



Community Dining Room

Spring/Summer 2021 Newsletter



Letter from the Executive Director:

Spring is upon us and 2020 is finally behind us!

Last year brought new challenges to the Community Dining Room having us and many of our community partners pivoting quickly to continue to meet the needs of our struggling neighbors. Together we got through it, but we know it is not over yet.

In 2021 CDR is still grappling with challenges and the most challenging and difficult times for many has not even arisen. We know eventually unemployment benefits and mortgage (rent) extensions will come to an end and that is going to present huge financial strains on so many. We anticipate our services will be in greater need for individuals and families in the seven towns we serve. Food insecurity can be long-term or temporary, though we wish it never existed at all. It is imperative during this time that we give back in anyway we can help continue to close the gap in hunger.

The Community Dining Room has been providing food services and resources to the Shoreline for over 35 years. We know this would not be possible without the help of our community in many different facets.

How can you help?

- Volunteer your time
- Make a monetary donation
- Donate Items from our Wish List :
<https://www.amazon.com/registries/custom/33RRPQ94MEN4D/guest-view>
- Drop-off food items / Conduct a Food Drive

Visit our website to find our how you can go about doing any of the suggested things above: www.communitydiningroom.org

Wishing you all a healthy and safe 2021!

Judith Barron, Executive Director

“The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention”

-Oscar Wilde-



Ways to reach us:

- Follow us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/CommunityDiningRoom06405
- Contact us via email or phone (203-488-9750):
- Judith Barron (Executive Director)
(Ext. 4) or:
jbarron@communitydiningroom.org
- Diana Vaicunas (Administrative Support)
(Ext. 3) or:
info@communitydiningroom.org
- Volunteer & Program Coordinator
(Ext. 2) or:
volunteercoordinator@communitydiningroom.org
- Mary Johnston (Kitchen Coordinator)
kitchencoordinator@communitydiningroom.org

Our Services:

WEEKLY MEAL SCHEDULE*

Sunday-Friday: 12:00 – 1:00 PM

Saturday: 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Tuesday Family Night Meal: 5:30 – 6:30 PM

Wednesday & Friday Night Take-Out
(Pre-registration required, call (203)-488-9750 / Ext. 2)

* All meals are provided to-go only at this time

HOME DELIVERY MEAL SCHEDULE

Monday/Wednesday/Friday (Branford)
Wednesday (North Branford)

Information on Home Delivery: (203) 488-9750 / Ext. 2

Words from our staff:

Spring has arrived! Here at the Community Dining Room, we are enjoying the warmer weather and the longer days of sunlight. Things are busy as usual!

Our Tuesday Night Family Night has had some wonderful events. In February we handed out "Decorate Your Own Valentine's Cupcake" kits for our kiddos. In March we had a special night to celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a great sweet treat! In April we celebrated Easter and were able to hand out Easter baskets full of treats, thanks to our generous donors. For each of these holidays we were able to hand out themed books from **Read to Grow** and some creative craft kits put together by one of our volunteers. Thanks to **Bare Necessities**, we are well stocked with diapers to meet the needs of families with little ones. Our Homebound Programs continues to provide nutritious meals for clients in Branford and North Branford.

We continue to look forward to a time when we will be able to go back to inside meals, but for now we are creatively meeting the needs of our clients each day. We couldn't do this without the dedicated volunteers who cook meals, prepare and package food, coordinate the pantry, pick up donations, deliver our homebound program meals and wash dishes. Thank you for all the hard work that you do to help us fulfill our mission.

Do you have time and a desire to help others? We invite you to come join our team! If you would like to volunteer sign up for one of our training sessions. Give us a call at 203-488-9750 ext. 2 to sign up. Our monthly trainings are held on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 5 p.m. Our next meeting is May 26th. Registration is required.

From Marie

Volunteer and Program Coordinator

A Healthy recipe from our

Kitchen Coordinator Mary Johnston:

Healthy Guacamole (with frozen peas)

Ingredients:

- 1 cup frozen peas, slightly thawed
- 1 medium avocado, peeled, pitted and chopped
- juice from 1 lime
- ½ cup grape tomatoes, cut into ¼ -inch dice
- ½ cup red onion, cut into ⅛-inch dice
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and minced
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1-2 cloves minced fresh garlic
- ½ teaspoon sea salt



Instructions:

1. Place peas in the bowl of a food processor or mini chopper and pulse until the peas are smooth.
2. Transfer peas into a medium bowl and add lime juice, tomato, onion, jalapeño, cilantro, garlic and salt.
3. Stir everything together with a fork. Add avocado chunks to the bowl and mix well, mashing the avocado as you stir.
4. Serve with an assortment of raw vegetables and tortilla chips.

What's New:

We are excited to announce that Amos Parker has taken the position of "Volunteer Kitchen Assistant". Amos is a long-time volunteer and will be a wonderful asset to the kitchen. They will be working closely with Mary Johnston to help with all the things involved with the cooking, pantries, and donations as we continue to grow. Welcome Amos!



What's Back:

Due to the pandemic we had to cease the use of our re-usable containers and bags for our Homebound Program so we could ensure safety. We are pleased to be resuming the use of them as part of our 2019 Go-Green Initiative!

So many thanks to Home Instead of Guilford and Harvard Pilgrim Health Care for their sponsorships towards this project.

Thank you to our 2021

Grant Funders

Nancy and Thomas Patton
Act II Thrift Shop
Ms. Salle Gouverneur
Bruce and Terri Alpert
Valerie Hansen & James Stepanek
Stop & Shop of Branford
Mary E. Davis Fund
Home Instead of Guilford
Barbaro Family Charitable Fund
Maura Whelan
Harvard Pilgrim Health
Community Foundation of Greater New Haven
Connecticut Food Bank

Thank you to all those who individually donate throughout the year, monetarily or food donations!