

Toni's Kitchen

"More than Soup...Feeding the Soul"

A Quarterly Newsletter

ISSUE NO. 4- SPRING 2008



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Computer Classes Underway

By Jim Snodgrass



Our computer training classes have started! A number of guests have begun sharpening their computer skills at Toni's resource center. Individual needs range from keyboarding and entry level Windows commands to Word applications for resume writing. Short classes and practice sessions are held prior to and shortly after meals. We

expect* to have internet access shortly so our guests can learn how to use this powerful tool for job searches and emailing applications.

Be a part of the team who help our guests learn basic skills! We need computer comfortable volunteers (you don't have to be a computer geek or guru) to assist on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10:30 am to 11:30 am and then again after lunch until about 1:30 pm. Please e-mail Jim Snodgrass at snowayout@aol.com to learn more and sign up for this exciting and rewarding experience. Our sincere thanks to our supporters who donated computer equipment and to the Episcopal Diocese of Newark for funding the program through an ACTS-VIM grant.

**Stop Press! Our Internet wireless router and phone line have been installed. John Kopitz, cook and IT guy, will now complete the job to provide phone, fax and internet access. Yeah!*

"Spokes for Folks" Program

By Bonnie Mota

Think bikes, helmets, and bike locks!

These are prize items for our guests at Toni's Kitchen who must rely on their feet to get them from place to place. To meet this very real need of transport, Toni's Kitchen has initiated a program called "Spokes for Folks".

Having collected donated bikes and biking gear from generous members of the Montclair



community, Toni's Kitchen will be holding a fun, equitable and free bike drawing for our guests on Saturday, April 19th. In anticipation of "Spokes for Folks" our guests have already expressed great enthusiasm and appreciation for the program.



The following is a poem written by a guest at Toni's Kitchen on Christmas Eve at Toni's Living Room*. It poured out from her heart onto paper without a single cross out and in less than 30 minutes.

"A Gift from God"

By Sheri Villone

As you walk on through the welcoming doors,
You look around and say "How could there be more?"

As your eyes settle in on the plants so green
A sight like this just has to be seen.
As you look to the wall, people standing so tall
Their warmth just comes through to the people around.

Excitement fills the room to the reverberating sound
Old friends shake hands they haven't seen in awhile.
They look upon each other happily with a smile.
The people helping out with limitless patience and time

And for their effort they do not get a dime.
You feel what they give you - their goodness and love.
In this day and age these things are unheard of.
Because of their time and effort they will definitely all be blessed.

You know that this group of people are really the best.
As they all prepare the food with caring wonderful hands

To help others and get nothing in return is their ultimate stand.

Just to speak to one of them really brightens your day.
They can make the most upsetting of days disappear away.

They give of themselves without wanting anything in return.

A lesson of life we could valuably learn.
Their unselfish deeds are great examples for us all.
They are also a shoulder to cry on, the problem never too small.

SO WE HONOR ST. LUKE'S WITH THEIR
UNBOUNDING CARING
WHICH SPEAKS THE LOUDEST OF THEIR
PURPOSE
NEVER STOP THE GIFT OF SHARING.

* Toni's Living Room provides a space out of the cold where guests can come to relax and have fun on holidays when public buildings are generally closed. Guests enjoy playing cards and board games, reading, watching TV/videos and engaging in good conversation.

FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Dear Friends of Toni's Kitchen,

Our guests delight and surprise us so much as their talents unfold!

Sherri, who hasn't written poetry in years, was inspired to write the poem on this page while enjoying the Living Room. Freddie astounds us with his harmonica playing. Did you know that Jack can yodel? Joe frequently quotes from classic songs or literature. Patrick writes letters on the computer. Bart will play Debussy, Mozart or Bach or whatever you ask of him on the piano. And so many of our guests sing and harmonize. How uplifting!

We are grateful to be able to provide an atmosphere in the Dining Room, in the Living Room, in the Conference Room and in the Computer Room that encourages our guests to express their creativity in so many wonderful ways. We are blessed!

A New Note at Toni's: Meet the Red Sax Man

Drawn into Toni's Kitchen by the music of our beloved TNT Ramblers, Nick Arons joined them playing outstanding sax. Who is this surprise treat? None other than the Red Sax man who plays his red sax before every Boston Red Sox home game! Please note that even though TK is a haven of staunch NY Yankee fans, we welcome EVERYONE to Toni's Kitchen - even Boston Red Sox fans!



Toni's Kitchen is a food ministry at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Montclair, New Jersey. As many as 70 guests are offered warm hospitality and a hot, nutritious meal every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, as well as on Christmas Day.

About Us Named for its first cook, the late Toni (Antoinette) Green, the program has been in continuous operation since its founding in 1982. Except for our cooks, who are paid a modest stipend, the kitchen is staffed by volunteers of all faiths from throughout the community. Much of the food is donated by local organizations, business establishments and individuals, and serving is done by volunteers. At Toni's Kitchen, every effort is made to assure an atmosphere of warmth and respect for all persons who find themselves in need of our hospitality.

Volunteer Support is always welcomed at Toni's Kitchen. Whether your schedule permits a weekly or monthly contribution of time, your efforts will be appreciated.

Financial Support is also important to Toni's Kitchen. Even though much of the food that is served is donated, funds are needed for the purchase of additional food staples, serving supplies and for operational expenses and those associated with our expanding programming. The need becomes particularly critical whenever replacement of major appliances becomes necessary. Your contribution is tax deductible.

Mission Statement "To Serve Our Guests". At Toni's Kitchen every effort is made to provide an atmosphere of warmth and respect for those among us who find themselves in need of our hospitality and services.

Volunteer Spotlight: Carol Heick



By Emma Cortese

Carol Heick was spotlighted at the Volunteer Dinner for her unwavering dedication to Toni's Kitchen. Carol's reaction: "I was so surprised because really, all the volunteers do so much. It's just that I'm really organized, that's all."

Of course, that's not all. Carol's dedication includes kitchen duty twice a week, where she orchestrates appetizers and post lunch wrap-up for those guests who take some of their meal "to go". She contributes so much more beyond these routines. She is as-needed: dishwasher, inventory taker, pantry organizer, holiday present buyer, and yard sale scout for anything TK might require; and she has been a monthly transportation provider

and staples shopper at the Community FoodBank in Hillside. In addition to her steadfast work, Carol never fails to entertain with stories of her beloved, almost human pet cat, Tristan!

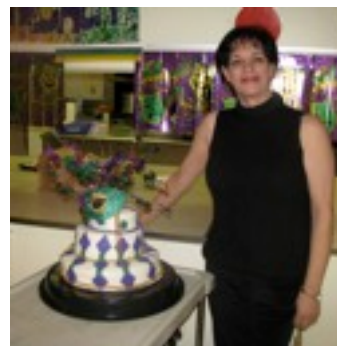


On a snowy day two years ago, Carol who is a long time parishioner at St. Luke's, came to Toni's Kitchen inquiring if she could be of help. Oh boy, could she! We thank you Carol, for all your service.

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner Festivities

By Mary Ann Renn

Over 60 volunteers from Toni's Kitchen enjoyed a full and fun evening at the annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner held on February 23rd. Beautifully planned and organized by Saturday volunteer **Lula Green** and her enthusiastic committee, the evening kicked off with a get-to-know-your-fellow-volunteer social hour where Thursday volunteers met Friday volunteers met Saturday volunteers. The room, transformed into a Mardi Gras theme with balloons and streamers, was a perfect setting for the potluck dinner featuring delicious roast turkey and roast pork prepared by **John Kopitz, Laura Feire and Mike Wong**. The committee worked hard: **Shelia Cardone** made a beautiful cake for the occasion; **Marcelle Gaia** decorated with gusto; **Debbie Walsh** generously provided Whole Foods tote bags for each attendee beautifully packaged with a framed note of appreciation for all; and **Toni Whitlock** helped pull it all together and shared a wonderful poem, written for the occasion, by husband Guy. A memorable evening for all!



This month at Toni's: *April is a "typical" month. Look at all our activities! We're definitely "More Than Soup"!*

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
APRIL		1	2	3 Computer Training 10:30 - 11:30 am Lunch 11:30-12:30	4 Computer Training 10:30 - 11:30 am Lunch 11:30-12:30	5 Computer Training 10:30 - 11:30 am Lunch 11:30-12:30 FREE TAX PREP @ SETON HALL LAW SCHOOL
6	7	8	9	10 Computer Training 10:30 - 11:30 am Lunch 11:30-12:30	11 Computer Training 10:30 - 11:30 am Lunch 11:30-12:30 GLUCOSE SCREENING	12 Computer Training 10:30 - 11:30 am Lunch 11:30-12:30
13	14	15 Earthly Treasures Jewelry Show (fund-raiser for TK) Call 973-746-5430 for details	16	17 Computer Training 10:30 - 11:30 am Lunch 11:30-12:30 MOBILE VAN FOR FOOD STAMPS	18 Computer Training 10:30 - 11:30 am Lunch 11:30-12:30 KARAOKE WITH MIKE KENNY	19 Computer Training 10:30 - 11:30 am Lunch 11:30-12:30 SPOKES FOR FOLKS BIKE GIVE-AWAY!!
20	21	22	23	24 Computer Training 10:30 - 11:30 am Lunch 11:30-12:30	25 Computer Training 10:30 - 11:30 am Lunch 11:30-12:30 BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING	26 Computer Training 10:30 - 11:30 am Lunch 11:30-12:30

What we need: Volunteer Teams: Our **Kitchen Team** needs a few more Friday volunteers. Can't work during kitchen hours? Join our **Living Room Team** and have fun socializing and playing cards, Scrabble etc. with our guests on holiday afternoons. Do you like to teach and know basic computer skills? Join the **Computer Room Team**. Have car/van and like to travel? Why not join the **Driving Team**? We need an extra person or two to do a Wednesday afternoon food pick-up from the Rt. 46 Farmers' Market.....and other pick-ups as needed. Have good writing skills? Please join our **Grant Writers Team** so that we can get funding to continue and expand our ministry to "serve our guests".

St. Luke's Episcopal Church
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All guests are welcomed as Christ, because
He will say,
"I was a stranger and you took me in."

- Matthew 25:35