



ANNUAL YEAR-END "REPORT CARD"

TO SHARE WITH "FRIENDS OF FISH" - DECEMBER 2022

332 South Main Street, Torrington, CT 06790 (860) 482-7300
www.fishnwct.org | facebook.com/fishnwct

'Tis the season to be grateful, and we at FISH NWCT recognize that you, and your generosity, make it possible for us to focus on our mission of providing the most basic of human needs – food, shelter and hope at the FISH Food Pantry and FISH Homeless Shelter.

Your donations directly impact those neighbors in our communities in economic crisis and desperate need. Many of you in the past few weeks have already generously supported FISH NWCT, and we are very thankful.

At times, 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, housewares and toy drives, helped us celebrate and provide holidays, and organized fund raisers to benefit area folks in need through FISH NWCT.

During this pandemic, we have been so thankful for our area Foundations who have stepped up to support our work, and especially the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation for organizing their "Northwest Corner Gives" campaign twice! Yet please remember that our most vulnerable in our community need our help year round.

We find amazing things happening daily under our roof at FISH NWCT, which in 2022, we are observing our 50th anniversary - serving our greater NWCT corner – aiding our homeless and food insecure neighbors in need.

Please know in this tough economy that your help is needed now more than ever, as food is flying off our shelves at the food pantry and we are purchasing food to meet the demand, and there is an increase in homelessness as there is a lack of affordable housing.

For 50 Years...

FISH has continued to provide the most basic of human needs... food, shelter & hope.





Raiders Rally Day



Pantry Tuesdays - Linda & Diane



Joanne Borduas and Deirdre



NCCC Criminal Justice students



Deirdre and Chris at WZBG



State Police Cadets "raise food"



Franco - Food Rescue with Daryl and Adam



Coat pick-up at St. Paul's Lutheran - Rachel, Adam, & Deirdre



Leadership NW raises 50 turkeys for Thanksgiving!





Dan at FISH Garden '22



Deirdre and Carol of Carol's Cards!



Super volunteers at our 8th Rally and coat giveaway



Deirdre, Margaret, Adam and Katie Sullivan on Veterans' Day - Litchfield Intermediate



Dymax helps FISH with Thanksgiving



NWCT Chamber of Commerce "Leadership NW" at FISH



Food raising by Torrington School Kiddos



Robin, Margaret and Adam prep for Thanksgiving food giveaway



Thanksgiving Shelter Dinner - Dan, Deirdre, Russ and Margaret



At the FISH Shelter, we do our best to provide the magic and wonder of the Christmas season for our children. At our last "Cocoa and Cookies" Party, there was not a dry eye in the house, when a 6 year old ran across the room when Santa entered and threw herself into his arms saying, "I knew you were real." It was a "Miracle on 34th Street" moment that every child deserves.



FISH FACTS IN 2021-2022

We at FISH NWCT...

see daily the very human, social welfare challenges of families, individuals and veterans facing life crisis.

We strive to restore the confidence and self-worth of those who are the most vulnerable and seek our help.

FISH Food Pantry

109,450 meals distributed

594 families enrolled to receive food, representing 1,200 individuals

FISH Emergency Homeless Shelter (35 beds)

Total # of bed nights = 7121

Total Served: 53 adults, 14 veterans, 10 children = 77 Total Residents

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.

Programs provided by FISH NWCT - Shelter for families, veterans and individuals (35 beds, 5 of which are designated for vets) which last year had 7121 bed nights used by 77 residents (53 adults, 14 veterans, 10 children). Our goal is to help find permanent supportive housing for our residents. The challenges have been great as we successfully follow our "Team Stay Healthy" protocols for Covid-19.

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 109,450 meals to 594 area families/over 1,200 individuals in need last year. We are finding the need increasing as people's federal pandemic subsidies are cut or ended. The FISH Food Pantry depends on the generosity of the community for contributions. Know that our doors have been welcoming to newcomers. Our distribution operation currently remains located outside on our loading dock. Everyday we serve more than double our usual numbers. Food is flying off our shelves.

GED high school accreditation classes 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 our weekly provider on-site.

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 8th annual rally held at St. Peter's Hall on November 19th welcomed over 250 people - focused on the coat giveaway (over 1200+ donated), and a bag lunch and grocery gift card were distributed, as well as info on area providers and Corona virus vaccines. The 9th Rally will take place November 18, 2023.

"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, such as Stock the Shelves, Food Rescue and the Rotary Club Food Drives.

We are unique in the community that we serve – helping the hungry and the homeless.

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

Deirdre & Steve



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Case Manager

Families, Individuals, & Vets

Adam Pitts

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Robin King

Food Pantry Manager

Margaret Franzi

Executive Assistant

Dan Santorso

Residential Monitors

Russ Brown

Daryl Fleming

Jeremy Kincaid

Fred Petteway

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!

SAVE THE DATE
Back by popular demand!



MAY 17, 2023
TORRINGTON ELKS CLUB

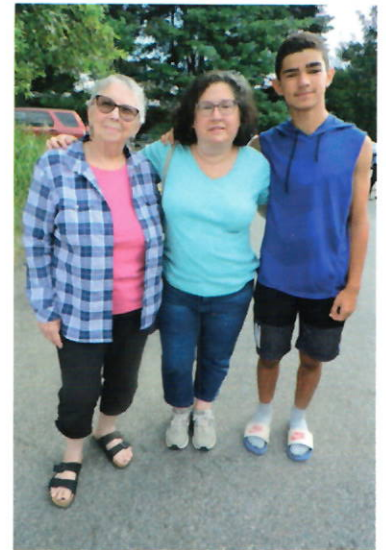


UNDER THE BIG TOP!
50th Anniversary Celebration
August 18, 2022
Litchfield Community Center









Thanks to our community donors and supporters... angels and heroes, we continue to miraculously serve our hungry and homeless neighbors in need.

So very thankful to the fabulous Litchfield Community Center team and George Noujaim and his Noujaim's Mediterranean Bistro crew for making this FISH 50th celebration such a success!!!!!!

We also loved Lori Kibbe Lindenmuth's garden flowers, and Charlene Dutka's gorgeous cupcakes!