

Autumn 2023

Waterville Area Soup Kitchen

The Lighthouse

More than 67,000 meals served



Gratitude

After 19 months at the Lighthouse, we continue to benefit from the support and generosity of the greater Waterville community. We value the help from large corporations, local businesses, individual neighbors, and friends.

Support from the Huhtamaki Corporation

A tremendous thank you to the Huhtamaki Corporation for the generous donations of paper goods, electrical and professional services, select monthly expenses, and Thursday lunch service help the Huhtamaki employees provide. We appreciate every bit of support and are glad to have Huhtamaki on our team.

Huhtamaki

Catalyst Grant from Kennebec Savings Bank

Kennebec Savings Bank recently announced that the Waterville Area Soup Kitchen will receive the 2023 Catalyst Grant. This \$30,000 award, presented in person by Andrew Silsby and Amanda Cooley, along with members of the Catalyst Review and Selection Committee, will enable us to upgrade and improve the Lighthouse kitchen. We are especially grateful since we are rapidly approaching capacity with our current equipment and the demand for meals continues to grow.



Holidays at the Lighthouse

Second Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon

The Lighthouse was happy to serve a traditional Thanksgiving dinner to our guests. Turkey with all the trimmings and lots of pie was enjoyed by all, in a festively decorated dining room. This year's dinner was well staffed by volunteers from the Kingdom Life Church in nearby Oakland.



We look forward to again hosting an equally delicious dinner to our guests on Christmas Day, Monday, December 25.



Mason Jar Campaign

Aline Poulin has spearheaded our second annual holiday season fundraiser. Mason Jars have been placed at check-out counters in almost 50 businesses around town and beyond to gather spare change contributions from patrons of local establishments. Last year's campaign raised more than \$1300. We are confident this year will be another success.



The Need for Support Continues

Join the \$100 Club

Help Us Reach Our Goal of 1800 new members

\$100 is only 25¢ a day



Donate at www.watervilleareasoupkitchen.com

or

WASK, PO Box 1494, Waterville ME 04903

Among our Lighthouse Keepers

The Board of Directors welcomes Janet Brunette

A heartfelt welcome to Janet Brunette, a new member of our board of directors. A resident of Fairfield, Janet is presently employed by the Diocese of Portland as the Business Manager of Corpus Christi Parish in Waterville and Winslow. A graduate of Thomas College, she has had a varied career including serving as Leasing Agent for Seton Village. We are eager for Janet's contribution to our organization.



Our Good Friend Ryan Sirois

"It's amazing how a single decision can affect your life. Just walking through a door can change everything! It all depends on what awaits you on the other side! I will never forget my first time walking through the door at the Lighthouse. I was withdrawing from meth, had broken up with my girlfriend and had lost the will to live. It was that day I met the friends who would support me. I have found a reason not just to keep going, but to get and stay clean. I genuinely look forward to spending the day at the Lighthouse among my friends."



Lighthouse Involvement

After weeks of spending time at the Lighthouse, Ryan began contributing his time and labor. For months, Ryan involved himself in daily chores such as hauling supplies and mopping floors - whatever was necessary to ensure our smooth operations. Eventually he took on running the dishwashing operation. Ryan has recently taken on more responsibilities by doing food prep in the kitchen.

Update

As many are aware, Ryan experienced a bicycle accident on September 15th that left him with several fractured vertebrae. After just a month, he returned to the Lighthouse. Now, after more than 2 months, his recovery is progressing nicely and he hopes to soon be free of the cumbersome brace that is allowing his neck to heal. We continue to wish him a full recovery.



Community Connections

Community Collaborative - Wellness Day - Sep 12

Every month at the Lighthouse brings new opportunities for collaboration and cooperation. Recently we participated in an afternoon event where more than 50 state and local agencies came together to provide information about services available on a variety of topics. WASK offered sandwiches and fruit as people circulated among booths and tables filled with information about housing, employment, physical and mental health, nutrition, substance use treatment and other significant issues.



Open Forum Listening Sessions

Since mid-October, the Lighthouse hosts a small group of local service providers. On Tuesday mornings from 10 until lunch time, a dozen individuals confer on available services. More importantly, they invite input from dining room guests. The group has found it invaluable to hear what might be helpful from those most likely to benefit from social services. Members of the listening group have included city council members, state representatives, Waterville's mayor, police and fire chiefs, case managers from local agencies, and local healthcare providers.

Art Workshop

"Together" is a project of Damariscotta artist Peter Bruun, sponsored by Waterville Creates. Peter is working with multiple groups within the community, including patrons of the Lighthouse, to artistically express their own experiences of 'community'. Given a prompt, participants explore their ideas through art. The Lighthouse is a prominent feature of several pieces. The group meets after lunch on Tuesday afternoons.



Emergency Warming Center

Waterville's Public Safety Chiefs have been constructing a plan for winter emergencies, with particular attention to the impact on our unhoused community. As the Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter takes responsibility to ensure that no one is unsheltered overnight, WASK has been approached to assist with daytime shelter.

The Lighthouse is currently open 8am until 12:30pm. We intend to offer additional hours of warm shelter, until emergency beds are available at 8pm. Adding an additional 7 hours of operation will require community support. The city has put out a call for volunteers to help staff this warming shelter and meet other needs. Training will be provided in areas such as CPR, substance use disorder, and de-escalation. If interested, contact Teresa Crawford at 207-680-4735 or tcrawford@waterville-me.gov

Waterville Area Soup Kitchen

PO Box 1494

38 College Av

Waterville ME 04903

www.watervilleareasoupkitchen.com