

Open Table

Caring for Families & Creating Community



Winter 2010

Our Mission

Open Table offers weekly community supper programs and pantries in Maynard and Concord to more than 175 guests, including many children – no questions asked.

Founded in 1989, its mission is to address hunger and social isolation in our area, while respecting the privacy and dignity of our guests in a welcoming community of support.

“Our guests are the catalyst for our program, both 20 years ago and today. We are privileged that they let us into their lives.”

ROBERT RODRIGUEZ, CHAIRMAN

Guests and Volunteers Highlight Our 20th Anniversary

We took a moment in this very challenging and busy year to celebrate our 20th Anniversary by hosting our inaugural fundraising luncheon in April. Those in attendance were visibly moved by the compelling stories that individual guests shared, in their own voices, about the importance of Open Table and its community of support for some of our neighbors coping with enormous daily challenges. Hear the voices of three of our guests...

“In 2006, we moved from Texas for my husband’s job. The job we came to MA for ended up being worse than what we left; the pay was inadequate. Soon, all my children had to eat was cheese and crackers. We knew no one here and had no friends or family who could help us. I learned about Open Table from Minuteman ARC, and **received the food and groceries we needed.** In April 2009, my husband was laid off, and Open Table continued to give us the support we needed to deal with the crisis we were in. ”



“Open Table is a cure for my loneliness and isolation; **it has given me a community to belong to** and share my joys and concerns with. ”

“Not so long ago, my life in a nearby suburb was very different. Then, my world turned upside down. The groceries Open Table provides help my family eat many things I couldn’t afford. The hot meals are healthy and delicious. The back-to-school supplies and the simple holiday gift provided for each of my kids are greatly appreciated. **Most of all, I value the people.** Open Table’s volunteers have become friends. During a time of so much upset and stress, I have found through Open Table people who listen, who care and who help provide the tools toward self-reliance. ”

Open Table is a way to open arms and hearts in the community, share success and gifts, practice values that enhance common humanity and give and receive kindness.



Concord & Maynard

www.opentable.org



The Tradition of Guest Support

When we listen to people's stories about the struggles in their lives, it becomes very apparent that our guests have many complex needs beyond food. While food is our primary focus, we help guests address the multiple challenges in their daily lives.

Some needs are small – a notebook for a school project, a winter jacket or boots, or a dinner delivered to a home because the person has no transportation. However, many of our guests face crises in housing, fuel assistance, summer child care, and critical health situations. For these issues, we draw on the wider community of helpful support, including referring guests to other community agencies whenever possible. We use our discretionary fund to deal with crises of an immediate nature. **We recognize and appreciate that it takes the efforts of many people to support our guests.**



Volunteers from Open Table joined with the crews from Gaining Ground to help with needed farm work this spring. Our guests enjoy an abundance of fresh produce during the summer growing season thanks to donations from Gaining Ground and other local farms.



Thanks to funding provided by the Sudbury Foundation, Open Table cooks have new professional ovens.



Do You Know?

Annually

- 12,600 bags of pantry groceries are distributed
- 10,700 meals are served
- 95+ children receive back-to-school supplies, shoes and holiday gifts
- 200 + volunteers commit 10,000 + hours of their time and energy
- Thousands of non-perishable items are collected through food drives
- 90% of budgeted expenses are spent on direct program services

Weekly

- 175 + guests are served dinner
- 90% of our guests rely on weekly bags of groceries and fresh produce
- 148 gallons of milk are sent home
- Children's bags with healthy school and summer snacks go home
- 2/3 of the cost of weekly grocery bags is for perishable food purchased by Open Table

*"Dear Open Table, This money (\$2.86) is for you.
We earned it by setting up a fruit juice stand."*

SINCERELY, LOUISA, LILY, MAGGIE, SALLY AND KATHARINE - AGES 4 TO 8.

Students at the Nashoba Brooks School spent their day of Service Learning in May organizing and cleaning the pantry.



We celebrated our 20th Anniversary in April 2009 at a luncheon with our community of sponsors, volunteers, and supporters that included members of faith groups, school groups and the local community. We came together to share a meal, similar to the one served every Monday, in Maynard and Thursday, in Concord, prepared and served by our outstanding group of volunteers.

Thank you to all who made this celebration a success!



Volunteer Appreciation

Welcome to all new volunteers!

We wish to extend a heartfelt thank you to the following retired volunteers:

- Bruce Arntzen (cleanup)
- Eric Arntzen (cleanup)
- Nate Calcagni (server & cleanup)
- Bill Elliott (shopper & cook)
- Eva Herndon (shopper)
- David Hull (setup)
- Marie Larson (pickup)
- Michelle Lipkin (cleanup)
- Bonnie Logan (head cook)
- Pat Messenger (cleanup)
- Christine Midwood (cleanup)
- Kate Nazareth (cleanup)
- Marilyn Nazareth (cleanup)
- Gene Parish (driver)
- Cathy Putnam (pantry)
- Stephanie Reid (shopper & cook)
- Rose Ruse (shopper)
- Margaret Scheiner (server & cleanup)
- Patrick Schomacker (cleanup)
- Fan Watkinson (pantry)

We will miss your generous contribution of time and your presence!



Carl Torrice, social worker at the Willard School receives a certificate of appreciation from Marilyn Hughes, Open Table's Pantry Coordinator, upon his retirement. Under Carl's guidance, each March the 5th grade class coordinated a schoolwide food drive that this year resulted in the delivery of **over 50 boxes (1250 lbs.!) of food to the pantry.**

"Without a place like Open Table, many of us might be spending our week alone." OPEN TABLE GUEST

Remembering Eddie & Henri

The Open Table community is deeply saddened by the death this fall of long-time volunteer, Eddie Zygala. For almost 20 years, Eddie's hard work in the pantry each week was invaluable. He greeted guests and volunteers with his warm and welcoming smile and often a big hug or handshake. What a gift he was to all of us at Open Table.

We are also saddened by the death this past spring of Henri LaFreniere. Henri was a volunteer and guest at Open Table for several years. He helped shop for dinner groceries, picked up donated bread and pastries, and meticulously organized the 'choice' table in the pantry. We will miss his smile and weekly presence.



Working together, cooks in Maynard and Concord are committed to providing weekly nutritious and appealing meals.





Peter Hilton (l) and Rob Rodriguez (r).

Peter Hilton, President of Open Table, was awarded an Honorable Mention by the Crossroads Foundation for the Woolsey Conover Award for Effective Philanthropy. The award celebrates the extraordinary generosity of an individual dedicated to improving the MetroWest community. Peter chose Open Table as the recipient of an accompanying grant award.

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The Chairman and President's Message

Dear Open Table Supporters and Friends,

2009 was a year of challenge, growth and quiet celebration. At Open Table, we spent the year managing significant challenges brought about by the difficult economic situation, reflecting on our past 20 years of providing for families in our communities and, most importantly, planning for the future. We are committed to continuing to enrich the services we offer while maintaining the same high standards that have characterized our program since its inception.

Our guests are the catalyst for our program, both 20 years ago and today. As anticipated, our guest population has increased at our dinner and pantry programs – we are close to capacity in each of our locations. We are seeing more people, particularly families with children, needing assistance. We have more guests with a greater variety of needs. All of this serves as a backdrop for looking critically at our programs, understanding where our strengths are and assessing how we can best serve our guests – on both a short-term and long-term basis.

Here is how we serve our guest community today:

Our Community Suppers are continually reviewed and improved to ensure that we provide healthy, nutritious and appealing meals to all our guests, including an increasing number of children and guests with varying health needs and dietary restrictions;

Our Pantry provides both staples and fresh produce for our guests, including “kids bags” containing food items that are both healthy and appropriately packaged for taking to school and camp programs;

Our Guest Support Program includes the Children's Back-to-School and Holiday Programs, Winter Food Voucher Program, and individualized Guest Support Services. We offer guidance and onsite access to other community resources to help guests find solutions to issues such as heating and fuel subsidies, food stamps, subsidized housing applications and legal services. Our Emergency Guest Support Services utilize our discretionary fund to help guests when other community resources cannot be accessed in a timely manner or are not available.

We provide these programs with an all-volunteer team and our volunteers deserve special recognition and appreciation for all they do as well as how much they care for every member of our community.

Last year, an eroding economy put pressure on many non-profits and we were worried. We asked for special help from our supporters and you came through, supporting us in the Annual Appeal, through special giving opportunities and by participating in our Anniversary Luncheon. Unfortunately, the economy has not improved. **When you read about budget cuts that impact state and local social service agencies, remember that these are services utilized by our guests.** The need continues to grow, the lives of our guests become increasingly challenging and complex, and resources continue to be constrained. We are there to support the critical needs of our guests and can only do so with your continued help.

To each of you, we offer our deepest thanks and appreciation for your ongoing support of Open Table.

Robert Rodriguez, Chairman

Peter Hilton, President



Community Businesses & Organizations Recognized

Hundreds of generous volunteers and donors make personal contributions of time and money throughout the year to ensure that there is “always a place at the table” for all Open Table guests. The Board of Directors also wants to acknowledge the generous support given to Open Table during the past year by the following local businesses, community and faith groups:

AECOM Technical Services, Inc.
A Place To Grow
Adele Chambers, DMD, PC
Alcott Elementary School
Alistair Lucks Architecture & Interiors
Anzu Global LLC
Applefield Farm
Arbella Insurance Group Charitable Foundation
Atlas Venture Inc.
Barn Cooperative Nursery School
Barrett & Co.
Barrett Foundation
Bent-Stone Farm

Debra's Natural Gourmet
Dewing Schmid Architects
Domestic Violence Services Network, Inc.
Donelan's Supermarket-Acton, Littleton
Drumlin Farm
Dunla Eco-Store
Eastern Mountain Sports, Acton
Emerson Hospital
Farm at Walden Woods
Fenn School
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
Fine Arts Studio
First Parish in Concord
First Parish in Lincoln

Northeast NE Correctional Center
Northern Trust Corporation
Old Town Hall Exchange
One Source Information Services
Parker School
Payless Shoe Source, Inc.
Pink Ladies Soccer Club
Por-Shun
Potting Shed
Prellwitz/Chilinski Associates, Inc.
Project Bread
Prokopis Charitable Gift Fund
Pyramid Technology Services, Inc.
Red Lion Foundation
Roche Brothers Supermarkets
Rosse Family Charitable Foundation
Rotary Club of Concord
St. Anne's in-the-Fields Episcopal Church
St. Bridget Parish
St. Irene Parish
St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
Sally Ann Food Shop
SolidWorks, Corp.
Spaulding Management Corp.
Stand for Children Breakfast
Starbucks Coffee-Concord, Acton
Stop & Shop, Acton
Stow Family Chiropractic
String Arts School of Concord
Sudbury Foundation
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Sun Microsystems Foundation, Inc.
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Sybase, Inc.
The KELYN Group LLC
38 Studios LLC
Thoreau Club and Members
Thoreau Elementary School
TomTom, Inc.
Town of Concord
Town of Lincoln
Toy Shop of Concord
Tradeloop Corp.
Trader Joe's, Acton
Trinitarian Congregational Church
Trinity Episcopal Church
Twin Seafood, Inc.
U.S. Postal Workers-Concord
Union Congregational Church
United Women's Club
Vanderhoof Hardware Co.
Verrill Farm
Welch Foods, Inc.
West Concord Union Church
Whole Foods Supermarkets
Willard Elementary School
Willy's Philly's Sub Shop
Z-Tech Allez Consulting

“We all love the fresh fruits and veggies, not just because they taste good but also because it's nice to feel supported in our goal of providing healthy meals at home.” OPEN TABLE GUEST

“We are fortunate to be cared for by the communities around us... by the schools, faith groups and other organizations who are tied into the work we do at Open Table.” OPEN TABLE BOARD MEMBER

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Nashoba Brook Bakery and Café
Nashoba Brooks School
National Charity League
New Church of Concord
Nokia Inc.
Northbridge Insurance Agency, Inc.



On behalf of Open Table, Linda Escobedo (l) and Peter Hilton (r) gratefully accepted a grant from Ann Scarzi of the Concord-Carlisle Community Chest.

*Every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list. If there has been an inadvertent error or omission, we apologize and want to hear from you so that it can be corrected.

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Caring for Families & Creating Community

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Winter 2010

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Open Table Returns to First Parish

In November 2009, First Parish Church welcomed back Open Table's community supper and food pantry program in Concord. During the prior 18 months, Trinitarian Congregational Church graciously hosted our program while First Parish underwent extensive renovations.

We wish to express our sincerest thanks and gratitude to Rev. John Lombard, Judy Walpole, Karen Lord and members of the TriCon congregation for their support.



How Can YOU Help Now?

- Give generously to the Annual Appeal; every company matching gift really counts!
- Donate to the pantry or organize a food drive.
- Ask your friends on Facebook and Twitter to support Open Table.
- Request donations to Open Table "in lieu of gifts" for a birthday, anniversary or other social occasion.
- Donate online at www.opentable.org

Become an OPEN TABLE SUPPORTER!

"I never expected to be a guest of Open Table. I had been on the other side of the table, literally, for my entire life. However, now I was the one who needed help." OPEN TABLE GUEST