GUESTS OF THE INN
Persistence with a Smile

A guest came to the Rosa Parks INN the day before Thanksgiving with her four children; three sons, ages one through eight, and a four year old daughter. A single mother, she needed to get her children out of their apartment since it was becoming a harmful situation...infested with mice, with drug dealers and users in the hallways. She... (continued pg 4)

STUDENT CORNER
Sacred Heart Academy Students and Moms Get INNvolved

Sacred Heart Academy, a longtime supporter of The INN, has been encouraging its students to get INNvolved for many years. Girls from the Hempstead preparatory school have historically taken leadership roles on the Youth Board, made both monetary and in-kind donations and volunteered regularly over the years. And their moms are not just sitting on the sidelines. Groups of Sacred Heart Academy moms have sponsored three meals at the Mary Brennan INN so far this year, becoming familiar faces around the soup kitchen as volunteers. We applaud their efforts, not only for giving their time and generous donations, but for being positive role models for their daughters. (continued pg 6)

NEWS AROUND THE NETWORK

The INN operates 14 soup kitchens in 21 locations that serve 5,000 meals weekly across Long Island. Here are highlights from some of our soup kitchens on what’s new.

Freeport INN (Freeport)
The Freeport INN is in need of a new home and is currently looking for a church to host it, allowing for the preparation and serving of meals, Monday through Friday. (continued pg 6)
While The INN is an interfaith organization, we have welcomed both Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny to the Mary Brennan INN when the guests and their children are enjoying their holiday meals.

It has been amazing to watch the children’s reaction to Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. They are so excited and seem as though they cannot contain their total joy and happiness of being in the same room with such magical characters.

With Santa Claus this past year we imagined that some of the children might have been frightened, as many of them had never seen him in person. This was not the case. No one cried. No one became upset. Most of the children ran to him and put their little arms around his legs making it almost impossible for him to move. There was a sense in the whole room as though time stood still. To witness such innocence and bliss was truly a treat for everyone. It also was so touching to watch how many adults who were there without children also wanted their pictures taken with Santa Claus, as though they were remembering their own childhoods. Feeling the magic of standing next to this amazing representation of generosity and love is a memory that both our adult guests and we who work and volunteer at The INN hold special in our grateful hearts.

Last year when the Easter Bunny came for the first time we were amazed at the children’s awe and surprise. When the Easter Bunny sat down to allow the children to come close and say hello, there was one little boy who stood at his table near the Bunny, looking totally mesmerized. He kept watching all the excitement and remained very quiet and still. Then, when everyone returned to their seats to finish eating, this little boy took a cookie he had been given and walked over to the Bunny, put the cookie on his knee and walked back to his seat. It was such a simple act of kindness, performed by a child who was only four years old. The Easter Bunny saw the gesture and expressed both surprise and thanks to his new friend. The boy’s mother said he told her he gave him the cookie because he looked like he was hungry and no one was giving him any food.

We were all shown an example of thoughtfulness by this remarkable little child.

Each one of you is a “Santa Claus” and an “Easter Bunny” for your generosity, your incredible understanding and your never-ending compassion; you allow us to offer all we can, to all in need, always in your name and on your behalf.

May you and your families be forever blessed for never forgetting those who are less fortunate. As long as your hearts continue to be so giving, we can continue to spread your love to all of the guests and to each other. Please remember to take the very best of care of yourselves and thank you for being such gracious and compassionate members of The INN family.

Love,
Jean

Jean Kelly, Executive Director

**PRICE WATERHOUSE COOPERS GENEROUSLY GIVES**

An INNcredibly generous donation from Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC) will give The INN’s administrative offices and emergency shelters a much needed IT upgrade to help better serve guests in our programs. Thank you for making a difference in this way.

To find out ways your company can get INNvolved, please contact Dorian Stern at (516) 486-8506, ext. 106 or email dstern@the-inn.org.

Pictured L to R: PwC Partners Peter Kaplan, Michael Desautels, INN Executive Director Jean Kelly, and PwC partners Paul Salerno and Elizabeth Robinson

**REFLECTIONS**

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Pictured L to R: PwC Partners Peter Kaplan, Michael Desautels, INN Executive Director Jean Kelly, and PwC partners Paul Salerno and Elizabeth Robinson
The Caring Community—One Person Making a Difference
By Dave Golbert
We all have seen stories about hunger and homelessness on television. We’ve read countless articles in newspapers and magazines; after a while, it all starts to blend together. Thirteen years ago I decided it wasn’t enough to just read about the problems of hunger and homelessness on Long Island—I had to find a way to make a difference.

I did some research and quickly realized that The INN was the leading non-profit agency helping Long Islanders in need, not just in the numbers of meals served and beds provided in emergency shelters, but in the spirit of compassion and love. The INN puts such great value on the dignity and respect of each guest.

How could I make a difference? How could I best support the mission of The INN? I decided to use the power of networking. I made a list of all my neighbors, friends and family members; that came to about 120 people. Then I designed a letter which described the impact that hunger and homelessness have and I asked my friends and neighbors to join with me by making a contribution to The INN in whatever amount was comfortable for them.

The first year I raised $4,700, which was enough to provide food for up to 2,000 people, served during four meals at The INN’s largest soup kitchen in Hempstead. In year two, my friends, whom I called “The Caring Community,” donated $7,700; and in year three, we raised over $11,000. I kept adding names to my list and talking to everyone I met about the needs of hungry and homeless Long Islanders.

To make a long story short, I’m now in my 13th year of fund raising for The INN and we have raised over $300,000. It gives me such great pleasure when I visit the Mary Brennan INN Soup Kitchen and see hundreds of guests enjoying a meal that “The Caring Community” helped to provide.

None of this is rocket science. With a little bit of hard work and determination, you could do the same in your town or village. If you’d like my help to get you started, please contact me at davegolbert@yahoo.com. One person can make a difference, and one person with friends and neighbors pitching in, can change the world. “Let no one go hungry while there is food on our table.”

PLANT AN EXTRA ROW

The best thing about planting a vegetable garden is distributing the harvest. What gardener hasn’t experienced the pleasure of sharing his or her crops with neighbors? It’s a great feeling to give that ripe tomato, bright green cucumber or bunch of herbs to another.

For the past five years, Cathy Newman, a wonderful volunteer, as well as a master gardener, has donated her entire vegetable garden to the Mary Brennan INN. Last year she donated an amazing 750 pounds of organically grown fresh vegetables. We are so grateful to Cathy for her gift of health and nourishment to the guests The INN serves.

If Cathy Newman can share such a huge amount of fresh vegetables, it causes one to pause and think, how much more many of us could do. To all our ‘green thumb’ friends: This summer would you be so kind to plant an extra row of vegetables for those in need? You can deliver them to the Mary Brennan INN Soup Kitchen, located at 100 Madison Avenue, Hempstead, during the hours of 9:00am-11:00am or 2:00pm-4:00pm.

Your one row of vegetables, multiplied by how many other rows, will surely make a difference in the lives of a substantial number of guests of The INN.
Guests of The INN continued from pg 1

turned to The INN for shelter for her family and was welcomed for the holiday with continued support to help find new housing. Both mother and children were so happy to embrace a new beginning at The INN, while looking forward to the future.

The children were very outgoing and polite, easily making friends with staff and the other children at the Rosa Parks INN. Their mother was rather quiet and unassuming, yet she went beyond what was required of her and always with a smile. She sought ways to help, starting with the Thanksgiving dinner clean-up, which was appreciated by the whole house and its staff. At the holidays, The INN provides guests with the opportunity to shop for toys and gifts for their children. The young girl wanted a skateboard and The INN staff made sure they were able to get that for her. The family thought this was the best holiday they had ever had.

Though the holidays were wonderful for the entire family, their mother stayed focused and determined on moving them into a permanent, safe home. She was persistent in contacting potential landlords and was consistent in her daily search. In exactly 60 days, she was able to secure new housing for the family, so impressing The INN staff that they asked her to share her story to help other guests. The mother felt the key to her success was being persistent and polite. Landlords responded well to the family’s courtesy and pleasant manner. Although shy, she shared her story at the time of her success and still comes back to help support the other guests.

If you’d like to find out how you can support our Emergency Shelters, please contact us at (516) 486-8506 or visit our website at www.the-inn.org.

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT

SurvivINN at The INN

When you volunteer at The INN, you not only get a wonderful sense of satisfaction by helping the guests; you also get to meet and talk with a great group of volunteers. Books, movies, families are all topics of discussion. On Easter Sunday in 2014, Nancy Burke and Maria Roberts discovered that they shared something very important to both of them. It began by talking about hair – of all things!

What they shared was the life-changing experience of being diagnosed with cancer, undergoing treatments and gaining strength from surviving. The hair loss, the wigs, the hats were all part of this survival. The unique bond that cancer survivors have immediately became apparent to Nancy and Maria. From this understanding came the idea of starting a group of cancer survivors who were involved with The INN.

A mailing list developed to let INN volunteers know about this fledgling group, with the name SurvivINN saying so much. At the first meeting last July, the group talked about their experiences and actually shared many laughs. All participants were proud of what they had undergone and endured. That, however, was not enough for a group that developed from INN volunteers. Direction was sought and received from Jean Kelly who made sure that the mission of The INN was part of this group’s agenda.

One idea was to collect feminine hygiene products for the guests. The group received an amazing donation of eighteen cases to distribute. The success of this project encouraged SurvivINN to think about other ways to contribute to The INN. Members recently became part of The INN’s Speakers Bureau, publicizing the agency’s work to interested groups. As SurvivINN meets monthly, more ideas are being developed. To borrow a phrase, “Mighty oaks from little acorns grow.” What a wonderful way for cancer survivors to express their thankfulness by giving to those in need.

For more information on volunteer opportunities, check out our website, www.the-inn.org, or call (516) 486-8506.
INN GOOD COMPANY

Henry Schein Employees Get INNvolved

Recently, nearly 30 Team Schein members, along with friends and family of Henry Schein, Inc., volunteered their services at the Mary Brennan INN soup kitchen to assist in spring cleaning activities.

Volunteers spent the day cleaning out the walk-in refrigerator, re-packing food, re-stocking the guest choice pantry, as well as sorting donated clothes and redecorating the clothing boutique to make the layout more organized and attractive for guests.

In the weeks leading up to their volunteer day, Long Island-based Team Schein members collected more than 1,500 pounds of food and toiletries for donation to the soup kitchen in support of the event.

“Every year, I look forward to working at the Mary Brennan INN Soup Kitchen,” said Alexandra Brody, a coordinator for Henry Schein. “A fantastically well run organization, The INN is a great example of what a non-profit local agency can accomplish when focused and passionate people work together to better the community.”

With its global headquarters in Melville, NY, Henry Schein, Inc. is the world’s largest provider of health care products and services to office-based dental, animal health and medical practitioners.

If you have visited www.the-inn.org in the last few months, you may have noticed that our website has had a complete makeover. Its bright new look and design, as well as a user friendly format on all mobile and desktop devices, is all thanks to father and son team Neil and Steve Levin of Webline Designs. The family-owned company is based in Long Island City, Queens and serves Long Island and the Greater New York area with 20 years’ experience in web design and development. To date, Webline has worked on over 850 projects in more than 100 industries.

After serving mainly corporate clients, Neil and Steve heard Jean Kelly speak at an event some 15 years ago. Upon learning about the work done by The INN, both Neil and Steve agreed that they should offer their expertise to help communicate The INN’s cause by creating its first website. Webline has gone on to help over 50 non-profit organizations with their web design and branding, offering at a fraction of the cost the same professional services that they provide to for-profit clients.

Helping non-profit agencies has become a passion and an important part of Webline. As Steve says, “In our company, we try to do the best for the community that we serve. At some point, everyone could use a helping hand.”

For working with family, Steve has this to say, “I get to come into the office every day and see my dad. You can’t really get any better than that.” For more information on Webline Designs, visit the company’s website at www.weblinedesigns.com.
The Youth Advisory Board closed out another successful year of support for The INN through fundraisers, in-kind donation collections and volunteer projects. Do you know a Long Island high school student who displays leadership qualities and would like to be part of a group that helps spread awareness and tackle issues of hunger and homelessness, while gaining community service hours for college applications? Contact Dana Lopez at 516-486-8506, ext. 138 or dlopez@the-inn.org. Our monthly meetings will kick-off in October.

**Our Wish List**

**The INN is in need of:**

- Canned meats (tuna, turkey, chicken, ham), canned soup, canned pasta sauce (no glass, please)
- Non-perishable vegetables, fruit, Chef Boyardee-type products
- Hygiene products – soap, shampoo, toothpaste, etc. (small, travel sizes preferred for all items)
- Disposable diapers (all sizes), baby lotion, wipes and baby powders
- **New** underwear and socks
- Gently used towels, washcloths, blankets and bed linens

Please bring your donations to the Mary Brennan INN at 100 Madison Avenue in Hempstead, Monday to Friday, 9–11 am or 2–4 pm. For directions please check our website or call (516) 486-8506, ext. 114. Thank you.

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**News Around the Network**

at noon. The Freeport INN must relocate by the end of May 2015.

**Patchogue Neighbor’s INN (Patchogue)**

The Patchogue Theatre for the Performing Arts has generously been supporting the Patchogue Neighbor’s INN Soup Kitchen in its fundraising efforts. The Patchogue Theatre has a community-minded spirit that is always willing to act as an outreach vehicle to help those who are in need. Thank you for your ongoing support.

For additional information and available volunteer opportunities in our Network Soup Kitchens, please contact Michelle Singh, Human Resources Soup Kitchen Coordinator, at (516) 486-8506, ext. 143 or email at msingh@the-inn.org.

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**Student Corner**

Join the 2015-2016 Youth Advisory Board

The Youth Advisory Board closed out another successful year of support for The INN through fundraisers, in-kind donation collections and volunteer projects. Do you know a Long Island high school student who displays leadership qualities and would like to be part of a group that helps spread awareness and tackle issues of hunger and homelessness, while gaining community service hours for college applications? Contact Dana Lopez at 516-486-8506, ext. 138 or dlopez@the-inn.org. Our monthly meetings will kick-off in October.

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**“Serving Hungry and Homeless Long Islanders”**

211 Fulton Avenue Hempstead, NY 11550
(516) 486-8506 • www.the-inn.org

The INN has established a policy regarding all guests: to protect their privacy, no guest is to be photographed or interviewed while using the services at The INN.

**SOUP KITCHENS**

Bethany Hospitality INN – Central Islip
Bread and More INN – Riverhead
Mary Brennan INN – Hempstead
Freeport INN – Freeport
Having Friends INN – Sayville
Invited INN – Rocky Point
Long Beach Food and Friendship INN – Long Beach
Mercy INN – Wyandanch
North Fork Community Supper INN – Greenport
North Shore INN – Glen Cove
Patchogue Neighbor’s INN – Patchogue
Shepherd’s INN – Lake Ronkonkoma
Thee Island INN – Middle Island
Welcome INN – Port Jefferson

**SHELTERS**

Donald E. Axinn INN
Edna Moran INN
Rosa Parks INN

**PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES**

Alona Grace INN Administrative Center
Catherine Martin INN Veterans Housing Program
Catherine O’Neill INN
Clarice Silk INN
Crisis Housing Project
Delta Funding INN
Dr. Victor G. and Rejane Herman INN Homelessness Prevention
Jane’s INN
Long-Term Housing
Mary Moore INN
Palmer INN

The INN is on Facebook and Twitter

To become a fan and receive updates on The INN’s activities and announcements, please go to www.facebook.com/theinnli or twitter.com/the_inn.