



Easter Bunny's Helpers



On March 19 dozens of volunteers hopped over to ISS' offices to pack Easter baskets for needy South Shore Children. Under the direction of ISS' former Executive Director Laura Stracco, the group assembled almost 250 baskets, which will be distributed to Pantry Shelf clients.

Anchors of Hope a twilight Boston Harbor cruise

ISS is thrilled to announce it will be holding Anchors of Hope, a twilight Boston Harbor cruise to benefit impoverished South Shore families on Thursday, June 23, 2011 from 7:00-10:00 p.m.

Participants will enjoy beautiful views of Boston's historic seaport and skyline aboard The Voyager III, which has incredible expansive outside viewing areas on various decks, and ample inside seating. Festivities include hors d'oeuvres, a cash bar, silent auction, and live entertainment.

The ship will embark from the Fore River Shipyard Ferry Terminal, 703 Washington Street in Quincy.

Tickets are \$45 per person, and may be purchased online at www.InterfaithSocialServices.org or in the office during regular business hours.

Allure Spa partners with Career Closet

Allure Spa in Quincy describes itself as a "sanctuary...for healing, wellness and rejuvenation." They can now include "career consultant." In an effort to help low-income job seekers find employment, Allure Spa is partnering with ISS to offer a complimentary haircut and/or style for clients of the Career Closet program.

For over ten years, the Career Closet has given professional attire to low-income job seekers. "Due to the current economic situation, the job market is more competitive than ever," says Career Closet Manager Bettyanne Lang. "Not everyone has appropriate clothing for interviews. Our volunteers help clients—who desperately need work—select the right outfits, and coach them about the interview process. By providing an outfit or two it may give clients the boost that they need to land a job to help lift them and their families out of poverty."

That boost of self-esteem is the kind of help that someone like Sandra Ishmael and her staff are in a unique position to provide. Ishmael is the owner of Allure Spa. "We are so pleased to be partnering with Interfaith Social Services. We are looking forward to offering a respite in our upstairs sanctuary for Career Closet clients, as well as giving them a boost of confidence for their job interviews."

Anyone interested in using the Career Closet program must be referred from a partner agency, such as Quincy Career Center or Father Bill's. The program is currently seeking donations of gently used professional attire, such as suits, dress shirts, slacks, ties, shoes, blouses, pant suits, and accessories. There is an increased need for men's clothing and volunteers to assist clients.

ISS is actively trying to form these types of partnerships," said Executive Director Rick Doane. "We are so grateful for thoughtful businesses like Allure Spa.

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Message from the Executive Director



My office is located right outside of our Pantry Shelf food program, giving me a unique perspective into the lives of our poverty-stricken neighbors. These amazing people personify a humility that everyone can benefit from; they are helping me become a better person.

Our clients come from all walks of life, and each one has a different story about how they ended up in line at our food pantry. What unites most of them is a desire to be self-sufficient.

Last week I was walking through the Pantry waiting room and saw a middle-aged woman reading a very large book as she waited for her food order. I noticed that it was some kind of medical text and was intrigued, so I sat down and asked what she was studying. "Nutrition," she responded. "It's a tough subject for me to understand, but it is part of the curriculum. I'm studying to be a nurse." I recalled the nutrition class that I had taken in college and wished her luck. I returned to my work responsibilities with a heart full of gratitude for this woman's ambition and desire to improve her situation.

Recently Maria, a single mom with two small children, lost her job and went to the local career center for help. She met with a counselor who, in addition to helping her look for a job, referred Maria to ISS. She had no food in her house, so instead of going home to face her hungry children, Maria was proactive and started walking to our office. She walked over two miles on a rainy, cold winter day and

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Chilly “Plungers” raise funds for ISS

Hundreds gathered to watch the *5th Annual John Hancock Birthday Plunge* at Wollaston Beach in January. More than 50 hardy souls braved the ice-filled waters and snow-covered beach to support ISS, raising more than \$7,000. In five years, the *Plunge* has raised more than \$30,000. This was by far, the coldest *Plunge* to date.

Some of the brave “plungers” include Quincy College’s new president Peter Tsaffaras as well as State Senator and Quincy Councilor-at-large John Keenan, Neil McCole, president of Friends of Wollaston Beach, several members of Caddie Memorial Veterans, members of a local Girl Scout troupe, members of Quincy Beaches & Coastal Commission, and Rev. Mike Cunningham from First Baptist Church of Wollaston.



These “plungers” left the water more quickly than they went in.

Executive Director

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arrived at our food pantry just as we were closing. When we brought the bags of food out to Maria it was obvious that she was on the verge of tears. Her gratitude is one of the many reasons ISS has been serving those in need since 1947.

A youth group from a local church happened to be helping out in the Pantry that day. To witness children assembling a food order for other hungry children is a sight that is difficult to put into words.

We live a world that at times portrays our impoverished neighbors as unmotivated members of our community who are just looking for a handout. The majority of our clients are simply looking for a “hand up” as they strive to better their lives.

Over the past five years our food pantry has grown from serving 8,000 people a year to over 16,000 last year. Many of these individuals are from middle class families who never thought they’d have to reach out for help from a food pantry. They have been affected by the recession in one way or another and can no longer make ends meet. Gratefully, they are getting the help that they need. Unfortunately, many others don’t receive needed assistance simply because they are too proud to ask.

It is not a sign of weakness to ask for help; it is a sign of humility. At the heart of almost all faith traditions are the simple attributes of humility and service to our fellow man. Opportunities to request assistance and to provide assistance surround us; we can all do a little better to help and be helped. I am grateful for the opportunity that I have every day to sit outside the Pantry Shelf and learn from the most humble members of our community.

**Don’t forget to “friend”
ISS on Facebook!**

HomeSafe: Many programs under 1 roof Help with health related expenses

Medically-related expenses can be daunting in these days of escalating costs. Sometimes people forego something that is important to their quality of life, simply because they can’t afford it. This problem has never been more apparent than during the current economic recession.

Thankfully ISS can help. For over two decades an initiative within the HomeSafe program has been assisting the most vulnerable members of the community with some types of health-related expenses. Over the years the agency has helped hundreds of local seniors as they struggle to pay for hearing aids, eyeglasses, and various other emergency medical expenses.

ISS recently helped Michael with an outstanding home health care bill so his 94-year-old mother could come home from a skilled nursing facility.

Edward got replacement dentures. For years he had been trying, unsuccessfully, to save enough money to afford the dentures that he so desperately needed.

Evelyn was struggling to pay costly prescription bills while she waited for a decision from her insurance company. In a note she sent to ISS, she expressed the words so often heard, “It was such a relief to find help when I needed it.”

This initiative within the HomeSafe program is supported by an outside trust. When ISS receives requests for assistance that may be eligible, staff submits those

requests to the trustees for approval. This partnership has allowed ISS to make an immediate and significant difference in the quality of life of individuals who were suffering and had nowhere else to turn for help.

Aid for foreclosure victims

ISS recently received an award of \$50,000 from the Massachusetts Attorney General’s office to assist sub-prime borrowers who have been, or are facing, foreclosure. The award is part of the settlement agreement between the state and Morgan Stanley.

ISS is one of 12 non-profit agencies to receive these awards. While all of the details are still being ironed out with the Attorney General’s office, ISS anticipates that the bulk of its awards will be for rental assistance.

ISS’ HomeSafe program will manage this new initiative.

Fresh Start

Also under the HomeSafe umbrella, Fresh Start provides financial assistance to families who are moving from shelters or motels into permanent housing.

The assistance may help with security deposits, basic household necessities, or other needs that will help families end the hardship of homelessness.

Volunteers and interns further ISS' mission

This school year ISS has been blessed to work with five very talented interns and volunteers who assisted in the HomeSafe program and the development department.

Paul Ostrander is a junior majoring in business management at Stonehill College. Growing up, he was always interested in working with the underprivileged and less fortunate. During the fall semester he worked with ISS on a project for his nonprofit management class, leading him to become very familiar with the agency. Since January, Ostrander has been working with ISS' Executive Director Rick Doane on various fund-raising projects and events. "Paul has been a huge help this semester," said Doane. "He pitched in and helped wherever needed, from calling potential event sponsors to shoveling snow off the roof. We are grateful for his service."

"What interested me most about ISS is the variety of ways they help local communities," said Ostrander. "Knowing I would be able to learn about several nonprofit strategies, departments, and tactics from their knowledgeable staff, ISS has been the perfect fit for me to learn and grow as a person, while having a current impact of the communities around me."

Sandy Johnson has provided much-needed support to two of ISS' departments. For over six months, Sandy has been working closely with ISS' HomeSafe Manager Sue Whitehead—fielding phone calls, meeting with clients, attending community meetings, and compassionately helping those who are suffering. Johnson recently retired from Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC), where she was the national director of marketing for PwC's higher education and nonprofit practice. Sandy has also been an invaluable resource to ISS' executive director, writing grant applications and researching funding opportunities for the organization.

One responsibility Johnson most enjoyed while working for PwC was writing proposals to win new clients which, she was delighted to discover, is very much like grant writing. "Sandy is a CPA, which perhaps explains why she likes researching statistics and working with numbers for ISS grants," said Doane.

Johnson first learned about ISS when she toured local gardens, including ISS' *Harvest Helpers* vegetable garden, with a community group last summer. "I was so impressed that you were growing vegetables in a shaded alley," she said. "And I loved hearing about ISS' other good work from Rick. I had been looking for a way to 'give back' as they say. I'm so glad to have found ISS and all the very nice people here."

Johnson has a BS from Boston University's School of Public Communications and an MBA from Simmons College.

In addition to ISS, she enjoys volunteering at a therapeutic riding stable, working with horses and children.

ISS is also grateful to the other interns, Jen Doyle, Ashley Doyle, and Josh Kramer.

"We are always on the lookout for dedicated interns and volunteers," said Doane. "We couldn't fulfill our mission without the support of selfless local residents who are interested in strengthening ISS and consequently, their communities."

ISS names associate to new position



ISS recently hired Paula Daniels as their new Volunteer Coordinator/Development Associate. In this position, Paula will be responsible for recruiting new volunteers and managing current volunteers for ISS' programs that serve those in need on the South Shore. She will also be assisting the executive director in all fund-raising efforts.

Daniels has a BA in Politics from St. Anselm College and has eight years of development and administration experience in non-profit organizations. Prior to joining ISS, she spent over three years as the director of development at HomeStart, Inc. in Boston. As a former certified personal trainer, her favorite activities in her leisure time are running and hiking. She currently lives in Norton with her husband, Chris, and their dog, Oakley.



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Mission Statement

Interfaith Social Services seeks to serve South Shore residents by strengthening family life and offering assistance to anyone in need.

Interfaith Social Services, Inc. (ISS) is a non-religious organization working to ensure that individuals and families have access to food, clothing, energy assistance, and counseling. Support for ISS' Programs comes from several sources including caring individuals, faith communities, organizations and businesses, foundations, and program fees. Additional funding is provided through a number of special events held throughout the year.

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Harvest Helpers from Keohane Funeral Homes



John Keohane and Joe Reardon, of Keohane Funeral Homes, flank ISS Executive Director Rick Doane, giving him some of the vegetables grown at the funeral home's corporate garden in Quincy. Staff at Keohane's planted and tended the garden specifically for Interfaith's Harvest Helpers food program.

Fresh produce, something many people take for granted, is often times a luxury for those in need. Last year ISS launched its first annual *Harvest Helpers* program, encouraging local gardeners to plant an extra row of produce to share with the Pantry Shelf for distribution to its clients.

ISS also planted its own garden in a tiny strip of land next to the agency.

"With spring *finally* here, it's time to start thinking about planting," said Bettyanne Lang, director of material assistance. "Last year's bounty of donated vegetables was amazing. It was wonderful to be able to share them with our clients.

"I hope many of you will become *Harvest Helpers* by planting and donating an extra row of fresh produce to our Pantry Shelf."

Appraisal Show a Success

Kelley Auctions in Holbrook hosted the South Shore Antique Appraisal Show to benefit Interfaith Social Services in February. The show was a great success, with more than 100 people in attendance. "It was a lot of fun seeing what everyone has been treasuring for all these years," said Rick Doane, executive director.

Recent Grants

Corporate and foundation partners are one of the principal sustaining factors which allows ISS to serve over 30,000 individuals every year. Since the last newsletter the following foundations have made charitable donations to a variety of ISS' programs.

Thank you to all of the community-minded organizations who help "...strengthening family life and offering assistance to anyone in need on the South Shore."

Morgan Stanley Settlement	\$50,000	for the HomeSafe program
Grace E. Brooks Trust	\$10,000	for the Fresh Start initiative
Arbella Charitable Foundation	\$10,000	for the New Directions center
Fredrick E. Weber Charities	\$ 8,000	for the HomeSafe program
Reebok Foundation	\$ 5,000	for operating expenses
Eastern Bank Foundation	\$ 2,500	for the HomeSafe program

Working Together Works Wonders

ISS recently hosted the first networking meeting for emergency financial assistance providers on the South Shore.

Program managers from Quincy Community Action Program (QCAP), Quincy Salvation Army, Milton Residents' Fund, Father Bill's and Wellspring joined ISS' HomeSafe Manager Sue Whitehead for an informal meeting in March. It was an opportunity to update each other on the various programs each agency offers to needy individuals and families, as well as develop better ways to collaborate.

"The information shared was incredibly valuable," said Whitehead. "The group insisted on meeting again in just a few short weeks, and to invite more agencies."

The results of this increased collaboration are already felt by ISS' clients. Various agencies have collaborated in pooling knowledge and resources to help at least six families. For example, ISS, QCAP, Salvation Army, and Father Bill's teamed up to assist an elderly gentleman pay an outstanding rental bill so he could move into more affordable, senior housing.

"For many of our clients, the need for funds is greater than any one agency can provide," said Whitehead. "With this type of collaboration, we will be able to help more people who previously—as individual agencies working alone—we may have had to turn away."

Allure Spa

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There are some incredibly charitable businesses and individuals on the South Shore who want to do more than make a donation; they want to use their experience and expertise. We are looking for opportunities to put these people to work helping our neighbors in need."

That desire to use her skills to help others prompted Ishmael to seek out ISS. "God has given us so much that it's important to give back and make sure we share our blessings. By working together, we can really make people's lives better."

If you or your business have a creative idea for partnering with ISS, please contact Rick Doane at 617-773-6203.

13th Annual Women's Prayer Breakfast

On March 12 St. Catherine's Greek Orthodox Church in Braintree was overflowing with women of other faiths, as it hosted Interfaith Social Services' 13th Annual South Shore Women's Prayer Breakfast. Over 250 women from 32 local houses of worship gathered for a morning of prayer, music, and fellowship. Church Members



Breakfast participants, from left to right: Alyson Greer, music director for Quincy Point Congregational Church; Michelle Widrick, a music major from Eastern Nazarene College; Rev. Clara Sparks, Interfaith chaplain at Quincy Medical Center; Rick Doane, executive director Interfaith Social Services; Leanne Walt, minister of First Congregational Church of Braintree; Christine Lott, executive director, Chris Cares International. Seated from left to right: Gail Madjzoub, The Baha'i Faith; Rev. Esther Bowen, director of pastoral care, Quincy Medical Center; Father Paul Sughrue, St. Clare's Catholic Church, Braintree.

prepared and served a sumptuous meal.

"This was our most successful prayer breakfast to date," said Rick Doane, executive director. "All of the proceeds from the breakfast go to helping impoverished local families served through Interfaith's food pantry, counseling center, and other assistance programs. It was wonderful to see the youth group from St. Catherine's serving breakfast to all of the attendees. That example of community spirit is what makes this event so special."

Keynote speaker Christine A. Lott, executive director of Chris Cares International, delivered an inspirational message about her transition from being a vice president of operations at Goldman Sachs in Boston to the head of a non-profit organization helping families in Africa. Chris Cares, which is based in Stoughton, works to help the people of Tanzania. Lott told of the obstacles that she has had to overcome while trying to help people so far from home. Her words inspired many

of the attendees including Betsy from Hingham's The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who said, "Christine's story was truly inspiring. Her dedication to helping the people of Tanzania helps all of us to stop and think about what is truly important in life."

"This breakfast is about community" said Doane. "Ms. Lott told us about a community that her organization is trying to strengthen thousands of miles away; hopefully that will inspire us to strengthen our communities' right here as well.



INTERFAITH SOCIAL SERVICES STAFF

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Claire Hagan, RN, LMHC
Counseling Coordinator

Bettyanne Lang
Manager of Material Assistance

Sue Whitehead
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Rev. Clara Sparks, M.Ed.

Editor

Jeanie Runey

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Please help stock our Pantry Shelf

Please remember The Pantry Shelf when you shop; items on the list below are always needed.

cereal

soup

rice

pasta

fresh produce

pasta sauce

canned meats

canned tuna

canned veggies

mac 'n cheese

healthy snacks

small jars of jelly

peanut butter

personal care products

diapers

baby food

Call Bettyanne Lang at 617-773-6203 or email: balang@InterfaithSocialServices.org for information about holding a food drive in your workplace, faith community, school, or neighborhood. She will be happy to help.

Remember ISS

If you would like to make a contribution to ISS through a bequest, trust, or as a gift, ISS would be happy to refer you to a certified public accountant or an attorney who works with the organization to assist you in your charitable financial planning.

Interfaith Social Services welcomes your contributions and will use them to strengthen family life and offer assistance to anyone in need on the South Shore.

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Up for a challenge?

The Feinstein Foundation in Rhode Island, which is dedicated to alleviating hunger, will match part of every donation made to the Pantry Shelf food program between now and May 1, 2011. The Foundation's generous program provides an opportunity to compound your gift.

Bureau Drawer Wish List

Knickknacks and curiosities
Clothing in clean, current style,
in all sizes for men and women
Books (please, no encyclopedias)
Small working appliances
Greeting cards
Jewelry
Shoes & handbags
Household items
Toys (no stuffed animals)

& volunteers who want to join in the fun

Shop the Bureau Drawer for great buys,

Monday - Friday, 12:30 - 3:30 p.m.

& until 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays

Coming Attraction

37th Annual

SOUTH SHORE WALKSM

Helping our Neighbors in Need

Saturday, April 16, 2011

Pageant Field

Merrymount Parkway, Quincy

11:30 a.m

The *Walk and Family Fun Day* features a three mile route, with a BBQ and concert at the end. The event has become an annual tradition for hundreds of South Shore families. Festivities and treats after the Walk include hamburgers, hotdogs, ice cream, clowns, balloon animals, a bouncy house, face painting, and live entertainment.

The South Shore Walk is held every year rain or shine. This is a great activity for youth groups, families and anyone interested in helping their community and having a fun time. Your support makes it possible for ISS to continue feeding, clothing and comforting our neighbors in need.

Go to www.InterfaithSocialServices.org to download a sponsor sheet or to make a donation online.

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