

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*
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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

Over 29 years of service to the communities of Ayer, Devens, Groton, Harvard, Littleton and Shirley

LIFTING AND FEEDING OUR NEIGHBORS

A CALL TO ACTION!

It's fall in New England. It's the time of year that our thoughts turn toward the holidays and everything for which we have to be thankful. During these difficult economic times, many of us are thankful just to have food on the table and a roof over our heads.

For a lot of us, tightening our belts means doing without certain luxuries. Perhaps we cancelled our cable service or found new ways to conserve energy. Maybe we've stopped buying our morning coffee on the way to work. Making these sacrifices is a harsh reminder of the rising cost of gas and basic necessities, like groceries. For some of us, one trip to the gas pump reminds us that we're paying painfully high prices for the things we need, even though our income is not keeping pace.

But what if you or a household member loses a job, becomes ill, or just doesn't make enough money to make ends meet? What if you had to choose between feeding yourself or your family and paying the mortgage? The rent? The fuel bill for this upcoming winter? Paying for health insurance?

For one in six people—49 million Americans—the sign that times are hard is hunger. They must choose between food and other basic household necessities. Who are these 49 million Americans? They are seniors living on fixed incomes and children just starting their first year of school. They are your coworkers, your neighbors, and your child's classmates. They live in your town, perhaps even your own neighborhood. What do they have in common? They worry because they may not know where their next meal is coming from.

A visit to the Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry for these community members means more than a meal. It means less worry and more hope. Our services include one-on-one meetings with a steward, who helps address the needs of the individual. Our support and resource referrals promote empowerment and self-reliance.

It is the mission of Loaves and Fishes to provide food and support services to residents of Ayer, Devens, Groton, Harvard, Littleton and Shirley. Last year, thanks to the community's donations, we provided food to 883 families who were struggling with hunger. Of those, 285 were new clients. Because of the community's generosity, we've never had to turn away a single person in our 29 years of operation, despite this growing need. We couldn't have done it without you! We at Loaves & Fishes hope you can help us achieve this momentous goal again in 2013.

Whether you can donate food items, provide a monetary donation, or give the gift of your time, every bit of your help counts. For \$25 we can feed a mother and her two children for five days. \$50 provides a child with breakfast for more than a month. It takes approximately 8,000 lbs. of food each week to feed our neighbors in need. Each can of soup, each box of pasta, each jar of peanut butter helps!

With your help, we can help our neighbors make it through another day and put food on their table. Help us continue to be successful in these trying times.



The Wortman Family, John, Ann, Ainsley and Jack, work together to stock our shelves."

Sharing the Season's Bounty

I am a member of a wonderful group called The Glean Team. We are based out of the Harvard Unitarian Universalist Church and have members from all over the area, ranging in age from 3 to 83. This time of year brings such wonderful fresh local produce our way. Driving around our communities we pass farm stands and orchards in the towns around us. Our group's goal is to ensure that everyone can share in that bounty, and that no food goes wasted.

Over the last 3 years, we have developed relationships with some local farmers who call us when they have more than they can sell. The weather plays a large part in when food ripens and sometimes too much ripens all at once. When we receive a call from a farmer, an email goes out to the members of the team and anyone who is available shows up and helps harvest. Then it's off to Loaves & Fishes with boxes of freshly picked produce. Sometimes the food has already been harvested, and it is as simple as driving out to the farm, loading up the car, and heading over to Loaves & Fishes.

We also pick up food on a weekly basis from farmers who participate in farmers' markets. The day after the market, whatever doesn't sell ends up in the back of one of our cars and is delivered to Loaves & Fishes. We are an important link between the farmers and the Pantry.

Gleaning benefits everyone involved. The energy the farmers put into growing such wonderful food doesn't go to waste; we are outside in beautiful orchards and fields, exercising and spending time with friends; and the clients at Loaves & Fishes share in the bounty of the season. It is a great feeling to know that we are helping farmers share their bounty with people that really appreciate it.

If you would like to join us in our mission, we'd love to have you. Contact us through the Loaves & Fishes office at (978)772-4627.

We hope to see you in the fields!

-Ellen - a member of the Glean Team



This young volunteer found a "twisted carrot" as he helped glean for the Pantry.

Thanks to the generosity of so many, we are pleased to report that 42 children received up to a \$100 scholarship to attend a summer camp/activity this summer.



A total of 286 backpacks were recently distributed to children within our service area. Each backpack was filled with age-appropriate school supplies and lots of love from the many donors and volunteers who worked to make this program such a success!

CLIENT LETTER:

I was brought up by parents who taught me the importance of giving to charity. My husband and I both worked successful jobs in corporate America and were living a typical middle class lifestyle. I never expected to be on the receiving end of charity. Medical issues forced me to quit work for a little over a year. We found ourselves unable to meet our financial responsibilities for the first time in our lives. The food pantry at Loaves & Fishes has eased our monthly food bill and allowed us to meet our mortgage payment. I am convinced that without their blessing we would be well on our way to foreclosure. I cannot thank this organization enough for all they have done for me and my family.

---Danny

Holiday Food Distributions

It is almost the holiday season once again, and we at Loaves & Fishes are already making preparations. In the months of November and December, our clients are able to participate in separate, special food distribution events for each holiday that focus on providing all the basics for their Thanksgiving and December holiday meals. From turkey and stuffing to potatoes and pies, these distribution events make sure everyone can celebrate the holidays. For a list of items to donate, or to help with special sorting and stocking sessions, please check our website at loavesfishespantry.org or contact our Volunteer & Office Coordinator, Karen DeGagne at tohelp@loavesfishespantry.org or (978)772-4627 x300. We would love to have your help!



Photo above: Dave and Ray kept things orderly outside directing traffic and keeping everyone safe.



Photo left: Ann got into the holiday spirit last year and brought smiles to the faces of both clients and volunteers.

Photo below: The 'meat guys' moved tons of turkey, chicken and ham during our dinner distribution events!



UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 19th
Thanksgiving Dinner
Distribution

DECEMBER 8th
Shop For Your Parents Program
at the Shriver Job Corps

DECEMBER 16th
Shirley Community Christmas Concert
to Benefit Loaves & Fishes

DECEMBER 17th
Holiday Dinner Distribution

DECEMBER 20th
Shop For Your Kids Program
at the Devens Community Center



**Holiday Distribution
Most Wanted List**
Turkeys – 16 lbs. and larger
Hams – 3 lbs. and larger
Stuffing
Gravy
Broth – Chicken or turkey
Holiday nuts, crackers and candy
Juice
Coffee/Tea/Cocoa
Frozen Apple Pie

IT'S A PARTY!!!
Loaves & Fishes will be celebrating our 30th anniversary during 2013. We could use your help planning our year-long celebration...give us a call or send us an email to learn more about how you can join in the fun!

Holiday Food Donation Drop-off Hours

Food donations are welcome at any of the times listed below throughout November and December.

Every Monday 7:00pm-8:00pm
Every Wednesday 9:45am-noon
7:00pm-8:00pm
(closed November 21st)
Every Friday 9:45am – noon

November

Saturday 3rd 9:00am-11:00am
Tuesday 13th 6:00pm-8:00pm
Saturday 17th 8:00am-11:00am
and 1:00pm-3:00pm
Sunday 18th 1:00pm-4:00pm

December

Saturday 1st 9:00am-11:00am
Saturday 15th 9:00am-11:00am
and 1:00pm-3:00pm
Sunday 16th 1:00pm-4:00pm



Santa and his hard working elves pause for a photo at the Shop for Your Parents event last year.



Karen and Kathy had a blast helping our clients shop for gifts for their children.

12 YEARS AND GOING STRONG

Breakfast with the family, a visit with Santa and shopping for holiday gifts for Mom & Dad—that's what the children of Loaves & Fishes are looking forward to on **Saturday, December 8, 2012**. Last year, over 250 children were treated to a memorable morning they won't forget, and we're hoping to do the same again this year with your generous support of our Shop For Your Parents Program at the Shriver Job Corps Center.

Our volunteers are already busy planning for this annual event, shopping for new merchandise to display and tending to every detail of the program which is celebrating its 12th anniversary. The holidays are a difficult time for individuals already struggling to make ends meet and the added burden which the holiday season presents can be overwhelming for some. Through our Shop For Your Parents Program, we are able to lighten that burden just a bit by offering our families the opportunity to smile, if only for one day,

and be free from worry. We are grateful for the support the community has shown for this program whether through the donation of gifts, monetary support or the gift of your time. Won't you please, once again, help us help our youngest neighbors smile?

We are in need of NEW gifts such as: clothing, jewelry, winter glove/hat sets, cooking items, perfume/cologne and sports related items. We would also be grateful for your monetary support, and we will gladly do the shopping. Please contact Marie at mallen@stemsons.com or 978-772-07510 to learn more about how you can help.

TIS THE SEASON—SHOP FOR YOUR KIDS!

It's time for the annual Loaves & Fishes' "Shop for Your Kids Day" event, which will be held on **Thursday, December 20th 2012**, at the Devens Community Center at Rogers Field.

Last year, thanks to generous donations, we helped over 200 clients happily shop for almost 500 children. With the assistance of over 100 volunteers, our clients chose gifts, from toys to books, and selected new rolls of wrapping paper for their treasures. It was heartwarming to see so many families donating their precious time and gifts to help ensure other families would have a happy holiday. We also received donations from many local businesses and organizations; including the local police departments who sponsored toy drives. Once again, the Ayer Police Dept. went above and beyond the call of duty and provided nearly 2200 toys! It was comforting to see such overwhelming support during these difficult economic times.

This season we are seeking donations of new unwrapped toys for children from infancy to age 18. Please keep in mind the needs of families with tween and teen children. Please visit our website www.loavesfishespantry.org to view the most desired items for the 2012 Holiday season. Donations will be accepted at Loaves & Fishes and at the many businesses and organizations which have graciously agreed to host a donation collection box (Police Stations in Ayer, Groton, Harvard, Littleton and Shirley, Littleton High School, Littletowne Toys and the Shirley Library). As always, if you do not have time to shop, we would be grateful for your monetary support as well. If you are interested in sponsoring a toy drive, hosting a donation box or volunteering to help with this event, please send us an email at LFshop4yourkids@gmail.com or contact the Loaves & Fishes volunteer coordinator at 978-772-4627.

TOY DONATION DROP-OFF HOURS

Toy donations will be accepted at the Devens Community Center, 100 Sherman Avenue, Devens, MA during the following times:

NOVEMBER

Monday, November 26th 6:00pm-8:00pm

DECEMBER

Sunday, December 2nd 10:00am-1:00pm

Monday, December 3rd 6:00pm-8:00pm

Sunday, December 9th 7:00pm-9:00pm

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE TRULY MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Loaves & Fishes has been the fortunate recipient of the beautiful artwork of two local young ladies. Caroline Provost, a Sophomore at Littleton High School and very talented artist, just completed a gorgeous mural of a butterfly at the Pantry. Its bright, bold colors give both the clients and volunteers a reason to smile. Caroline spent approximately 19 hours on the project during the summer. When she's not painting, she enjoys reading, studying foreign languages, participating in the school Humanitarian Club, playing and refereeing soccer and her newest pursuit—the Westford-Littleton Crew Team.

Kara Kennedy, a Senior at The Bromfield School in Harvard, created an amazing quilt for Loaves & Fishes centered around the theme of "A Friend's Hand Makes a World of Change." The project was developed as part of her Girl Scout Gold Award and now graces our waiting room. In her spare time, she plays three varsity sports (soccer, swimming, and track), dances ballet, and participates in the National Honor Society, the Model UN and the peer-tutoring program. Outside of school she plays the flute, teaches religious education, works as a lifeguard and teaches swimming and sailing at the town beach during the summer.

We were also delighted to work with Deirdre Kennedy, Kara's sister, who translated many of our materials into Spanish and French versions to assist our clients who struggle with language barriers. Deirdre is in her freshman year at The Bromfield School in Harvard. Outside of school and Girl Scouts, she enjoys playing the piano as well as playing soccer, swimming and running track for the school teams and dancing ballet. Some of the other extracurricular activities Deirdre participates in are: Debate Team, Model UN and Math Team. During the school year, she is a religious education teacher and over the summer Deirdre works at the Harvard Town Beach, teaching swimming and sailing lessons to children. After graduating from The Bromfield School in 2016, Deirdre plans on attending college and hopes to continue service for others.

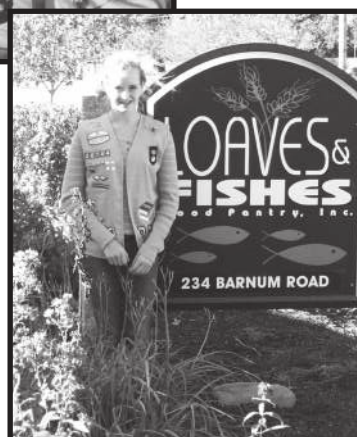
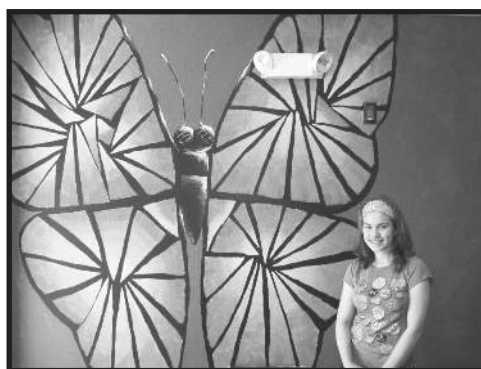
These three young ladies are outstanding examples of the essence of volunteerism and community service and we are honored to display their work. Yes, our young people truly make a difference, and you can too!



Photo left: Kara Kennedy next to her quilt, "A Friend's Hand Makes a World of Change"

Below: Deirdre Kennedy, who translated client materials into French and Spanish

Right: Caroline Provost next to the mural she painted at the pantry.



SPECIAL THANKS!

Loaves & Fishes has received enormous support from individuals, companies and organizations both within and outside of the communities we serve. We can't acknowledge everyone, but we will try to recognize as many donors as we can in this and future newsletters. Here are some friends in our communities who made their neighbors' lives a lot easier by donating financially, giving the gift of food or supporting one of our special programs:

All Houses of Worship
Ayer Rotary Club
Steve Bakke & Julie Staraitis
Bemis Associates
Keith & Vicki Bilafer
Arthur Boisseau & Marcia Gilson
Jean-Pierre & Cheryl Boissy
Bristol Myers-Squibb
Peter & Diane Carson
Kathleen Cole
William & Susan Coney
Digital Federal Credit Union
Gallagher Sales Associates, Inc.
Groton-Pepperell Rotary Club
Gary & Heather Gumuchian
Harvard Lions Club
Michael Horton
Carolyn Hotchkiss
Scott & Betsy Howard

Timothy Ingraham
JK Farnsworth Company
Stephen & Mary Keville
Julie Kirkwood
Warren & Meredith Kundert
Ted & Connie Lapres
Bill & Judy LeSage
Paul & Mimi Matisse
Daniel & Patricia McCloskey
Dan & Lori McElroy
Charles & Carolyn McLatchy
Douglas & Sandy McPherson
Medtronic, Inc.
Montachusett Area Rotary Club
JoAnn Nicewicz
Cynthia & Stephen O'Brien
ODIC, Inc.
Kathleen Oosterman
Jonathan & Jessie Panek

Ann & Richard Perreault
Philip Rayla & Diane Herlihy-Rayla
Diane Reilly
Rollstone Bank & Trust
Heidrun Ryan
Benjamin & Meredith Scarlet
Tom & Verna Sefranek
Russell & Linda Shappy
Ted & Mary Shasta
The Smith Family
Jim & Pat Sommer
Donald & Janet Stevens
Richard & Jean Walsh
Willie Wickman
Douglas & Elizabeth Williams
Laurance & Melissa Yahia
Douglas & Paulette Yedwabnick

LOAVES & FISHES Food for Thought

NEWSLETTER TEAM
 Hana Barker, Martha Dean, Susanne Harrington, Maureen Lemieux, Kathleen O'Connor, Keyna Thomas



Visit us on Facebook by scanning the code with your smart phone's Quick Response (QR) code reader, or by logging into Facebook and searching for "Loaves-Fishes-Pantry-in-Devens-MA"



HELP NEEDED

Food Distributors

Writers

Proof-readers

Data Entry

New Volunteer Orientation

Sessions:

November 7 6:30pm

November 15 9:30am

December 5 6:30pm

December 13 9:30am



**CLOTHING ROOM:
WINTER OUTERWEAR IS
NEEDED IN ALL SIZES**

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

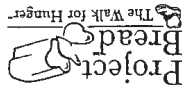
SHIRLEY: Shirley Post Office, Hazen Library, Shirley Fire Department, North Middlesex Savings Bank, Phoenix Park

ALL 6 TOWNS: Many places of worship

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



Has your address changed? Please e-mail us at tohelp@loavesfishespantry.org or call 978-772-4627x300



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