

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

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

OPEN PANTRY HOURS

Wednesday and Friday

9:45AM-12:30PM
(Doors open at 9:30AM)

First and third Saturdays of the month

9:00AM-11:00AM
(Doors open at 8:45AM)

Second Tuesday of the month

6:00PM-8:00PM
(Doors open at 5:45PM)

Closed when Ayer Shirley Regional School District is closed or delayed due to inclement weather.

FOOD DONATION TIMES

During all Open Pantry Hours and Monday and Wednesday evenings from 7:00PM-8:00PM

CLOTHING DONATION TIMES

Monday 10:00AM-12:00PM and 7:00PM-8:00PM

LOCATION

234 Barnum Road
Devens, MA
Mailing address:
PO Box 1
Ayer, MA 01432
Telephone: 978.772.4627
Fax: 978.772.7395

Who's Hungry?

"If we can conquer space, we can conquer childhood hunger."

- Buzz Aldrin, Astronaut

Hunger is a more serious problem in our community than many people realize. The overall poverty rate in Massachusetts in 2012 was 11.9%. (*Source: massbudget.org*) It's quite possible someone you know well is just one step away from being hungry. Many of the households in our communities who need help from Loaves & Fishes have at least one family member who is working.

Loaves & Fishes serves many families, including single-parent families, elderly and retired members of the community living on fixed incomes, minimum wage employees, and disabled individuals. Some **misconceptions** still prevail out in our communities about hunger, the need for Loaves & Fishes, and the people who come to us for help:

1) "People are poor because they are too lazy too work."

Many clients visiting Loaves & Fishes are part of a hard working family living below the federal poverty line, and, in many cases, because of circumstances beyond their control. It would probably surprise most people to know that a lot of hungry children have one or more parents who work full time.

2) "Many of Loaves & Fishes clients receive food stamps, and they don't need to come to the pantry."

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, more than 1 in 4 of all children nationally live in a household that receives SNAP (food stamps). Monthly SNAP benefits are generally not enough to sustain a family, especially during the summer months when school is out and the breakfast and lunch provided at school are no longer available. Many low-income households that receive benefits still have trouble affording an adequate diet, and this is also true for seniors or anyone with a fixed income. Some families, seniors and disabled individuals in our communities manage this shortfall by purchasing less nutritious foods, which can adversely affect health.

3) "There are plenty of resources for people. They don't need the food pantry, and the pantry doesn't need my help."

Most families who come to Loaves & Fishes never imagined they would be in the situation they suddenly find themselves in, needing support to get through a tough time, and finding that support just isn't there. Many in our community depend on Loaves & Fishes. More and more people are in need of food assistance and we do need your help! We have seen a 42% increase in families visiting the Pantry since 2007.

4) "I would never go to a food pantry or a soup kitchen for food."

No one plans to be hungry. Many people live from paycheck to paycheck. Circumstances such as a medical emergency, a job loss, or a divorce force families to choose between buying food or paying other household bills, such as rent and utilities, or even forcing them to make a choice between food and essential medication.

The average SNAP benefit equates to roughly \$1.40 per person per meal.



What's New?

16,020 lbs of food collected during 22nd Annual Postal Workers Food Drive! See Inside.

Who's Hungry? Many are hungry. The need is great and we need your help now, more than ever before. Thank you for your continued support, compassion and dedication.



Loaves & Fishes Harvest Club

Loaves & Fishes offers a variety of ways to support the pantry through financial donations, goods and services and volunteering. Our Harvest Club recognizes businesses, civic organizations and individuals for their outstanding support.

In our last issue we highlighted our Harvest Club Silver Partners. Please take a moment to meet our Bronze Partners for FY14.

Harvest Club Bronze Level Partners

Applefield Farm
Assabet Valley Vocational School District
Ayer Fire Department
Ayer/Shirley Recycle
Ayer-Shirley Middle School
Azuki Systems
Baddour Family Foundation
John Betz & Kathleen O'Connor
Bigelow Middle School
Arthur Boisseau & Marcia Gilson
Dennis Boon
Thomas Brando
Brownie Troop #65223
Lee Burton
Peter and Diane Carson
Community Chiropractic Computer
Consulting Services
William & Susan Coney
William Conley
Cross Country Consulting LLC
Frank D'Ambrose
Ann Davis
Deluxe Corp.
Devens RFTA-Army
Epic Enterprises, Inc.
First Church Unitarian
First Congregational Unitarian Church of
Harvard
Francis W. Parker Essential School
Gregory & Kathryn Fricchione

Garden at Church Meadows
Evan Gould
Grande Marketing Communications
Groton-Dunstable Middle School
Groton-Pepperell Rotary Club
Gary & Heather Gumuchian
Karen Hachey
Hanscom Air Force Base Commissary
Harvard Boy & Girl Scouts
Harvard Women's Club
Hildreth Elementary School
Holy Trinity Parish
Michael Horton
Huff & Cuff 5K Road Race
Stephen & Mary Keville
Kimball's Farm
Warren & Meredith Kundert
Douglas & Dolores Lee
Little Rascals Orchard
Littleton High School
Lucia's Tavola
Curtis & Kathleen Marble
Mary Markham
Mary Marsh
Daniel & Patricia McCloskey
Dan & Lori McElroy
Middlesex Savings Bank, Natick
Murphy Insurance Company
Nancy F. Washington, P.C.
Network For Good
North Country Porche Club of America
ODIC, Incorporated
Our Lady of Grace Parish
Chris Parlee
Richard & Ann Perreault
Jennifer Rahaim
Philip Rayla & Diane Herlihy-Rayla
Robert & Joan Dircks Foundation
Heidrun Ryan
Saint-Gobain
Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church
Don & Heidi Siegrist
Otto & Dorothy Solbrig
Jim & Trish Sommer
Scott & Patricia Stadler
The Kurian Foundation Trust
Townsend Ecumenical Outreach
United Steelworkers of America
United Way of Massachusetts Bay &
Merrimack Valley
Wal-Mart Foundation
Richard & Jean Walsh
Westward Orchards, Inc.
Willie Wickman
Douglas & Elizabeth Williams
Wilson Brothers HVAC, Inc.
Windmill International, Inc.
Robert Zimmer & Yvette Chocolaad

Visit www.loavesfishespantry.org for more information on how to become a partner.

Extraordinary Young People Getting Involved



Troop 20 Littleton Boy Scouts held a food drive at Donelan's. They collected 2,069 lbs of food and almost \$565 in monetary donations!

Photo Credit: Brian Murphy

Jessica and Ellory Terwilliger



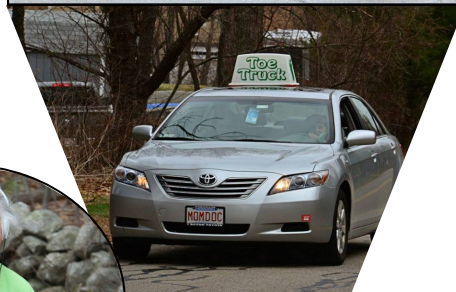
Kiernan DeMeis-Dullea from Groton donated over 9 lbs of fresh eggs from his own hens—Hope, Big Foot, Fluffy, Mulan and Big Mama!

**IF OUR YOUTH ARISE AND ACT,
THEY HAVE THE STRENGTH AND
DYNAMISM TO GENERATE A HUGE
TRANSFORMATION IN SOCIETY.**



30th Annual Good Friday Walk

This year's Good Friday Walk, held on Friday, April 18th, was a wonderful success! 199 participants walked the five mile route through the beautiful countryside of Harvard, logging a total of 1,040 miles and raising over \$23,000 in pledges! This year, Loaves & Fishes will receive 90% of the donations, up from 80% in the past years. So many volunteers come together to make this a great day, and we give special thanks to **Becca Day-Newsham** and **Jeanie Colony** for their tireless efforts coordinating this special event! In addition, thank you to all the folks who set up the route, manned the rest stop, "Toe Truck", and volunteered at the registration and accounting tables and a special thanks to the ladies who fed our hungry walkers afterwards. (Photo credits: Karen Riggert, Scott Lewis and Adrian Flatgard)



Volunteer Spotlight!

In March, one of our volunteers was featured as "Volunteer of the Month" by United Way Community Builders. Below are excerpts from her interview.



Karen O'Neil began volunteering at *Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry in Devens, MA*, in 2011. She had become acquainted with some of their volunteers through her job at a retail pharmacy. When she retired, she really wanted to volunteer where she could make an immediate impact in her own back yard. Karen says, "Loaves & Fishes is one of those organizations where the more you do, the more you want to do."

Karen has many hats to wear there! Two years ago, she signed on to be the administrator of the Pantry's Facebook page. In addition, she agreed to take on the role of Drives Coordinator. During open Pantry sessions, when the clients come in to shop, Karen works in the "Back Pantry" receiving, sorting and organizing donations and stocking shelves. She is also a Volunteer Driver, picking up retail store donations and collecting from some of the donation box locations in Littleton. She also likes to work events like the special holiday dinner distributions and Shop for Your Kids.

She says, "There really are so many favorite volunteer moments! Client interactions are the most special. Having a client tell you how hard it was to get up their courage to come here, but finding that they felt welcome and cared about. Finding that special food item for the client that they had been unable to have since falling on hard times."

Karen's advice for youth or others interested in volunteering is, "The most important thing to consider is, what your passion is? Do you worry about the environment? Then be of service in conservation. Are you concerned with Human Rights, World Hunger or Animal Welfare? Then those are the areas you should investigate for volunteering opportunities. The place you will do the most good is where your heart is, it will keep you coming back and making a difference."

Thank you for your service, Karen!

Need Assistance?



Do you or someone you know need food assistance? Please contact us to find out how we can help.

If you are in need of food and live in Ayer, Devens, Harvard, Groton, Littleton or Shirley, please call (978) 772-4627 x312, email us at clientadvocate@loavesfishesfoodpantry.org or visit our website at www.loavesfishespantry.org.

Loaves & Fishes is open the following days and hours:

Wednesdays and Fridays
9:45AM-12:30PM

1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month
9:00AM-11:00AM

2nd Tuesday evening of the month
6:00PM-8:00PM

Just bring a proof of residency (a utility bill or rental or mortgage agreement) and visit us at

234 Barnum Road, Devens

We are here to help!



22nd Annual Postal Workers Food Drive



On May 10th, Loaves & Fishes was the recipient of the efforts of the 22nd Annual Postal Workers Food Drive. This nationwide event helps raise awareness about hunger and collects for food pantries across the country. This largest and most critical annual food drive for Loaves & Fishes yielded **16,020 lbs** of food—a **28.7% increase** over last year! **82 volunteers** were on hand to deliver, receive and sort every pound of food!

The donations received on

this one-day effort will help stock our shelves with food that will help sustain us into the summer months—a time when donations historically decrease. Unfortunately, the decrease in donations during the summer comes at a time when the need is greatest.



Children are home on summer break and nutritious school breakfast and lunch program is unavailable. Remember, Loaves & Fishes distributes over 11,000 lbs of food every week! Thank you to the **Postal Workers, Postmasters** and program coordinator **Nancy Ohringer**, for their hard work to make this drive a success!



**Photographs
Karen Rigger**

Community Partners



The Town of Littleton, who recently purchased the land upon which the **Garden at Church Meadows** sits, has agreed to allow the garden project to continue for the next two years! This garden is operated solely for the benefit of Loaves & Fishes clients!



Amie and Michael from **American Superconductor** delivered a donation of almost 220 lbs of food collected during a drive for L&F!



Webelos Scout and Charter Organization Rep, Officer Mead, at **Groton Cub Scout Pack 12** Dad's & Lad's Cake Competition. The Scouts raised \$800 to support L&F!

Enrichment/Campership Program News



37 children
have received a
\$100.00
scholarship
toward a camp/
enrichment
program!

Dear Loaves & Fishes Staff:

Thank you for your generous assistance which has enabled a child to participate in our Karate Program. We are pleased to have this child here and enjoying karate classes. Thank you for providing this assistance and making a difference in a child's life!

Sincerely, Jenn & Mike Luth

Luth's Family Karate

Backpack Program



Back to school will be here before we know it! Last year, thanks to our generous donors, we distributed 300 backpacks to students pre-K through high school. We hope to do the same this year and are asking for your help.

This year, the backpack distribution will be on August 25th, please consider a donation to help support this volunteer-driven effort for our clients. A donation of a new backpack, school supplies or your financial support would be greatly appreciated. **The deadline for donations for this program is August 4th.** For more information on how you can help email the program coordinators at **lnfbackpackprogram@gmail.com.**

A Very Special Thank You

A very special thank you goes out to our communities for the tremendous response to our Annual Appeal in February! Donations to-date total \$20,032, which is a 26% increase over last year's appeal!

"Thank you doesn't begin to cover all I feel for the many times I have been there and you have all warmly smiled and made me feel welcome and lent a helping hand."

~L&F Client



Summer Volunteers Needed!



Do you have extra time during the summer? Are you looking to make a real difference in your own community? Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry volunteers help distribute food to those in need in the communities of Ayer, Devens, Groton, Harvard, Littleton and Shirley.

Weekday morning, Saturday morning and Tuesday evening volunteer opportunities are available to help organize and stock donated items and/or assist clients through the pantry, helping them shop for groceries.



Due to vacation plans and school out for the summer, it can be more challenging to fill our volunteer slots!

Come to a **New Volunteer Orientation Session** on the first Wednesday evening of the month at 6:30PM or the third Thursday morning of the month at 9:30AM.

Visit our website at www.loavesfishespantry.org or email tohelp@loavesfishespantry.org

Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry, Inc.
 PO Box 1
 Ayer, MA 01432

Nonprofit Org.
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 Ayer, MA 01432
 Permit No. 4

Has your address changed?
 Please email us at
 tohelp@loavesfishespantry.org
 or call 978-772-4627 x300.
 Let us know if you would rather receive an
 Electronic Newsletter!



Follow us on Twitter

LoavesFishesMA

Search "Loaves-Fishes-Pantry-in-Devens-MA"

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or scan the QR code

Most Needed Items

Stewed tomatoes/tomato paste
 Mayo/Mustard/Ketchup
 Baked Beans/Pork & Beans
 Canned Pasta/Canned Chili
 Pasta (Ziti/Rotini/Shells/Rigatoni)
 Garbanzo and Re-fried beans
 Canned Beets/Spinach/Sauerkraut
 Ensure/Instant Breakfast
 Depends (Lg & XLg size)
 Feminine Care Products
 Toothpaste & Tooth Brushes
 Shampoo/Conditioner
 Deodorant
 Soap

Collection Box Locations	
AYER	HARVARD
Ayer Post Office	Harvard Post Office
Nashoba Valley Medical Center	Harvard Police Department
North Middlesex Savings Bank	LITTLETON
The Cottage Restaurant	Citizen's Savings Bank
The Markham Group	Donelan's Supermarket
DEVENS	North Middlesex Savings Bank
North Middlesex Savings Bank	Northern Bank & Trust
GROTON	Littleton Police Department
Donelan's Supermarket	Littleton Post Office
Groton Post Office	Knox Realty
Groton Public Library	SHIRLEY
Middlesex Bank	Shirley Post Office
North Middlesex Savings Bank	Hazen Library
Shaw's Supermarket	North Middlesex Savings Bank
Town Hall	Phoenix Park, Building D
Groton Senior Center	

Donation boxes can also be found in many places of worship in all
 six towns served by Loaves & Fishes