



Sunshine Soup Kitchen News

Providing a free meal to anyone in need.

FEBRUARY, MARCH, AND APRIL 2011



I started down the mountain on my skis and realized, "I left my poles at the top!"

No, this was not my latest nightmare, but it is a good description of what the pace is like in the Soup Kitchen office during the holidays. It is that busy and none of the staff feel like they have any control over the day. But it is all good. During this season, 18 or so businesses and organizations collected food for us, some small collections and others massive. I dare not mention names for fear of overlooking someone, but know that these efforts will sustain our meal program for the months to come.

Our regular volunteers were joined by others to prepare and serve meals during a time of the year that everyone is busy. Volunteers are the heartbeat of this organization. If these hard-working folks had been paid even just the minimum hourly rate, it would have cost over \$56,000 in wages.

There were over 70 regular Soup Kitchen guests at our yearly Christmas party. Each one received gifts that were purchased by incredibly generous folks. These were not just generic, one-size-fits-all gifts, but they were items individually requested by our guests and selflessly shopped for, wrapped, tagged, and given by donors. Besides the bounty of gifts, the Derry Teachers group from G.H. Hood Memorial School once again served a restaurant-quality turkey dinner. This is a tradition carried on in loving memory of Susan Piper.

We put out the word that we were in need of warm winter clothing and almost got buried in an avalanche of donated items. The Derry Human Service Department displayed a giving tree in the Municipal Center asking for new socks and towels for our guests. I think the donations filled about four cartons.

Approximately 270 churches, individuals and businesses gave cash donations to help with the overhead program of this ministry. Many were responding to our end of year plea. We still ended the year in a deficit, but not what it was running at this fall.

How can all of these people be adequately thanked? Each volunteer is verbally thanked in person. We strive to send a letter of thanks to every in-kind and cash donor. I have no doubt that some are missed. My prayer is that every person who answered the call within his or her heart to give aid to this ministry is blessed by the One who commands that we "love our neighbor as we love ourselves." I also offer up praise to Him because of the good things that you all do. Be blessed in all you do for others.



~Cynthia Dwyer

You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.
2 Corinthians 9:11 (NIV)

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What does the Soup Kitchen do in a blizzard?



Winter has just begun, and already we are seeing Mother Nature in her best fury. In years past we have shut down the entire operation when schools were cancelled. We have decided this year, that as long as the staff can get here, we will have something hot to serve. We will not operate at full staff in the kitchen; however we will keep the office open, and serve soup for the people who still come for a meal, no matter the weather.

The first storm in mid January took us by surprise when 23 guests came for a meal. Our plan was to serve soup in the office, but quickly moved back to the church dining room where we had adequate seating for this surprise crowd. As most of you know, we have seen a huge increase in the number of guests dining with us over the past two years. Leaving most of them with nowhere to obtain a hot meal, is not our idea of goodwill.

Therefore, in the case of severe weather when road conditions are hazardous, the Sonshine Soup Kitchen will make every attempt to provide a hot meal for guests. The plan is as follows:

Making the Decision

- * As early as possible, the Executive Director and Program Director will confer on the conditions and make a decision to open as usual or proceed with the storm plan.
- * A call will be made to the group leader for the day and let him or her know that the storm plan is in effect.
- * The group leader will make calls to the group volunteers and let them know the plan. They will be offered the option of coming in or staying home.
- * The Directors will then proceed with the necessary calls to inform staff and other scheduled volunteers of the plan.
- * No meals will be delivered, and calls will be made to the homebound clients informing them.

The Meal

- * The office will be set up to seat eight diners.
- * Start soup heating in the soup kettle no later than noon in order to have time to heat it to 160 degrees.
- * Put signs on church door and office door indicating the change in serving procedure.
- * Have paper products ready for serving. Include crackers and individually bottled drinks.
- * Serve soup at 3:00 (or as soon as it is safely heated) until 5:00 PM.

Prayer concerns

Please join us as we pray for:

- K for housing
- S for protection
- E in depression
- R & K & L with health issues
- P, missing since summer

*In the morning, O Lord
you hear my voice;
in the morning I lay my requests before you
and wait in expectation.
Psalm 5:3 (NIV)*

WE URGE ALL VOLUNTEERS TO USE YOUR JUDGMENT AND YOUR DEGREE OF COMFORT FOR DRIVING IN THE SNOW. DO NOT PUT YOURSELF IN DANGER.

Anyone who would like to be on our special on-call list for storms, please call the office. We would need a few people starting at 12:00 to help prepare and set up for the meal, and a few more at 2:30 to help with the serving and clean-up.

And just think spring is just around the corner.



~ Christine

Current needs



At this time, the following items are in short supply. This list is also posted on our web site and updated monthly along with other current information.

Go to www.sonshinesoupkitchen.org.

- Heavy duty electric can opener
- Butter, single servings and sticks
- Salad dressing
- Decaf coffee
- Disposable dessert plates
- 12 or 16 oz. disposable soup containers with lids
- Sponges
- Clam chowder

Numbers to note

2010 was a banner year at the Sonshine Soup Kitchen. We saw our highest number of meals served in our 21-year history. Thanks to consistent and reliable community support, we are equipped with the resources to continue serving hot, nourishing meals in the future.






2010	
Guests served	10,668
Meals served	15,212
Average meals per day	59
Average people per day	41
Volunteer hours logged	7,940
2009	
Guests served	9,838
Meals served	13,735
Average meals per day	54
Average people per day	39
Volunteer hours logged	6,482

	2008 to 2009	2009 to 2010	2008 to 2010
Meal increase	15.9%	10.8%	28.4%
Ave. meal per day increase	14.8%	7.4%	25.5%
People increase	28%	8.4%	82.6%
Ave. people per day increase	30%	5.1%	36.7%




Heartfelt thanks

The work of the Sonshine Soup Kitchen is accomplished by many different organizations in the community. The people who represent those organizations sometimes change. The start of a new year seems to be an appropriate time to acknowledge the service provided by those who will no longer be volunteering regularly at the soup kitchen and to welcome the new volunteers who have picked up where the others left off.

Many blessings to the following groups for their years of dedication and service:

-  Judy & Cam Boyd, 10 years of volunteering!
-  St. Matthews Church, Sue Quaranta, group leader for 8 years! Laurie Duff, group leader 1 year!
-  St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 20 years of volunteering! Group leaders Judy and Bill Kelley 10 years!

Our new groups have jumped right in with new ideas and great attitudes! We welcome the following groups:

-  Calvary Christian, Linda Smith, group leader.
-  Windham Bible Chapel, Michelle Ohlson group leader.
-  Braje Group, Dennis Braje and friends.

Time for sharing

I understand that change is not embraced by everyone all the time. Our staff is dedicated to keep this mission complying with all of the codes and guidelines we need to in order to maintain safety.

Sometimes my job is not easy. It is not so pleasant to be the bad guy all the time. I do get quite a bit of feedback from y'all but once in a while it is very heartwarming to get feedback that gives me encouragement.

I received this email late in December from a group leader and it made me smile from ear to ear. I hope we can all serve together and make the most of what we have together.

"Christine and Jackie,

Thank you so much for allowing us to serve tonight! I was only expecting a total of 9 people and 11 showed up and two people who thought they were supposed to serve due to a misunderstood email. What an abundance! We had to send people home! If you have any feedback for me, please let me know so we can do a better job each time we serve."

~ Christine

A very warm freezer

Remember our plea for a freezer? It was just weeks before Thanksgiving and one of our freezers went belly-up. Anticipating donations of holiday turkeys made this a critical event, for without space, we would not be able to take offerings of holiday meats that carry us through to spring. We sent out notices to churches and other organizations. Then Christine got on the phone and called a few retailers. We believed that the problem would be solved somehow, fully expecting someone had a freezer in their basement no longer needed. But we got much more than that.

The freezer of our dreams would be a 19 cubit foot chest freezer, perfect for storing large turkeys. Two small freezers were offered by Sam's Club of Manchester. We thought we better take them, or else risk having to turn down donations. We picked them up, and got them ready to go. Then we got the call.

A family in Londonderry heard of our need and conferred on what they could do to help. They decided they would like to purchase whatever freezer would best suit our needs. We were awestruck with this incredible offer. A little shopping shined the light on a 19.7 cubit foot commercial grade freezer that could be delivered within the week. And get this—it came with casters! A freezer we could move if needed without calling in a team of heavy lifters. Oh the joy! This beautiful freezer is fully operating and kept full of donated meats. Christine, in particular really likes it!

Our gratitude to this wonderful family with such warm hearts.

Staff retreat

After the holidays, the Sunshine Soup Kitchen staff began several weeks of out-of-the-office gatherings to help build positive relationships. Not that our relationships were bad, but we are called on to deal with a lot of different personalities.

We are using a series of lectures by Florence Littauer call *Your Personality Tree*. This study goes into the four major personality types, choleric, melancholy, phlegmatic, and sanguine. Each type has its own unique characteristics, strengths, weaknesses and needs. The purpose is for us to get to know ourselves better and to better understand the people we work with and their needs.

This effort can only, with God's help, make us a better team of people devoted to the ministry at the Soup Kitchen.

Prayer changes people

Prayer is not a matter of coming to God with our wish list and pleading with him to give us what we ask for. Prayer is first and foremost the experience of being in the presence of God. Whether or not we have our request granted, whether or not we get to take home anything as a result of the encounter, we are changed by having come into the presence of God. A person who has spent an hour or two in the presence of God will be a different person for sometime afterward.

~Harold Kusher in *Who Needs God*.

Donor recognition

It is not always easy to decide how to give recognition to donors. Some people want their good deeds to be private. Others enjoy sharing them in a public way. This is a very personal decision that the Soup Kitchen tries not to force one way of the other.

We have found that most businesses benefit from the "advertising" gained from public recognition and, unless otherwise instructed will, from time to time make these donors known. Individuals and families usually prefer more anonymity, so these people are never mentioned by name in any of our publications. Our sincere hope is that everyone is rewarded in a way that feeds their souls.



Recognition of business donors 2010

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 LONDONDERRY AUTO BODY & REPAIR
 LONDONDERRY LIONS CLUB
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