

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.

20 years of caring for families and creating community



Winter 2009

OUR MISSION

Open Table offers weekly community supper programs and pantries in Maynard and Concord to more than 150 guests, including many children – no questions asked.



Founded in 1989, its purpose 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.



"Hunger is a community issue and needs to be solved with community solutions."

*Ellen Parker
Executive Director, Project Bread*

LIFE THROWS YOU UNEXPECTED CURVEBALLS A GUEST'S STORY

My family and I are new transplants to the area. I have four young children and am a single parent. I was overwhelmed after a move in which I left a domestic violence situation. I landed in a town I did not know well. With few resources and a lot of worry, I looked into local social service agencies. I was lucky enough to discover Open Table.

The groceries, including milk, fresh produce and baked goods, are an invaluable part of my kids' diets. The hot meals are a wonderful way to have a fresh and delicious dinner. The volunteers are all kind. I have never felt judged at Open Table; people simply accept you for who you are and don't ask questions.

The programs Open Table has in place for the children it serves have also been of tremendous help. The back-to-school backpacks and the school supplies are a lifesaver. The holiday program is another fantastic program to help families who are struggling in these tough economic times. I never thought I would go to a food pantry as a patron. I had always been a volunteer on the other side. But, sometimes life throws you some unexpected curveballs and you accept the help from your community that is available. I am so grateful to have found Open Table. I am so glad that I picked up the phone and left a message on the Open Table answering machine when I needed help. My experience has reminded me of all the good in the world and that people really do practice acts of kindness.

I am grateful for all you do.

Thank you for Open Table.



DO YOU KNOW?

- 12,600 bags of pantry groceries are distributed annually
- 9,600 meals are served annually
- 160 – 185 guests are served dinner weekly
- 91% of budgeted expenses are for direct program services
- 10,000 volunteer hours were contributed last year
- 200 + direct service volunteers commit their time and energy
- 80% of our guests rely on the weekly bag of groceries
- 30 children's bags with school snacks are sent home weekly
- 70 children received back-to-school supplies and shoes in August
- \$22.00 is the average cost of a weekly grocery bag given to guests (\$7.00 in donated and \$15.00 in purchased and perishable food)
- 84% of budgeted expenses are for food and food supply purchases

BUILDING STRENGTH IN MAYNARD

2008 has seen another year of growth and support for the Open Table Maynard Program. An increasing number of guests come each Monday to enjoy the dinner, groceries and companionship of other guests and volunteers. Open Table Maynard has achieved many successes this year, including receipt of a significant grant from Middlesex Savings Charitable Foundation for providing outreach and program support, increased weekly commitments and donations from local businesses and the implementation of a recycling program. A warm and caring community is forming and it feels good!

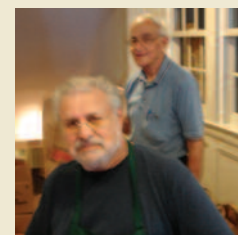
20 YEARS OF CARING FOR FAMILIES AND CREATING COMMUNITY

Some members of our community lack the resources to provide for all of the needs of their families at various times in their lives. Others who live alone easily become isolated and lonely. In 1989 a group of concerned citizens came together as a community to address the local issues of hunger and social isolation. Representatives from faith groups, the town and schools, joined to provide food and support to those in our community and surrounding area who had a need for these services. The program was named Open Table to communicate that all are welcome – no questions asked.

What began as a program to provide a hot meal every week to those who joined us has grown steadily over the past 20 years. Emboldened by the challenges faced by guests, Open Table has through the years strengthened its mission and now has two programs: Open Table Maynard and Open Table Concord.

Funded and supported by you – local businesses, social service agencies, grant makers, foundations, community chests and individual donors, today Open Table:

- Feeds 160 – 185 guests each week, many of whom are children or senior citizens;
- Distributes thousands of bags of groceries each year through its onsite pantries;
- Offers a community of support and onsite access to other community resources to alleviate the stress of food insecurity;
- Supports Open Table guests with special programs such as the Children's Back-to-School Program, Winter Food Voucher Program, Fresh Produce and Milk Programs, and emergency Guest Support Program.
- Always seeks community solutions to link guests to other services such as heating and fuel subsidies, food stamps, subsidized housing applications and legal services.



While providing these services, our volunteers develop warm relationships with our guests, learn of their needs and help them address the challenges they face at various times in their lives. Numerous guests have also become volunteers, while remaining guests. Together, we enrich each others' lives while providing valuable service and developing meaningful friendships.

You can be proud of your support to Open Table now and into the future!



TRICON OFFERS THEIR "HOME AND HEARTS" TO HOST OPEN TABLE

When Open Table learned that First Parish of Concord, our home of nearly 20 years, was due for a major renovation, we knew that we would have to find another location that could accommodate 100 weekly guests and many volunteers every Thursday. No easy task! After reaching out to the community, members of Trinitarian Congregational Church (locally known as TriCon), graciously invited Open Table to make our temporary "home" with them, which we have done since May 2008. Open Table is fortunate to be embraced by this generous and welcoming community.

THANK YOU everyone at TriCon for your warm and caring support!

OPEN TABLE 20TH ANNIVERSARY FUNDRAISING LUNCHEON

In April 2009, friends of Open Table will host a fundraising luncheon in conjunction with its 20th Anniversary. Details and ticket information will be available on the website at www.opentable.org.

NOURISHMENT IN A VERY WEARY WORLD

Glenn Rifkin

Sometimes, in the middle of a weary world that often makes little sense and feels devoid of destination, there are small rituals that offer a brief respite and a warm welcome to people who need both. These tiny communities can and do pop up in many places for an endless list of reasons, especially this time of year. Here in Concord, on Thursday evenings such a community coalesces each week for a simple purpose: to offer a meal, a bag of groceries and a calm reprieve to a group of people who have encountered the indiscriminate touch of hunger.



The place is called Open Table.....

This is a place of genuine caring and mutual vulnerability. While serving the veggie lasagna and salad, you get warm greetings, smiles, heartfelt gratitude. But you also get to hear stories that are both sobering and heartbreaking: of bad luck, of lost jobs, of homelessness, of marriages broken, of illness and depression, of lives that tilted off track somewhere, somehow. *What we so often forget in our busy lives is that hunger might be just one lost paycheck away.* One night in the food pantry, a pale gentleman with sad eyes but a sweet smile thanked me for the groceries and told me that he used to be on my side of the table, working as a volunteer. The chasm between safety and despair can close in a hurry when there is no net beneath you.....



(Excerpted from the original article that appeared in the Concord Journal, December 6, 2007. Please visit our website at www.opentable.org to read this moving article in its entirety.)

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

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

OT Concord:

Jeanette Birch Gromada (pantry)
Suzanne Knight (pantry)
Hillary Marzot (pantry)
Martha Simon (pantry)
Dean Sullender (pantry)
Ed Zygala (12+ years, pantry)

OT Maynard:

Charlotte Corcoran (cook)
Caroline Casey (dinner manager, server)
Trish Gillis (server)
Henry Haughton (cook)
Brian Nolan (clean up)
Aziz Hassan (clean up)

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

IN MEMORIAM

Open Table regrettably notes the passing of OT Maynard volunteer Betsy Wilson and OT Concord volunteer Pat Landry.



To learn more, please contact us at 978-369-2275 (Concord) or 978-823-0082 (Maynard), or www.opentable.org.

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THE CHAIRMAN AND PRESIDENT'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR MESSAGE

Dear Members of the Open Table Community,

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

Open Table was formed with a unique vision, that all are welcome to join us for dinner and groceries and a community of support – no questions asked. For nearly 20 years now, wonderful members of our community, both volunteers and guests (including new babies) have joined us at our dinner table. We have also stood beside those experiencing illness and loss, and offered support to each other when we could.

Beyond these meaningful connections at meal times, your support provides guests with a food voucher program to help during difficult winter months when heating drives expenses up, or at other times when guests have specific need. Your support also provides children with healthy snacks, backpacks, and the opportunity to buy shoes.

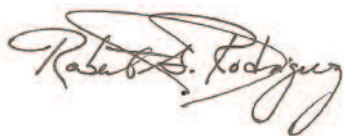
This past year, we have worked to develop several key areas further:

- **MAYNARD DINNER PROGRAM** – This program began three years ago, after we learned that a previous local dinner program had been closed. Today we serve 50 to 75 adults and children each Monday at the Union Congregational Church in Maynard Center.
- **GUEST ACCESS TO SERVICES** – Our guests face many challenges beyond food, so we provide onsite connections on Thursdays to legal and social services, information on heating, fuel subsidies and food stamps, and subsidized housing application support. Our goal is to expand these services to include additional programming for children, nutrition education, job search support and financial guidance.
- **GUEST SUPPORT PROGRAM** – After a successful pilot program, an emergency guest support program was formalized to help guests when other community resources cannot easily be accessed or are not available.
- **OVERSIGHT BOARD** – Created last year, our new Board of Directors helps to guide our expanding programs, as well as provide a strategic and long-range view for planning.

Your Support is Critical to Open Table and the Well-Being of our Community
Recent economic news has everyone worried, and we are certain our guests need us now more than ever. Many non-profits see their financial base eroding, as foundations and other funders may have from 15 to 25 percent fewer dollars to share with groups like ours. We are, more than ever, greatly appreciative of those who can support us, and also look forward to working with many of you in the year ahead, whether it is through food drives, volunteering or other Open Table activities.

As we plan improvements and additions to Open Table in the coming year, we will continue our philosophy of openness and respect for all. In this spirit, it is an honor and greatly rewarding to serve those who join us for dinner.

Robert Rodriguez, Chairman



Peter Hilton, President



"In this economic environment, Open Table will see and meet people we have not seen before. People not used to hardship will need resources, friendship and support. Open Table will be there to help."

OT Maynard Supporter



"The high standard of excellence and professionalism that Open Table sets for its existing programs shows profound respect for the guests."

Community Volunteer





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:

Open Table Board of Directors

Robert A. Rodriguez, Chairman
 Peter D. Hilton, President
 Harriet G. Kaufman, President Emerita
 James B. Terry, Treasurer
 William W. Barnes, Clerk
 Megan H. Christopher
 Linda L. Escobedo
 Douglas Meagher
 Joseph W. Mullin
 Claudia Nimar
 Sandra L. Tilley

Operations Board Concord

William W. Barnes
 Linda L. Escobedo
 Lyneath Floyd
 Peter D. Hilton
 Marilyn Hughes
 Harriet G. Kaufman
 Jane Lifton
 Pat Alexander Oliphant
 Carol Pikilingis
 Lisa Anne Richards
 Daniel M. Shepard
 Mary Stewart
 James B. Terry
 Kathryn S. Ticknor

Operations Board Maynard

Mark A. Koenig
 Troy B. Liston
 Cindy Mello
 Jeffrey Mello
 Lisa Anne Richards
 Martha Shugrue
 Sandra L. Tilley

Open Table Concord

A Place to Grow
 Acton Barn Cooperative Nursery School
 Adele Chambers, DMD,PC
 Alcott Elementary School
 Alphabetica
 Book Rack
 Boston BookPALS: CCHS, Nashoba Brooks, Middlesex, Fenn
 Budget Printing of Concord
 Caldwell Banker, Lincoln
 Carlisle Middle School
 Carlisle Public Schools
 Carlisle Youth Commission
 Cheese Shop of Concord
 Colonial Inn
 Commonwealth Ballet Company
 Community Newspaper Company
 Community Services Coordinator for Concord & Carlisle
 Concord Academy
 Concord Bookshop
 Concord Brownie Troops 2665, 2694, 2691, 2692, 2693, 3690
 Concord Children's Center
 Concord Council on Aging
 Concord Country Club Ladies Golf
 Concord Family Network
 Concord File
 Concord Flower Shop, Inc
 Concord Law Group, PC
 Concord Middle School: Peabody & Sanborn Bldgs.
 Concord Museum Guide Staff
 Concord Picnic in the Park
 Concord Provisions
 Concord-Carlisle Community Chest
 Concord-Carlisle High School
 Concord-Carlisle Lacrosse Team
 Congregation Kerem Shalom
 Crawford Idema Family Foundation
 Crop Walk
 Crosby's Marketplace
 Crossroads Community Foundation
 Cub Scout Pack 147, 149
 Curves
 CVS Pharmacy, Concord

Cynosure
 Daisy Troop 2669
 Deborah Richardson Designs, Inc.
 Debra's Natural Gourmet
 Domestic Violence Services Network
 Donelan's Supermarket, Acton, Littleton
 Emerson Hospital
 Fenn School
 First Parish in Concord
 First Parish in Lincoln
 Food Project
 40 ParkLane, LLC
 Gaining Ground, Inc.
 GE Foundation
 Holy Family Parish
 Hugh Cargill Community Gardens
 Jacobs Creative Group, Inc.
 JSP Partners LP
 Just Cause 3 Day Cancer Walk
 Keller Williams Realty
 Keystone Partners, Inc.
 La Provence
 LEAP School
 Lincoln Public Schools
 Luther Conant School
 Mahoney's Garden Center
 Mass. Audubon Society - Drumlin Farm
 Mass. Medical Society Middlesex Central District
 MetroWest Legal Services, Inc.
 Middlesex Savings Bank
 Middlesex School
 Mill Iron Farm
 Milldam Nursery School
 Minuteman Arc for Human Services, Inc.
 Moonlight Web Service
 Nashawtuc Architects
 Nashoba Brook Bakery and Café
 Nashoba Brooks School
 National Charity League, Class of 2013 & 2014
 New Church of Concord
 Pan Mass Challenge Kids Ride
 Payless Shoe Source, Inc.
 Pioneer Investment Management, Inc.
 Potting Shed

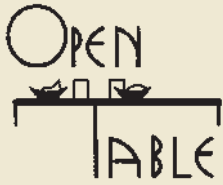
Project Bread
 Prokopis Charitable Foundation
 Pyramid Technology Services, Inc.
 Raiders Softball
 Red Lion Foundation
 Roche Brothers Supermarkets
 Sally Ann Food Shop
 Spaulding Management Corp.
 St John Evangelical Lutheran Church
 St. Irene's Parish
 Starbucks Coffee, Concord, Acton
 Stop & Shop, Acton
 Tenet Healthcare Foundation
 Thoreau Club, Camp & Outdoor Center
 Thoreau Club Members
 Thoreau Elementary School
 Timothy Wheeler House of Concord
 Town of Concord
 Tradeloop Corp
 Trinitarian Congregational Church
 Trinity Episcopal Church
 US Postal Workers - Concord
 Vanderhoof Hardware Co.
 Verrill Farm
 Welch Foods, Inc.
 West Concord Five & Ten to \$1.00 Store Inc.
 West Concord Union Church
 Whole Foods Supermarkets
 Willard Elementary School

Open Table Maynard

AECOM Technical Services, Inc.
 Benjarong
 Blue Coyote Grille
 Café Decadence
 Cast Iron Kitchen
 Clock Tower Place
 Congregation Kerem Shalom
 Cristopher's
 Crop Walk
 CVS Pharmacy, Maynard
 DeCordova Museum & Sculpture Park
 Donelan's Supermarket, Littleton
 Dunia
 51 Main Bar & Grill

Fine Arts Theater
 First Parish in Concord
 Flower Pot
 Geek Boutique
 Girl Scout Troops 2508, 2634
 Greater Boston Food Bank
 Imago School
 Main Street Market & Café
 Martin & Doran Funeral Services
 Maynard Community Chest
 MaynardFest
 Maynard Outdoor Store, Inc.
 Maynard United Methodist Church
 Maynard Village Pizza
 MetroWest Legal Services, Inc.
 Middlesex Savings Charitable Foundation
 Mission Evangelical Congregational Church
 Mohawk Memory Co., Inc.
 Moran Leasing Corp./U-Haul
 Northeastern NE Correctional Center
 Not Your Average Joe's
 NStar Foundation
 1 on 1 Self Indulgence
 Organization for the Assabet River
 Oriental Delight
 Paper Store, Acton and Maynard
 Project Bread
 Pyramid Technology Services, Inc.
 Salon Alexa
 Second Glance Resale Shop
 Siam Village
 Shaw's Supermarket, Stow
 St. Bridget Parish
 St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
 Stow Dollar Day, Inc.
 Thai Chili
 38 Studios
 Trader Joe's, Acton
 Trinity Episcopal Church
 Union Congregational Church
 West Concord Union Church

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



P.O. Box 42, Concord, MA 01742

P.O. Box 404, Maynard, MA 01754

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

WE'VE LAUNCHED A NEW WEBSITE.

Please visit us online at

www.opentable.org

Concord 978.369.2275 • Maynard 978.823.0082

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Winter 2009

HOW CAN YOU HELP NOW?

- Give generously to the Annual Appeal.
- Make a special 20th Anniversary donation to Open Table.
- Remember every company matching gift really counts!
- Request food or cash donations to Open Table "in lieu of gifts" for a birthday, anniversary or other social occasion.
- Tell your friends about Open Table's programs in Maynard and Concord. Pass along this newsletter and ask for their support.
- Help us find new resources in the community or at your place of work to fund the large amount of food that has to be purchased beyond food drives.
- Give gifts of securities or donate online at www.opentable.org.

YOU ARE Open Table's "Community Resource"!

THANK YOU for supporting Open Table guests.

BECOME AN OPEN TABLE SUPPORTER

And add your business, organization or faith group to all those who help provide a weekly community supper and groceries for our guests. Send a donation today or visit www.opentable.org for other ways to contribute.

FAVORITE PANTRY CHOICES

In a poll conducted this fall, we discovered that the Open Table guests enjoy most the following "choice" items that are always in short supply in the pantry:

Coffee and tea
Cereal
Canned fruit
Tuna
Spaghetti sauce
Canned stews
Canned soups containing protein
Children's snack items
Cooking oil

