



ANNUAL YEAR-END "REPORT CARD"

TO SHARE WITH "FRIENDS OF FISH" - DECEMBER 2015

FISH/FRIENDS IN SERVICE TO HUMANITY OF NORTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT
332 SOUTH MAIN STREET, TORRINGTON, CT 06790 (860) 482-7300

*"Providing the most basic
of human needs...
food, shelter & hope"*

Tis the season to be thankful, and we at FISH/Friends in Service to Humanity of NWCT recognize that you all make it possible for us to focus on our mission of providing the most basic of human needs – food, shelter and hope - to those neighbors in our communities in economic crisis and desperate need.

Please know how much we appreciate your financial contributions, food item donations and support of our special events. Many of you in the past few weeks have already generously supported FISH NWCT, and we are very grateful.

In fact, we find ourselves overwhelmed with the generosity of our communities, churches, organizations, businesses, restaurants, fire departments, State Police Cadets, families and schools (to name some) who have made donations, sponsored food, coat and toy drives, and organized fund raisers to benefit area folks in need through FISH NWCT.

As we decorate the FISH Shelter's tree with our residents, and distribute holiday meals and surprises for the children of families using the FISH Food Pantry, we have a renewed sense of energy and exhilarated spirit as we serve the hungry and the homeless of our NWCT corner. We have had exceptional support from the local media, and area foundations and organizations.

We invite you to view our website at www.fishnwct.org and Facebook page at [facebook.com/fishnwct](https://www.facebook.com/fishnwct).

Our diversity at FISH NWCT is one of age - from newborns - seniors. We hope to improve and change the lives of our shelter residents by making a positive impact through their FISH Shelter experience and the encouragement we wholeheartedly provide. We find amazing things happening daily under our roof at FISH NWCT, which we share in this year-end "report card."



At the closing day activity of the "Rally to End Hunger & Homelessness in Northwestern Connecticut", eight area students and their advisors camped out in front of St. Francis of Assisi Church in Torrington, CT to raise local awareness to the problem.



Amazing things are happening under our roof at FISH NWCT!
Highlights of 2014 - 2015

- The "Rally to End Hunger and Homelessness in NWCT" - co-sponsored by the United Way of NWCT - featured the Rally Kick-off, tours of The Gathering Place and FISH NWCT, a free pasta luncheon and coat giveaway, and the cardboard box sleep out
- "Quality of Life" Award from the NWCT Chamber of Commerce
- Praised inspections by the Department of Housing and VA
- Deirdre recognized as one of the County's "most influential people" by Litchfield Magazine for her service work with the homeless and the hungry
- Fund raisers to support the FISH Food Pantry and Homeless Shelter - A Tasteful Event (ATE), the Michael E. Walsh Memorial Run, and "Deck the Halls"



Some of you generously support FISH annually, and some of you choose to donate bi-annually, quarterly or monthly, yet please know that whenever and however you choose to help FISH with a donation, we are very grateful.
We strive to improve and positively change the lives of our shelter residents, and give hope to food pantry users through your generous support.



FISH FACTS In 2014-2015

- FISH Food Pantry**
 - Total meals distributed (year ending 9/30) = 111,690
 - No. of families enrolled to receive assistance = 492 representing 1917 individuals
- FISH Emergency Homeless Shelter**
 - Total # of bed nights = 11,710
 - No. of adult bed nights = 7832
 - No. of children = 2205
 - No. of veterans = 1673
 - This represented 84 unduplicated individuals – 59 adults, 11 children, and 14 veterans



FISH/Friends in Service to Humanity of Northwestern Connecticut gratefully acknowledges the generous community spirit of our "A Tasteful Event" 2014 Sponsors.

PLATINUM SPONSORSHIPS
 Torrington Ford Lincoln
 Nationwide Insurance

MEDIA PARTNER SPONSORSHIPS
 Peoples United Bank
 Dunkin Donuts

GOLD SPONSORSHIPS
 Litchfield Woods and Valerie Manor
 Torrington Savings Bank
 Thomaston Savings Bank

SILVER SPONSORSHIPS
 Gleeson – Ryan Funeral Home
 Sharon Health Care Center
 Charlotte Hungerford Hospital
 Law Offices of Conti & Levy
 State Line Wine & Spirits and Ledgerbrook Spirit Shop
 Fire Equipment Headquarters
 All – Star Storage Torrington, LLC

BRONZE SPONSORSHIPS
 Founders Insurance Group, Inc.
 Borla & Associates, LLC
 Northwest Hills Credit Union
 The Nicholas Law Firm, LLC
 TEC Control Systems, Inc.
 Sharon Shopping Center
 Pro-Film Professional Window Tinting
 Alan J. Eckstrand, LLC
 King, King & Associates
 Litchfield County Commercial Realtors
 Allan Borghesi
 Aflac of Litchfield County
 Logan & Mencuccini, LLP
 Northwest Corner Dental Partners
 Minuteman Press
 Barry Cone's Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc.
 Eastside Electric, Inc.
 Gerald H. Michalowski, CPA
 Palace Aids Fireplace & Spa Center
 West State Mechanical
 True Value of Litchfield
 Salisbury Bank & Trust Co.

The evening was "delicious" thanks to the generosity of these fine culinary artisans.

TORRINGTON
 BACKSTAGE – Eat. Drink. LIVE.
 First Act Bakery
 Act Natural Health and Wellness
 Ciesco Catering

LITCHFIELD
 da Capo
 Love Heart Bakery
 AmandaBakes, LLC

LAKEVILLE / SALISBURY
 The Black Rabbit
 The Boathouse at Lakeville
 Morgan's Restaurant

MILLERTON, NY
 52 Main



Founded in 1972, FISH originally provided free transportation to patients, particularly cancer patients, to their appointments. Today, FISH NWCT has evolved into the area's largest emergency homeless shelter (35 beds) and free food pantry. The programs and social services at FISH/Friends in Service to Humanity of NWCT are critical to some for their survival and well-being.

Outline of current programs provided by FISH NWCT, aided by the generosity of donors:

Shelter for families, veterans and individuals (35 beds, 5 of which are designated for vets) which last year had 11,710 bed nights used. This fall 2015, FISH currently has 9 children seeking shelter, with school age children enrolled in local schools, and in the summer attending camp programs. We are focused on school needs and extra-curricular programs, such as the YMCA, Scouting and the PAL program. We do not tolerate substance use and our diversity is age - babies to seniors. We provide breakfast and dinner to the shelter residents.

Case Management - what makes FISH extra special is that we have two Case Managers dedicated to overseeing the resources, medical and mental health needs, employment opportunities, and housing possibilities to lead to one's independent, stable living future.

Food Pantry - FISH distributed enough food to provide 111,690 meals to 492 area families/1917 individuals in need last year - 2014 - 2015. The FISH Food Pantry depends on the generosity of the community for contributions. Donors please know that frozen foods are now welcome - thanks to our new walk-in freezer!

GED and computer training programs on site are offered to shelter residents and neighbors in the community twice a week by Education Connection.

FISH is a satellite office for the area's energy assistance program.

FISH provides both medical and mental health services, on site, to shelter residents. FQHC - Community Health and Wellness is a weekly provider.

FISH makes possible in-house group and family counseling, including AA.

Career counseling and coaching is provided by Prime Time House weekly.

Homeless Outreach, in coordination with other area providers, is routine; as well as our annual Veterans Stand Down held at the Torrington Armory in the spring.

"Life for Vets" program - multiple providers work with our Case Managers to assist our shelter veterans.

Life Skills workshops - FISH NWCT offers in collaboration with area providers - cooking, nutrition, couponing, budgeting, and managing well on one's food dollars.

Our hope is to have shelter residents participating in the communities that they will be living in once they receive their housing. In the transition house next door, we have made it possible for families to live with teenage children, which would not have been possible in our dormitory upstairs-male and downstairs-female shelter setting.

Our residents are extremely appreciative and hugs are a reality. All we provide is through the generosity of you donors and collaborations with numerous organizations and institutions. We are unique in the community we serve - helping the hungry and the homeless.

Please give Deirdre a call to schedule your "grand tour".

*Thank you for being a friend,
supporter and advocate
for FISH NWCT...
Deirdre & Steve*



FISH Board of Directors

Steven Caruso - President
Alan Eckstrand - Vice President
Katharine Briggs - Secretary
Susan Suhanovsky - Treasurer
Deirdre DiCara - Executive Director
Mark Berns
Joanne Donne
Robert Milano
Donna Puzacke
Lisa Soliani
Ken Yancy

FISH Staff

Deirdre Houlihan DiCara - Executive Director
Earl Gibson - Case Manager of Families & Individuals
Vera Halilaj - Case Manager of Veterans
Robin King - Shelter and Office Manager
Margaret Franzl - Food Pantry Manager

Residential Monitors

Doreen Bellmay
Daryl Fleming
Jeremy Nelson
Fred Petteway

Please know we could not manage without the cheerful support of our volunteers!

