

kitchen angels express

Hot, tasty news delivered fresh to you!

FALL 2022 ISSUE



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A Bit of History

With age comes a bit of wisdom as well as perspective. Reflecting back on the arc of the past three decades, it's quite remarkable that an organization like Kitchen Angels came into being. As so often happens with an idea whose time has come, Kitchen Angels was conceived in a flash of extraordinary synchronicity. In early 1992, two groups of Santa Feans, each unknown to the other, were simultaneously moved to create a food service charity that would deliver free hot meals to homebound individuals who faced life-threatening circumstances. No such organization existed. **The Founding Circle** was composed of a handful of people who were convinced of the importance of providing nutrition to folks who would otherwise go without. They contributed a tremendous amount of time and energy getting the project off the ground.

The first meals from Kitchen Angels were delivered on June 1, 1992. Within six months the program had served more than 2,000 meals to 80 different clients. If the founders had any doubts that the project was meant to be, those doubts quickly disappeared.

As more and more clients began receiving meals, the organization outgrew the kitchen at the Westminster Presbyterian Church and moved into the old National Guard Armory on Cerrillos Road. When that space became too small, Kitchen Angels was fortunate to have a champion in the New Mexico Legislature, Max Coll with Kitchen Angels volunteer Gregory Green who, orchestrated our current location and building on Siler Road.

Kitchen Angels has come a long way since 1992. Over the course of the past thirty years, 4,000 volunteers have prepared and delivered 1,755,412 meals to 7,693 clients ... all from the "angel kitchen" first envisioned by **Tony D'Agostino, Anna [Huserik] Stillmaker** and **Leise Sargent**.

Not every community need can be met by a small group of people with a great idea. But Kitchen Angels was a great idea whose time had clearly come. And because of the perseverance of those early visionaries and the steadfast support of our staff, donors, volunteers, and community, Kitchen Angels remains a major force in ensuring no one in our community who is homebound goes without nutrition. ♥

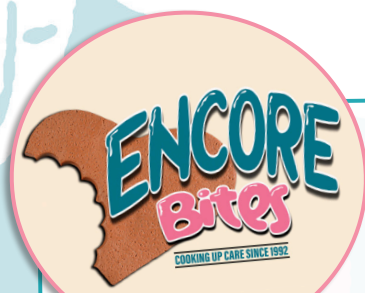


Pam Egan and Alice Fleischer placing the final touches on a holiday treat for the clients.

What's New?

The newest addition to our services is **Encore Bites**. The idea originated from a client's comment in our most recent satisfaction survey, "I really enjoyed the extra fruit you sent yesterday. I wish you had the funds to send snacks more often." That's all it took. Our Development Officer, Dwayne Trujillo, shared the idea with potential funders and **Los Alamos National Laboratory** thought it was a great idea. They agreed to fund the initiative for the first year.

We now send a monthly bag of healthy treats that includes some purchased foods as well as house-made items. We've sent zucchini dip (from our *Seasons of Santa Fe Cookbook*), hummus with fresh vegetable crudites, canned tuna and canned chicken, peanut and various other nut butters with rice crackers, trail mix, powdered milk, apple sauce, fresh fruit and house-made vegetarian dips. The program is still in its infancy but our clients all seem to be enjoying the added snacks. ♥



Thank you to graphic artist and new delivery volunteer Tony Salas for designing the logo for our new program

KITCHEN ANGELS EXPRESS is the official newsletter of Kitchen Angels, a not-for-profit organization providing free hot meals to eligible homebound persons in Santa Fe.

All of our clients face life-challenging situations and are ineligible for other area food programs. Our clients are selected without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation. Most are under 60 years of age and live at or below the poverty level. Kitchen Angels Express is published for the friends and clients of Kitchen Angels. The name "Kitchen Angels" and the angel logo are registered trademarks.



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KITCHEN ANGELS was founded in 1992

by Tony D'Agostino,
Anna Huserik, Leise Sargent,
and the very first group
of volunteer Angels.

From the President

What a remarkable nine years this term on the Board has been for me. Board members "term out" after nine years according to our bylaws, meaning they must step away from serving on the Board. I think this is a great rule, bringing fresh energy and new perspectives to both members and officers. We have a wonderful Board at the moment, with a wide variety of backgrounds, strengths and skills. The members work well together and support each other - great things that help support the work of a great organization.

It is now time for me to say "thank you."

Personally, I have been very fortunate to work with our wonderful executive director, Tony McCarty. I first met Tony when I joined the Board 22 years ago. In addition to his never-ending leadership, one of his most amazing "feats" was guiding Kitchen Angels safely through the Covid crisis. It has been a true honor to work with him. Thank you, Tony!

Dwayne Trujillo, our Development Officer, has proven to be a true asset for Kitchen Angels. He has made our fundraising events successful, even during the Pandemic years. His latest task has been coordinating our 30th Anniversary events. Thank you, Dwayne!

Working with Kitchen Angels' wonderful staff has been a pleasure and great FUN. Thank you, Lauren LaVail, for "herding cats" while keeping the volunteer schedules under control! Thank you, Jeannette Iskat, for your kindness working with our clients. Some days are quite challenging. Also, your fabulous outfits amaze me! Thank you, Joe Cates, for creating meals that clients comment positively on all the time. It is remarkable you can create delicious and nutritious meals considering all our clients' dietary needs.

THANK YOU volunteers! Without you, Kitchen Angels wouldn't exist. At the Volunteer Picnic this past summer, I had the chance to meet some of the volunteers whom I hadn't had the chance to meet when I've been in the building.

And a huge shout out to the volunteers in KITCHENALITY! You made my Chairmanship of the Fundraising/Events Committee so much easier. Before the store, grants, donations and events were the main source of funding for our mission. You now provide 23% of our operating revenue.

Finally, thank you to all Kitchen Angels donors. No matter what size your donation is, it is greatly appreciated. Your support means our clients know they are valued by the community and can remain in their homes, receiving the nutrition they need to stay as healthy as possible for as long as possible. Although I won't be in the building as much once I've stepped down from the Board, I will still be around. I can't think of a better place to donate my time and energy.

Best,

Linda



Thank you for nine years of sterling leadership to retiring Board Members, Linda Dressman and Ben Alaimo Monson



Thank You

Thank you Enterprise Bank and Trust for issuing a \$30,000 challenge grant and equal thanks to the Kind World Foundation for completing the match! ♥



THE KIND WORLD FOUNDATION

KITCHEN ANGELS

Celebrating 30 YEARS

of Cooking Up Care for Santa Fe

1992

TIME TO ACT

Kitchen Angels is created to feed homebound people during a time of great crisis



1995

OUR FIRST REAL HOME

We move from the Presbyterian Church to a commercial kitchen in the old National Guard Armory



1999

EXPANDING TO MEET A GROWING NEED

Frozen Meal Program provides weekend meals and expands our delivery radius

2000

PUBLISH SEASONS OF SANTA FE COOKBOOK

Recipient of the *Tobasco Community Cookbook Award* and the *Writers Digest National Self-Published Book Award*



2001

RECOGNITION OF OUR WORK

We receive the Old Santa Fe Association Award

A PERMANENT HOME

First successful Capital Campaign supports construction of the Coll Green Angel Depot



2003



PINON AWARD

Recognition from the Santa Fe Community Foundation



2006

BEST OF SANTA FE WINNER

Win, Place or Show 13 times since

2010

LAVENDER FAIRE APRON

Accepted into the Food Activism permanent collection at the Smithsonian Museum



2011

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

Recognizes Kitchen Angels with their Champions for Cancer Award

2014

ANGEL MONOLOGUES

Volunteers narrate poignant stories from their Kitchen Angels experience

2015

ONE MILLION MEALS

A milestone in cooking up care



2016

KITCHENALITY OPENS

Resale store selling gently used kitchenware to benefit our program

EDIBLE MAGAZINE

Recognized as a New Mexico Local Hero



2018

MOST IMPORTANT MEAL

Breakfast is added to our meal delivery

OUR HOME EXPANDS

We complete renovations to the Angel Depot to accommodate our program

2019

VOLUNTEER MILESTONE

1,010 volunteers contribute time and energy to our program

ANGELS DINE OUT MILESTONE

40 restaurants participate generating a fund-raising record



FEASTING WITH FRIENDS

20 community dinner parties raise awareness and funds

2020

ONE MILLION DOLLARS

Endowment grows to support future programming



BREAD & BUTTER CLUB

100 members' monthly gifts sponsor 12 clients for a full year

OUR HOME IMPROVES

Second round of renovations permits full utilization of our facility to support programming



2021

PANDEMIC CHANGES EVERYTHING

Designated a New Mexico essential service with no interruption in meal delivery

2022

THIRTY YEARS IN SERVICE

1,755,412 meals prepared and delivered to 7,693 clients by 4,000 volunteers

SPIRIT OF GIVING

Thirty years of holiday tradition



2023

WHAT'S NEXT

Meals That Matter – a new program to assist in the transition from hospital to home

Thank You, Volunteers

After 30 years and more than 567,000 hours of service, you can bet there are many inspiring stories that make us feel good about the generous spirit our volunteers demonstrate each day.

Few are as stirring as the ones from Rob Higgins who began volunteering with our program in 1992, the year of our founding. For many of Rob's delivery years, he had a favorite client who made various moves around town. No matter which route the client was assigned, Rob always requested a change to continue the connection. Even after the client's final move to Los Alamos and into assisted living, Rob continued to visit occasionally for friendly chats. Rob's dedication is a perfect example of the kindness of spirit and exemplary service to our community that our volunteers display. ♥



© Daniel Gust Photography



VOLUNTEER NOTE

"I don't think you realize how much you have given me. [My client] has filled a void that has been in my life since my mother died. Talking to her every week has been so healing."

Laurie, Caring Caller



Joe Cates and Lauren LaVail celebrate completion of a week of community service with visiting teen volunteers

Staff Milestones

Kitchen Angels has a fortunate history of dedicated leadership. This year, we celebrate the milestone anniversaries of **Lauren LaVail**, Community Liaison, and **Joe Cates**, Director of Food Services. After a decade with our program, Lauren commented, "I love my job because it is one, big practice in gratitude. Every day I greet these kind and generous volunteers who are selflessly working to end hunger. What an honor it is to recognize the goodness in each person who shows up." Joe says, "What I like most about working at Kitchen Angels is working with all the volunteers to feed people every day. We all dig in and work hard with that one goal in mind."

Thank you, Lauren and Joe, for your stable and thoughtful leadership that keeps our clients well fed, and helps them stay in the comfort and safety of familiar surroundings. ♥



CLIENT NOTE

"When you called you listened to me and you were very comforting in your genuine concern for me, you helped me a great deal. I was having an especially low day, I consider that first call to be a gift from God. Thank you for matching me with my Caring Caller, I enjoy our time on the phone more than I can express."

Linda T.



A few memories from over the years . . .



Reflections from the Executive Director

As I think over my tenure at Kitchen Angels, there is one phrase that comes to mind: *Indomitable Spirit*. Kitchen Angels volunteers, staff and donors always rise to whatever challenge comes our way. Whether it is adapting to new procedures, as we did during the pandemic, stretching our versatility muscles as supply chain issues continue to thwart our best laid plans, or funding a capital campaign, the Kitchen Angels family continuously finds the right path to keep healthy meals flowing to our clients. As the Sondheim lyric states, “*Good times and bum times, I’ve seen them all and my dear, I’m still here.*” In this case, it is Kitchen Angels that not only endures, but is made stronger by navigating challenging times.

I remember a Christmas Eve when a huge snow-storm was predicted for both Colorado and New Mexico. All was going as planned until our food wholesaler phoned with the news that their trucks, headed our way, were trying to make it through the Raton Pass before it was closed but they weren’t sure they’d make it. Our Chef was in regular contact with the company and we were all relieved when word came that the trucks were through the Pass and in New Mexico. Game on.

The snow accumulated quickly and all deliveries were prepared and packaged—except for the salmon entrée. Our delivery volunteers were anxious to get on the road. Snow was accumulating and more was steadily coming down. Where was the truck? After tracking down the driver, we learned he was unloading at a restaurant down the street. Two intrepid volunteers made their way down Cerrillos Road and climbed into the back of the truck, dug through the many orders packed in the trailer and located our order! Meanwhile, everyone in the kitchen

had the ovens, containers and sides ready to roll. The salmon arrived, was prepped, cooked and packaged in record time. Christmas Dinner was saved.

One Spring Tuesday many years ago, **Pam Egan** walked into my office, introduced herself and stated she wanted to volunteer. I asked if she could cook, she said sure! We were down a few volunteers that morning, so I handed her an apron and asked if she could start immediately—which she did. Pam became a long-term volunteer, served on numerous committees, our Board of Directors and is currently on our Advisory Board.

Then, there was the Thanksgiving when twelve inches of snow fell overnight. Six of our kitchen volunteers were coming from Pecos. There was no way for them to drive into Santa Fe. Fortunately, **Carol Beesley**, another one of our extraordinary volunteers, was scheduled to deliver later in the day. When she learned of the dilemma, she volunteered her family members all of whom were in town for the holiday. Not only that, when I asked for a volunteer to take the lead, Carol responded, “*I used to be a teacher. I can get this done!*” And, she and her family made it happen. Our clients were delivered a beautiful Thanksgiving feast. Carol stuck around and became one of our most dependable substitute drivers for more than a decade.

These are just three of the many instances when our volunteers demonstrated the *Indomitable Spirit* that is the hallmark of Kitchen Angels volunteers. Our heartfelt appreciation goes to everyone who has refused to take “no” for an answer and who stepped up to fill a pressing need, showed up for a regular shift, filled in at the last moment, or simply rose to the occasion to keep our clients fed. ♥

Tony



by **Adrienne Attaberry**

Caring Callers is a unique program designed during the height of the pandemic to bring companionship to Kitchen Angels clients who are homebound and living alone. Sensitive to the fact that being alone often creates a sense of loneliness as well as feelings of isolation (which can lead to anxiety, confusion, and sometimes depression), Caring Callers volunteers provide the all-important gift of human connection and companionship.

Nothing takes the place of the kind of one-on-one contact we used to have with our clients. Nevertheless, keeping our clients as safe from harm as possible during the pandemic remains a top priority. Adhering to Kitchen Angels protocols, we are no longer interacting directly with our clients. As the need for caution continues into year three of the pandemic, personal conversations have become even more precious.

I first learned about the work of Kitchen Angels in 2000 when Tony McCarty and I met as colleagues, each of us providing services to the Santa Fe community. Soon after we met, I became a contract writer for Kitchen Angels. We worked together on brochures, website copy, and on a number of marketing projects. I also did grant writing. At the beginning of 2022, Tony asked me if I would be interested in coordinating the Caring Callers program. Appreciating the mission of the program and being sensitive to the factors adding even more stress on those receiving Kitchen Angels meal services, I was eager to join.

I soon came to realize that our clients' need for companionship and connection had become vitally important. Many needs were falling through the cracks as so many obstacles, both old ones and new and unexpected ones, complicated our clients' lives. Support services, which were already difficult to navigate, such as housing, medical and behavioral health appointments, medication renewals, and transportation, were now nearly impossible to obtain. The closing of the city's senior centers ended many assistance services as well as opportunities for people to engage in social interactions. Also gone were the senior volunteers who had provided assistance in homes, helped with errands, and offered companionship for a number of our Kitchen Angels clients.

It was this increased social isolation that inspired the creation of the Caring Callers program. Volunteer callers aren't trying to rescue, solve problems, or change what is. They're simply offering a bit of companionship. Like a good friend, our volunteers listen as many folks just want to share their stories. For those without computer access, a volunteer might offer to provide phone numbers or the names of companies and organizations that can help. Sometimes, just sharing thoughts and perspectives can be meaningful. And, when a client asks for advice, their volunteer caller might help them prioritize steps to accomplish a goal or offer resources to consider. ♥

Folks who may be interested in becoming a caring caller can call Adrienne Attaberry at 505-471-7780, extension 207.



Emmylou Harris gave a stellar performance to an appreciative and capacity crowd at the opera house

Emmylou Harris at the Santa Fe Opera

Emmylou Harris headlined the culminating event of our 30th Anniversary celebration with a concert on September 23, 2022, performing with the Red Dirt Boys to a capacity crowd at the Santa Fe Opera. It was a night to remember. Coordinating an event such as this took the time, energy and support of many different people and organizations. We are extremely grateful to our sponsors for making this night a splendid success. A very special thank you **Enterprise Bank & Trust**, our Premier Sponsor. **The Santa Fe Opera**, **Hutton Broadcasting** and **Specifica** all helped make the event happen, as did **Nusenda Credit Union**, **PNM**, **Lexus of Santa Fe** and **First National 1870**. Additional thanks to **New Mexico Bank & Trust**, **City of Santa Fe** and **Rivera Family Funerals & Cremation**. We don't yet have a bottom line, but it looks as if we exceeded our financial goal for the concert.

The response to the concert on social media was pretty impressive. "OMG! Possibly the best show I saw all year (and I've seen quite a few). Thanks so much." And another, "It was a fantastic celebration! We were thrilled to be there! Thank you, Kitchen Angels, for all you do." Thank you to everyone who attended the concert and helped us celebrate 30 years of **Cooking Up Care**. As another social media post stated, "It was a perfect night." ♥



Carol Bronstein and Richard Graham finalizing an autumn meal

What Our Clients Think

Once each year we conduct a Client Satisfaction Survey to learn how clients feel about our meal service and to determine which aspects of our service may need some improvement.

Here are a few of the latest results:

- Ninety-eight percent of our clients responded that Kitchen Angels meal service fully meets their needs;
- Ninety-seven percent have maintained or greatly improved their ability to live independently;
- Ninety-eight percent have maintained the same quality of life as they experienced before becoming homebound, or feel their quality of life has greatly improved since starting our service; and
- Emergency room visits dropped by 82% and overnight hospital stays were reduced by 52% after starting service.

These are stats we can all be proud of! ♥

A Year of Celebration

We've had an active 30th Anniversary year. In February, Dwayne Trujillo, Development Officer, kicked off the year by having volunteers make a short video of their favorite Kitchen Angels memory. Winners of our first Video Contest were **Carolyn Wright's** comedy remake of a Julia Child cooking episode, **Michaela Deaton** from the Culinary Arts Program at Santa Fe Community College and **Zara Southard**, owner of Maggie's Cakes. Prizes were awarded in three categories: Inspirational; Comedy; and Food. Following the awards presentations, attendees enjoyed a viewing of the documentary **Julia** at Violet Crown and were then treated to a reception in the lobby of the theater. Check out the winning videos on our website (kitchenangels.org) and on our YouTube channel ([Kitchen Angels Santa Fe](https://www.youtube.com/KitchenAngelsSantaFe)).

Next up was the triumphant return of our signature event, **Angels Dine Out**. Apparently, people were ready to get out and about because it was our most successful in history!

The celebrations continued with our quarterly hands-on cooking classes. The popular series sold out almost as soon as it was announced. **Chef Johnny Vee** kicked off the series with a festive "Effortless Party Foods" class. He was followed by **Anita Hausafus** and an authentic East Indian feast. Next up was **Chef David Sundberg**, who taught classic, but manageable, French recipes. Our final class was taught by **Chef Ahmed Obo** from the popular Jambo restaurant.

Just as enjoyable as each class was the group meal that followed. Thank you to the wonderful chefs who gave of their time and talents to make the classes a success. We've had multiple requests to continue the series, so make certain to follow us on Facebook or Instagram ([kitchenangelssf](https://www.facebook.com/kitchenangelssf)) to be among the first to know our plans!

The culminating event of our 30th year was the incomparable **Emmylou Harris and the Red Dirt Boys**, in concert at the Santa Fe Opera Theater. It was a night to remember as the capacity crowd showed their appreciation with two standing ovations during the performance. Thanks to our sponsors, attendees, staff, volunteers and producers for making our 30th Anniversary celebrations truly worthy of the extraordinary milestone we've achieved. ♥



Chef Johnny Vee is always in high spirits



Anita Hausafus and Karen Wolf-Mattison dressed for the occasion



Chef David Sundberg, Joleen and Amy getting it done!



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Check out our 30th Anniversary video at
kitchenangels.org

Heartfelt thanks to Thom Eberhardt and Christy Vasquez of Sky City Productions



CLIENT NOTE

"Thank you so much for helping our family out at a very overwhelming time. We are so grateful for the delicious and healthy meals that we receive each week. Everyone who has delivered meals to the house has been extremely kind."

Jenny G.



A few of our very best volunteer angels



CLIENT NOTE

"Your meals and pet food, at no cost to me, have fed our bellies and souls all this time. Instead of feeling guilty, I feel immensely grateful and humbled by your generosity. Each time one of your kind and concerned volunteers knocks on my door, they say 'hello,' and my name, as a friend would. They ask how I am doing, and how my pets are doing. My pets are as thrilled to see them as I am. Your volunteer angels acknowledge me, and treat me with dignity and respect. This is at the top of my list in terms of 'needs' in my life right up there with oxygen, water and food. It is not an exaggeration to say that Kitchen Angels has not only enhanced, but also prolonged, my life."

Diane A.

