

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, 10 of which are designated for vets) which last year had 10,752 bed nights used. During the summer of 2014, FISH had 6 children seeking shelter, with school age children enrolled in local summer camps and town recreation programs. Currently we are focused on school needs and extra-curricular programs at the YMCA and in Scouting for the children (6 at moment, including a month old infant). We provide breakfast and dinner to the shelter residents in a safe, family-friendly setting.

**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 104,850 meals to 479 area families/1879 individuals in need last year - 2013 - 2014, year ending 9/30. Donors - Frozen foods are now a welcome addition thanks to our new walk-in freezer! And in 2015, we are launching a special outreach to Seniors who may need food assistance from the pantry, in partnership with the United Way of NWCT.

**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. Charlotte Hungerford Hospital's Behavioral Health and FQHC – Community Health and Wellness are the providers two days a week.

**FISH** makes possible in-house group and family counseling.

**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 Stand Down held at the Torrington Armory.

**Life Skills** workshops – FISH offers in collaboration with area providers – cooking, nutrition, couponing, budgeting/banking, managing well on one's food dollars and gardening without a yard.

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 two Dads to raise their families, which would not have been possible in our dormitory/upstairs/ downstairs/male/ female shelter setting.

"Feel goods" happen daily at FISH NWCT as we serve our neighbors in need. It is always pleasing to hear a resident say to a newcomer, "Welcome to the FISH family."

**Please give a call to Deirdre for a "grand tour".**



*Thank you for  
being a friend to FISH...  
Deirdre & Steve*

