

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.

At the best of times - programs provided by FISH NWCT, Shelter for families, veterans and individuals (35 beds, 5 of which are designated for vets) which last year had 10,879 bed nights used, and of the 101 residents (71 adults, 17 veterans, 13 children), we helped find permanent supportive housing for 40 people.

As this goes to press, FISH remains decompressed for the fifth month - only serving half of our capacity due to the COVID - 19 virus. We moved shelter residents to a hotel if they were aged 60+, or suffering from high risk health issues - out of our communal setting. Nearly all have now been placed into supportive housing. The challenges have been great, yet thankfully the Coronavirus has yet to enter the FISH House.

Case Management - what makes FISH extra special is that we have a Case Manager 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 113,841 meals to 657 area families/1506 individuals in need last year. The FISH Food Pantry depends on the generosity of the community for contributions. Donors please know that frozen and refrigerated foods are now accepted - thanks to our walk-in freezer and walk-in cooler! Know that our doors have been welcoming to newcomers in need due to the virus.

GED high school accreditation classes on site (temporarily remotely) are offered to shelter residents and neighbors in the community by EdAdvance.

Northwestern CT Community College/NCCC offers the opportunity for vocational training certifications and job placements.

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. (Currently telehealth)

FISH makes possible in-house group and family counseling. Job counseling, resume writing and coaching is made available.

Homeless Outreach - in coordination with other area providers, is routine; as well as our annual awareness event for the community "Rally Day to End Hunger and Homelessness." Currently not sure about the 6th annual rally on November 21st - YET WAIT FOR NEWS ABOUT OUR ANNUAL COAT DRIVE AND DISTRIBUTION - last year over 1000 coats were given away!

"Life for Vets" program - multiple providers work with our Case Manager to assist our shelter's veterans. We are pleased to be selected by the VA to serve as a Vets Shelter.

Life Skills workshops - FISH NWCT offers in collaboration with area providers. Now "on hold."



*Heartfelt thanks for being a friend, advocate and a supporter of FISH NWCT...
Deirdre & Steve*

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Please understand we could not manage without the cheerful support of our volunteers, donors and food contributors.

We are the champions for the hungry and the homeless of Northwestern Connecticut, yet know that it takes the generous support of you, our community neighbors, who care to join us in partnering in our humanitarian efforts.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!



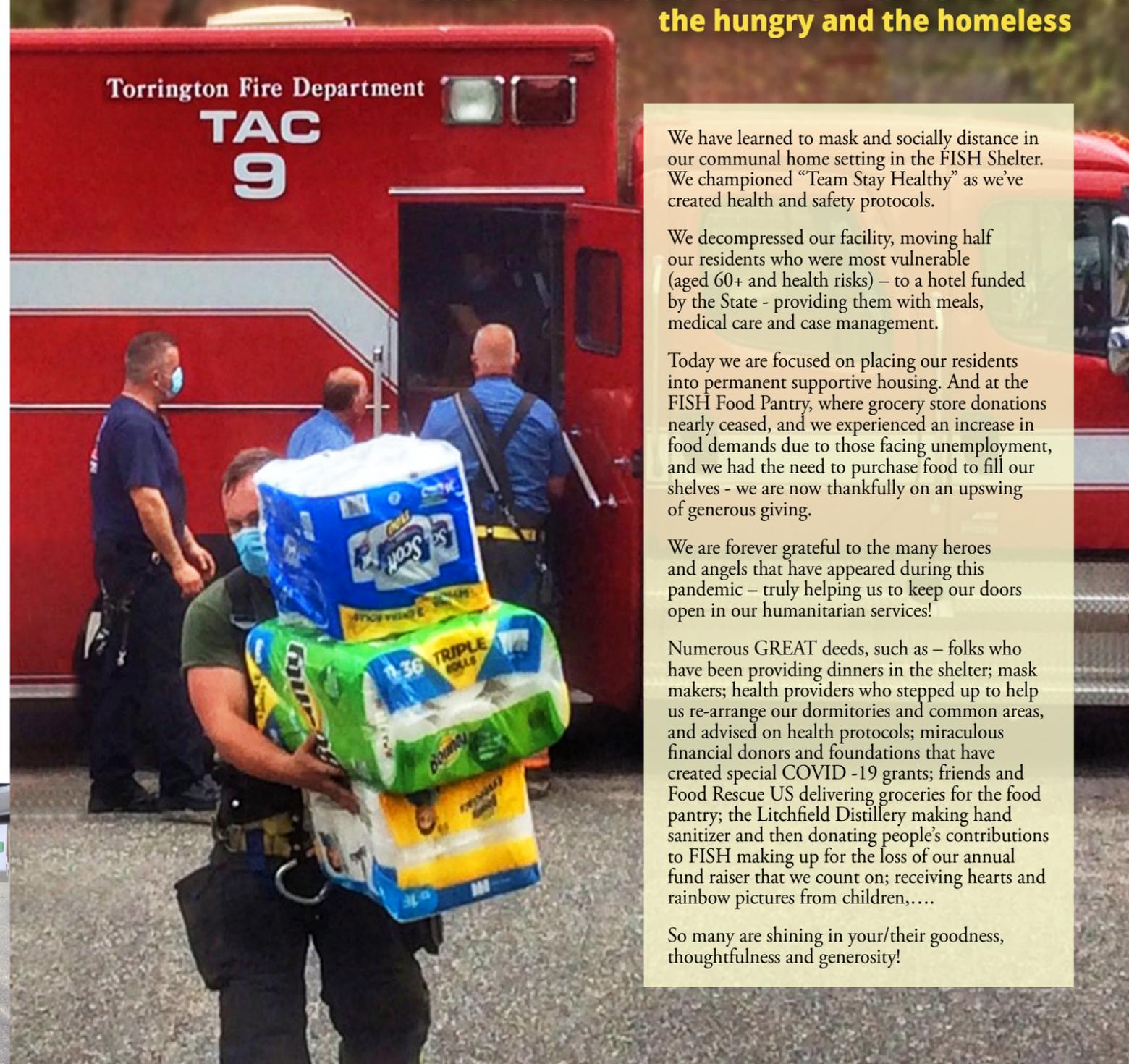
ANNUAL MID-YEAR "REPORT CARD"

TO SHARE WITH "FRIENDS OF FISH" - SUMMER 2020

FISH/Friends in Service to Humanity of Northwestern Connecticut
332 South Main Street, Torrington, CT 06790 | www.fishnwct.org | facebook.com/fishnwct

"Providing the most basic of human needs... food, shelter and hope, especially during this Coronavirus pandemic."

Since early March, we have gone through the stages of fear, stress and anxiety - to what has evolved to become routine and resilient in our services to the hungry and the homeless



We have learned to mask and socially distance in our communal home setting in the FISH Shelter. We championed "Team Stay Healthy" as we've created health and safety protocols.

We decompressed our facility, moving half our residents who were most vulnerable (aged 60+ and health risks) - to a hotel funded by the State - providing them with meals, medical care and case management.

Today we are focused on placing our residents into permanent supportive housing. And at the FISH Food Pantry, where grocery store donations nearly ceased, and we experienced an increase in food demands due to those facing unemployment, and we had the need to purchase food to fill our shelves - we are now thankfully on an upswing of generous giving.

We are forever grateful to the many heroes and angels that have appeared during this pandemic - truly helping us to keep our doors open in our humanitarian services!

Numerous GREAT deeds, such as - folks who have been providing dinners in the shelter; mask makers; health providers who stepped up to help us re-arrange our dormitories and common areas, and advised on health protocols; miraculous financial donors and foundations that have created special COVID -19 grants; friends and Food Rescue US delivering groceries for the food pantry; the Litchfield Distillery making hand sanitizer and then donating people's contributions to FISH making up for the loss of our annual fund raiser that we count on; receiving hearts and rainbow pictures from children,....

So many are shining in your/their goodness, thoughtfulness and generosity!