshine on an otherwise dreary day."*



Barbara, a client from Ayer, made approximately 20 afghans to donate to homeless veterans and single mothers. If you would like to donate yarn to help her cause, please feel free to drop it off at the Pantry.

*"I'm grateful for Loaves & Fishes and all that have worked hard to make it possible."*

*"Thank you all for all the wonderful things you have done for me over the years."*

*"Without people like the people at Loaves & Fishes, I don't know where we would be."*



The 2nd Annual Client Clean-Up Day was held on November 10th. Fourteen clients helped spruce up the grounds by raking leaves, clearing brush, washing windows, and cleaning the inside of the building. It was wonderful opportunity for clients to give back to the community and say thank you for the support they have received.

**1983-2013 – Our 30th Anniversary planning is underway!**

# ANNUAL MEETING ENJOYED BY ALL

**Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.** *Margaret Mead*

Tuesday evening, October 23, 2012, volunteers, donors and staff members gathered together for our Annual Meeting held at Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry. It was an opportunity to reflect on the good work being done at the Pantry and to recognize the dedicated and generous volunteers and donors who make it all happen.

The Annual Meeting this year was dedicated to Ray Grande, a resident of Littleton and a long-time L&F volunteer. This spring, the loading dock at the Pantry will be dedicated in Ray's memory. His commitment to the Pantry and wry smile are sorely missed.

The evening began with entertainment by The Johnny Appleseed Harmonizers who delighted the audience with their humor as well as their musical skills. Following the entertainment, the audience was provided with updates outlining progress with the Pantry's New Website Build Project and Service Assessment Project.

The Outstanding Volunteer Service Award for 2012 was presented to Janet Stevens. Janet has been a volunteer at the Pantry for eleven years and has served in several roles at the Pantry, including as a Steward, an Interim Client Advocate and a Food Distributor. She is a member of the Shop for Your Kids Team and previously served on the Board of Trustees as Secretary and President.

Eleven volunteers were recognized for their contribution of the most volunteer hours donated in the past fiscal year—Karen O'Neil 703 hours; Doug Lee, 674 hours; Peter Galluzzo, 499 hours; Temple Staples, 487 hours; Joanne Ouellette, 445 hours; Edna Del Toro, 431 hours; Brenda Ferguson, 424 hours; Bill Dean, 418 hours; Lauren Farrell, 364 hours; Ann Berry, 351 hours; and Martha Dean, 316 hours. In addition, Jane and Dick Lyons, as well as Dick Hunt, were honored with our Founder's Award in recognition of 10 years of continuous volunteer service.

Volunteer Joanne Ouellette was also pleasantly surprised as she was recognized for writing an original poem about volunteering. Joanne's poem has been framed and now has a permanent home in the Pantry!

Some volunteers shared their individual experiences about volunteering at Loaves & Fishes. Martha & Bill Dean, Kathy Ellis, Karen O'Neil and Marge Payne all spoke from their hearts. Their stories were touching and those in attendance were moved by their words. The climax of the evening occurred when a client shared her heartfelt testimonial with the audience. Her message was clear—she and her family are indebted to Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry!

A special thank you went out to the following local companies for sponsoring our Annual Meeting: Kathy Seniw of the Jack O'Lantern, Ayer for providing a wine tasting event, Lucia's Tavola of Ayer, Fihlo's Cucina of Groton and Hannaford Supermarket of Ayer for delicious refreshments; ISS of Shirley for printing services; Laddawn, Inc. of Devens for favors; and Warila's Carpet Cleaning Specialists of Shirley for waxing the floors and cleaning the carpets.



Janet Stevens, left, shown here with Cindy Thomas, President of the Board of Trustees, received the 2012 Outstanding Volunteer Service Award.

## SINCERE THANKS

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, staff, and especially our clients at Loaves & Fishes, I want to express my sincere appreciation for the overwhelming support we received from our communities during the holiday season. The outpouring of donations of food, gifts and financial support allowed us to help a record number of families this past holiday season!

During our special dinner distribution events, we were able to provide 368 families with all the fixings for their Thanksgiving Day dinners, and another 258 families received everything they needed for their holiday celebrations. Additionally, over 204 children shopped for holiday gifts for their parents during our annual Shop for Your Parents Program, at the Shriver Job Corps. Many smiles graced the faces of parents during our Shop for Your Kids event held at the Devens Community Center, because they were able to shop for new toys, books, games and puzzles. This event provided 526 children this season with a memorable holiday experience.

These holiday programs required an army of volunteers and donors! Volunteers are the backbone of Loaves & Fishes, and they generously share their time, talents and energy supporting our community. We are truly fortunate to be a part of such a giving community with an abundance of generous donors who consistently support our mission and lighten the load of so many of our neighbors in need. My sincere thanks for your continued support and my best wishes to each and every one of you and your families for a happy and healthy new year!

*Patty*  
Patricia A. Stern  
Executive Director



Recognized for contributing the most volunteer hours during the past fiscal year are (front row, left to right): Joanne Ouelette, Lauren Farrell, Karen O'Neil. Second row: Edna Del Toro, Doug Lee, Brenda Ferguson, Bill Dean, Martha Dean, Peter Galuzzo, Ann Berry and Temple Staples.

# Lifting & Feeding Our Neighbors for 30 Years

2013 marks Loaves & Fishes' 30th anniversary of service to the community. Loaves & Fishes started in 1983 as a hot meal program by ministers and volunteers from the Federated Church and St. Andrew's in Ayer; the program soon converted to distributing pre-packed bags of donated groceries to area residents. In its first year, the program provided groceries to approximately 50 households. Today Loaves & Fishes helps more than 897 client families and over 2,248 individuals from our six communities each year! We are dependent on our more than 300 active volunteers who provide thousands of hours of service every year to help us meet the needs of so many of our friends and neighbors.

We are commemorating our 30th anniversary through a year-long series of events in our towns. During this special celebratory year, we hope our mission and the helping hand we offer will reach all the members of our community who may need our services. We invite you to join us—as a volunteer, a donor, a fan on Facebook, or follower on Twitter. We are so grateful to have been part of the community for 30 years, and we are looking forward to many more years of dedicated service.



Founders' Award recipients, Dick Hunt (above) and Jane and Dick Lyons (below), were honored for dedicating 10 consecutive years of service to Loaves & Fishes.



Rosie and Laurel spread good cheer and smiles as they managed the bread station during our dinner distributions.

## HOLIDAY CHEER!!

**Sixty holiday gift bags were assembled for senior citizens who might otherwise not receive a gift. The bags included things like warm hats and scarves, umbrellas, socks, and soap, giving our older clients a little something to open for the holidays.**



## TONS OF FOOD

**We distributed a TON of food during our special Dinner Distributions:**

**4 tons of turkey**

**1 ton of ham**

**3 tons of fresh vegetables**

**1 1/2 tons of frozen vegetables**

**Plus...thousands of packages of gravy, stuffing mix, cranberry sauce, dessert items, coffee, tea, cocoa, juice and bread!!!**



Martha and Judy made a great team at the vegetable station at our Holiday Dinner diistribution.

## THE CHILDREN WERE ALL SMILES!

On Saturday, December 8, 2012, Shop for Your Parents celebrated its 12th anniversary. The day began with breakfast provided by Shriver Job Corps (more than 511 people, including over 45 volunteers, were served breakfast this year), and a visit with Santa, before the children embarked on their shopping adventure with the help of volunteers. The children visited each "shopping station" and then brought their gifts to the wrapping table where volunteers helped them wrap and decorate their treasures. The last two stops were the Christmas decorations table, where each child chose an item for display, and the ornament table, where they chose a handmade ornament to decorate the tree before rejoining their parents in the waiting room.

Thanks to the generous donations from businesses, the community and our special partners, the children were able to choose gifts for their parents or guardians at no cost. This annual event is very popular with our clients and our volunteers and is a fun day for all. Both the children and the volunteers were decked out in their festive holiday attire which added to the fun and joy of the annual event! Many of our volunteers return year after year for the event, and we even have a few families who have made volunteering for SFYP part of their annual holiday tradition.

A warm and heart felt thank you to everyone who donated or volunteered for this event which never fails to brighten the holiday for our clients and their children.



Our coordinators, Joan and Marie, pause for a photo with Mr. Claus.



The Shop for Your Kids Team did an excellent job organizing this event.

## SHOP FOR YOUR KIDS – IT'S A WRAP!

On Thursday, December 20, 2012, Loaves & Fishes, with the help of the Devens Recreation Department and MassDevelopment, held its 12th annual Shop for Your Kids Day at the Devens Community Center. We celebrated the holidays by hosting 217 client families who came to shop for toys, books, games, crafts, stocking stuffers and gift wrap for their children ranging in age from newborns to teens. In all, 526 children received gifts as part of this program. Our fabulous co-chairs Kathy Ellis and Debbie Roufos, our Shop for Your Kids team and more than 50 other volunteers shopped, solicited and received donations from local business owners and picked up toys at various drop-box locations. Just before the event, they set up shopping areas at the Community Center where parents chose that hoped-for toy, the perfect book, or that craft that will keep little hands busy for hours. Thanks to generous individual and corporate donations, every teenager was able to receive a \$25 gift card to select the perfect gift for him or herself. This program helps parents and caregivers provide gifts for the holidays, especially important when times are tight and there is often no money for "extras."

Shop for Your Kids is generously supported by the community. Local newspapers helped us publicize the event, raise cash and gather toys, and reach out to those in need who were unaware of the services Loaves & Fishes provides. The police departments from all of the towns we serve (Ayer, Groton, Harvard, Shirley, and Littleton) held toy drives and collected toys and gift cards for us—Sgt. John MacDonald at the Ayer Police Department managed to gather about 2500 toys! Toy drives were also held by many civic organizations, houses of worship, local businesses, scout troops, and parent organizations, including (but definitely not limited to!) the Acton Jazz Café, AM Transportation Services, Bemis Associates, Bristol Myers Squibb, Cains Foods, Cisco Systems, Courier Westford, Dee Bus Service, Devens Recycling Center, DCU, Ecological Fibers, Epic Enterprises, JM Coull, Fitness Your Way, Home Depot, Illusions Beauty Salon, Lindsey's School of Dance, Mangel Architects, Middlesex Savings Bank, 360 Gymnastics, Renaissance Electronics, Shirley Upholstery and Furniture, the Groton Garden Club, The North Middlesex County Police Association, Vitasoy USA, and others. Food (to keep our volunteers fueled on the 12 hour+ day of the event) was donated by Hannaford Supermarkets, beverages by Epic Enterprises, and coffee and snacks by Dunkin' Donuts (the Catalano Company). Storage boxes came from Horn Packaging. Janet O'Connell and Judy Grande provided entertainment while our clients waited to shop. And special thanks to Bob Hebb, Sr. at Nashoba Valley Trucking for helping us move all the toys from place to place!

We are very grateful to everyone who donated or volunteered for this event. The effort made by all involved helped keep the magic in the season, and it is easy to imagine the smiles and laughter when all those new gifts were opened.

# TOWN-WIDE EFFORTS APPRECIATED!

The residents of Littleton, under the direction of the Council of Churches and the Fire Department, collected approximately 1,500 pounds of food during the holiday season.

The Shirley Scouts canvassed the town and delivered over 8,000 pounds of food during their 22nd Annual Town-Wide Drive.

A special thanks to Jon & Jessie Panek for purchasing a chest freezer to replace the 50+ year old unit which recently failed!

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**FEBRUARY 14th**  
Annual Appeal begins

**MARCH 29th**  
Good Friday Walk

**APRIL 14 – 20th**  
National Volunteer Appreciation Week

**MAY 11th**  
Postal Workers Food Drive



### NEWSLETTER TEAM

Hana Barker, Martha Dean, Judy Grande, Susanne Harrington, Maureen Lemieux, Kathleen O'Connor



Santa shares a moment with the children.



The Groton Garden Club donated beautiful boxwood arrangements for our Shop for Your Kids Program.



Students at the Oxbow School, Devens, visited the Pantry recently to drop off donations.



Employees of the Johnson Matthey Chemistry Development Team sponsored a little friendly competition between departments and collected 2,300 cans of vegetables.

# SPECIAL THANKS

On behalf of Loaves & Fishes, we would like to thank some individuals, companies and organizations, both within and outside of the communities we serve, for their support. Our goal is to recognize as many donors as we can in each newsletter who have continued to make a difference by supporting our mission of making our neighbors' lives a lot easier by giving the gift of food, supporting one of our special programs or by making a financial donation.

### All Houses of Worship

- Ayer Rotary Club
- Steve Bakke and Julie Staraitis
- Bemis Associates
- Keith and Vicki Bilafer
- Cisco Systems
- Kathleen Cole
- William and Susan Coney
- Digital Federal Credit Union
- Epic Enterprises, Inc.
- Arthur Boisseau and Marcia Gilson
- John K. Grady
- Groton Dunstable Middle School
- Gary and Heather Gumuchian
- Harvard General Store
- Harvard Lions Club
- Michael Horton
- Scott and Betsy Howard
- Timothy A. Ingraham
- JK Farnsworth Company
- Johnson Matthey Pharma Services
- Stephen and Mary Keville
- Warren and Meredith Kundert
- Ted and Connie Lapres
- Paul and Mimi Matisse
- Daniel and Patricia McCloskey
- Dan and Lori McElroy
- Medtronic Inc.
- John and Eunice Morrison
- JoAnn Nicewicz
- Cynthia and Stephen O'Brien
- Richard and Bernice Packard
- Richard and Ann Perreault
- Heidi Reichert-Robes
- Stephen Roach and Amy Hilbert
- Rollstone Bank & Trust
- Heidrun Ryan
- Russell and Linda Shappy
- Ted and Mary Shasta
- Shaw's Supermarket
- Jim and Pat Sommer
- Sovereign Bank
- Scott and Patrizia Stadler
- Donald and Janet Stevens
- Temple Staples
- Target
- Trader Joe's
- U.S. Army Reserve, 94th RSC HHC
- Richard and Jean Walsh
- Walmart - Leominster
- Warila's Carpet Cleaning Specialists
- Willie Wickman
- Douglas and Elizabeth Williams
- Laurance and Melissa Yahia
- Douglas and Paulette Yedwabnick
- Robert Zimmer and Yvette Chocolaad



Help us reach 3000 "likes" on Facebook to celebrate our 30th Anniversary year! Scan the QR code or search "Loaves-Fishes-Pantry-in-Devens-MA"



## Food Drop-Off Locations

**AYER:** Ayer Post Office, Nashoba Valley Medical Center, North Middlesex Savings Bank, The Cottage Restaurant

**DEVENS:** North Middlesex Savings Bank, Anytime Fitness

**GROTON:** North Middlesex Savings Bank, Donelan's Supermarket, Groton Post Office, Groton Public Library, Shaw's Supermarket, Middlesex Bank, Town Hall

**HARVARD:** Harvard Post Office, Harvard Police Department

**LITTLETON:** Citizen's Savings Bank, Donelan's Supermarket, North Middlesex Savings Bank, Northern Bank & Trust, Littleton Police Department, Littleton Post Office

**SHIRLEY:** Shirley Post Office, Hazen Library, Shirley Fire Department, North Middlesex Savings Bank, Phoenix Park

**ALL 6 TOWNS:** Many places of worship

For more information or directions to Loaves & Fishes, visit us online at:  
[www.loavesfishespantry.org](http://www.loavesfishespantry.org)  
or call us:-978-772-4627

## HELP NEEDED

- Food Distributors
- Data Entry
- Grant Researchers / Writers
- Special Events help for our 30th Anniversary Celebration

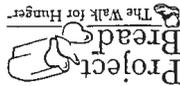
Won't you join our electronic newsletter mailing list? This will save money on postage, and stock our shelves with more food!  
Send us your e-mail address!

## MOST-NEEDED ITEMS

- Baked Beans
- Canned Pasta
- Mac & Cheese
- Diced Tomatos
- Cereal
- Pasta Sauce
- Hamburger & Tuna Helpers
- Boxed / Flavored Rice
- Soap
- Deodorant
- Shampoo
- Diapers, Size 4 and up
- Feminine Care Products



Has your address changed? Please e-mail us at  
[tohelp@loavesfishespantry.org](mailto:tohelp@loavesfishespantry.org) or  
call 978-772-4627x300



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