

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 7703 bed nights used, and of the 103 residents (70 adults, 17 veterans, 16 children), we helped find permanent supportive housing for 53 households.

As this goes to press, FISH remains decompressed for the 17th 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 for the first three months. Nearly all were placed into supportive housing, or they returned to Shelter in May 2020. 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 91,197 meals to 643 area families/1509 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 Coronavirus. Our distribution operation is located outside on our loading dock.

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 has been 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." The 6th annual rally on November 20th and 21st - focused only on the coat giveaway (over 600+ donated), and we partnered with Joseph's House. Our 7th Rally is scheduled for November 20th.

"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 offered in collaboration with area providers. Now "on hold."

All we provide is through the generosity of you donors, and collaborations with numerous organizations and institutions. We are unique in the community that we serve - helping the hungry and the homeless.



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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!



JOIN US FOR A CELEBRATION this August 18th!

An invitation to all of our many pandemic heroes and angels -

You are all cordially invited to join us at a (hopefully) post-pandemic event -



"A FISH Celebration of Resilience - Thanks for the Miracles" on Wednesday, August 18th, 2021 at the Litchfield Community Center from 5p.m. - 7:30p.m. We will celebrate you - our heroes; our angels; our loyal sponsors; and our FISH Staff and volunteers - who have tirelessly and bravely served on the frontlines of our FISH Food Pantry and FISH Homeless Shelter throughout the Coronavirus pandemic, never missing a beat, always serving our neighbors in need.

Every action taken to provide us with assistance has been enormously appreciated. Thinking back to our darkest days beginning in March 2020, when we worried for everyone's health and safety, and we launched "Team Stay Healthy" - when we stressed over funding the agency to continue services to our most vulnerable - and when there were food shortages - you all stepped up providing us with generous support, always boosting our morale.

We will be forever grateful, and we hope you will be able to join our celebration of miracles and generosity.

Please come!!!! We will be serving a summer supper/barbecue to you our guests, our angels and heroes, at the Litchfield Community Center, catered by our friend George Noujaim of Noujaim's Bistro in Winsted, at 5:30p.m. We plan on music and a special "resilience and recognition" remembrance that you should enjoy as you celebrate with us!

Please R.S.V.P. by emailing ddicara@fishnwct.org, or calling 860-482-7300.

Please **respond by August 7th** as we need your count for our meal planning!

ANNUAL MID-YEAR "REPORT CARD"

TO SHARE WITH "FRIENDS OF FISH" - JULY 2021

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www.fishnwct.org | facebook.com/fishnwct

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



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