



BREAD AND BOARD

The NSKS Newsletter

www.NSKS.org

The Greater Nashua Community will be one that ensures that the basic needs of all its members are met in a sustainable, accessible, and dignified way. The Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter will provide food and shelter to vulnerable individuals and families in the Greater Nashua Region in a dignified and sustainable manner. NSKS works to increase access to a full spectrum of basic needs through advocacy, targeted programs and collaboration with other organizations.

No one should be hungry or homeless in our community.

SPRING 2022

OUTREACH VICTORIES

In order to reach individuals experiencing homelessness who are unable, for whatever reasons, to come to the soup kitchen or shelter, NSKS created an outreach program to deliver essential supplies, from tents to pet food, in our community, and to help people experiencing homelessness to connect with needed services. We have two fantastic Outreach Staff, Wally, and Denise. Here are some of their recent successes.

While checking a campsite for another client we found another person in a tent. He refused to come out. Said he didn't need our help and had plenty of food. We left some warm socks even though he said he didn't want them along with our card. One day he emailed and thanked us for the socks and asked us for a food box. We met him at a coffee shop he frequents and brought him some food. He began asking us for food and other supplies. His name came up on a housing list I was sent, and I connected him to Harbor Homes. He is in the process of signing for a voucher.

Another client was dropped off here in Nashua to stay at the shelter. He had some cognitive difficulties and was unable to understand his benefit paperwork or navigate the area. We helped him connect with a benefits specialist to get him a Primary Care Physician in the area and get him back on his medications. When he had to leave the shelter, we supported him with a sleeping bag and worked with Harbor Care to get him into Safe Haven where he has a room of his own. They are helping find a supportive living arrangement.

We help our clients with basic needs like food, clothing and camping gear to survive outside. We also link them to counseling, housing supports and substance abuse treatments. Footwear and bus passes are popular needs. If we can remove a barrier or advocate in any way possible to find

suitable housing, we do. Sometimes just being a friendly presence that is there to say hello and lend a listening ear to people who are used to being ignored and marginalized makes a huge difference in itself.

SPRING AND SUMMER CLIENT NEEDS

With the change in seasons, some of our client needs are changing, too. Here is a list of our most requested items:

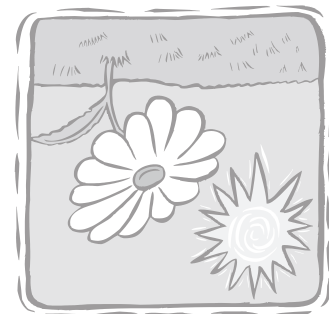
- Underwear for Men & Women- NEW
- T-Shirts, Sweatshirts, Sweatpants for Men & Women – NEW
- Footwear -- NEW
- Tents (new or gently used)
- Sleeping Bags
- Manual Can Openers
- Small Saucepans for campfire cooking
- Plastic forks/spoons
- Bug Spray
- Sunscreen
- Deodorant

GARDEN ITEMS

We are looking for garden volunteers and supplies to help us with our outdoor raised bed gardens. Please note, we have organic gardens so all materials, seeds and seedlings MUST be ORGANIC. We are happy to accept used garden supplies in good, operational condition.

- ORGANIC composted cow manure
- ORGANIC soil
- Financial donations to purchase specific items for the garden
- Volunteers (please contact shane@nsks.org for available shifts)

Happy Spring 2022



NASHUA
SOUP KITCHEN
& SHELTER, INC.



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Find us on Facebook: Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter, Inc.

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Your support is important. It makes all of this possible. Those who depend on us thank you!!

THANK YOU to our 27th Annual Run & Walk for Food & Shelter **SPONSORS**

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Day of event Registration will be open on Sunday, April 3rd from 11AM – 12:30PM outside Muldoon Fitness Center on Rivier Campus. Our Kid's Sprint is at 12:30PM. Our 5K & 10K Race starts at 1PM. 3K Walkers start after runners. Event happens whatever the weather! See you there!

A STORY SHARED by STAFF

When the pandemic began we noticed a lot of our clientele was changing. People that were embarrassed to come because "they've never needed to go to a food pantry before" or I even heard "I have a full time job. I am not supposed to be here." Truth is, someone could need a soup kitchen or food pantry at any point.

One story comes to mind where one client, who had been sent home from her full-time job due to the pandemic, was struggling to make ends meet. She was on the verge of being evicted and couldn't afford food. She came to our food pantry and used words such as "mortified" and stated "she's not poor." We helped her as we would any client and she came to us for the next six months.

Recently, she came for a regular visit for fruits and vegetables, and she was telling me her life was finally coming together. She had started working again, finally able to start paying bills back, and wanted to thank me. It was difficult for her to come to the soup kitchen to ask for help but having me, and the other volunteers and staff, show "compassion" and "understanding" made it easier for her to feel comfortable receiving services from us. It's a rewarding feeling to have a job that allows me to be able to help fulfill people's needs in a time of crisis.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BLOG

The other day, I was talking with a friend who had first started doing anti-poverty work back in the sixties. "I can't believe we're still doing this today!" he said. "Why haven't we made more progress?" I have to confess that it is a sentiment which has crossed my mind more than once. Why can't we make poverty of a generation rather than generational? Why do we work so hard and the needle never seems to move? The short answer is that we are working with long term problems. Problems that have been decades if not centuries in the making and unraveling the Gordian knot doesn't happen overnight.

One of the things I love about the Nashua Soup Kitchen are the daily reminders that we are making progress. At every staff meeting, we try to lift up stories people have experienced that provide hope and inspiration to come back another day. In our conversation yesterday, Donna mentioned a gentleman she had met who told her that he was living outside and hadn't had anything to eat for three days. As she put it, he was at the very bottom of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. She referred our outreach team to him and slowly, methodically, they provided food and assistance and today we are happy to see his name as a guest in our shelter.

The things that make the greatest difference are often the things that are the hardest to do. I want to end with a story Rich shared regarding gratitude:

One of our meal time clients really sticks out. He was homeless and constantly couch surfing. He always wanted to help whether it was dishes, trash, or even shoveling. I remember one day coming in to do breakfast, which at the time we had to be here at 6:00 AM, and he had already been here to shovel the entire walkway and sidewalk for our clients. I found out two months ago he got a place. He was so excited about it. He even pulled out a list and on it was all the things he needed for his apartment. [I got him the food he needed and other supplies.] He was overly grateful. He came back a few days later and said "thank you Rich. It feels great to have my own place now. I don't have to sleep out in the cold. I can go home in a warm building, cook my own food, and even watch TV". He looked at me and said 'you know how long it has been since I have been able to do any of those things?'

The difference we make is not always large. We may not be able to solve the problems of the world but for that man, the difference we all made together was priceless. Thank you!

Michael

WISH LIST

Most-Needed Food Pantry & Personal Care Items:

- Cereal: any non-sugary type, brand, or size, hot or cold
- Soups: any brand, flavor (broth or hearty), canned, boxed
- Pasta: any type or brand
- Rice
- Canned Fruit or Fruit Cups
- Shampoo
- Deodorant
- Toothpaste and Toothbrushes
- Body Wash or Bars of Soap
- Toilet Paper: any size packages; families are given one roll

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