



kitchen angels express

Hot, tasty news delivered fresh to you!

SPRING 2023 ISSUE

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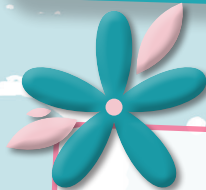
A Good Neighbor

The Siler Road neighborhood is growing by leaps and bounds. Those of us who have been around for a while welcome the new energy and vitality injected into our formerly sleepy area. And although they are no longer new to the area, Meow Wolf is continually reaching out to assist in the community.

Soon, they're going to brighten up our loading dock with an original mural! The project has been in the works for quite a while and we hope to begin the mural later this spring. As many of you know, during the pandemic we redesigned our delivery process to accommodate our drivers through the loading dock. It's never been the most aesthetically pleasing or pedestrian friendly aspect of our facility. Hopefully, by summer the area will be bursting with color, welcoming our volunteers and purveyors. Thank you, **Meow Wolf**, we're excited to see the finished mural. ♥



Colorful salads to match our soon-to-be-coming mural



Live Longer by Volunteering

It may not convey true immortality, but studies continue to point out the positive health benefits of volunteering, one of which appears to be longer life. According to a publication from Americorps, people who volunteer have lower mortality rates, greater functional ability, and lower rates of depression later in life than those who do not volunteer. And research has found that volunteering provides adults age 60 or older with greater benefits than younger volunteers. These benefits include improved physical and mental health and greater life satisfaction. In addition, while depression may serve as a barrier to volunteer participation in mid-life adults, it is a catalyst for volunteering among older adults, who may seek to compensate for role changes and reduced social relations that occur with aging.

In 2022, Kitchen Angels was supported by 570 volunteers who gave a combined 33,909 hours (or the equivalent of just over 16 full time employees). Forty percent of our volunteers have been with us for six years or more and a few have been with us since we opened our doors in 1992.

Volunteering helps counteract the effects of stress, anger, and anxiety. The social contact that comes from helping and working with others can have a profound effect on our overall psychological well-being. Nothing relieves stress better than a meaningful connection to another person. Kitchen Angels volunteers know the extraordinary impact their gifts of time and energy have on our clients and the community. And like a mirror, those gifts are reflected back on our volunteers. *Thank you!* ♥



Maria Goldstein finishing our Valentine cookies

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.

CLIENT NOTE

"My name is James and I have been a client on and off for quite a few years now. I'm dealing with multiple health issues that zap my energy and make it hard to use my hands and stand. I really, really appreciate the meals, the volunteers, and the wonderful staff at Kitchen Angels. The organization works for the community and me personally. It's really helped me get through some tough times, including fears of the pandemic. So hats-off to everyone out there who is a volunteer or staff. Thank you so much!"

Anybody There?

The Caring Callers program brings together some amazing Kitchen Angels volunteers with clients who are living alone and experiencing loneliness. The program, which began during the pandemic, continues to bring the gift of caring conversation to nearly 20 clients each week. The callers and clients don't meet in person and what starts out as casual conversation very often develops into an over-the-phone friendship. Small talk about the weather and local events quickly becomes a deeper conversation, growing into a discussion about family, childhood memories, travels and adventures, as well as an offering of support and resources.

Conversations with our clients and volunteers consistently reveal that common ground is easily established when one genuinely open heart responds to another. What begins as a weekly volunteer assignment is soon transformed into meaningful exchanges between two people who really care about each other.

Most phone calls are light conversations, although at times some rather serious issues arise. Caring Caller volunteers are given articles on topics that our clients face including depression and anxiety, elder self-abuse, and how to deal with feelings of being overwhelmed and procrastination.

More than 90% of our clients live at or below the poverty level and must deal with chronic or terminal physical health issues as well as behavioral health issues on a daily basis. Being homebound, many become "invisible." That's why it's important to remember that these folks once contributed to the work force, raised children and led active healthy lives. They contributed to their community. The simple act of a regular phone check-in is one way to remind them that we care about them ... hence the program's name Caring Callers.

If you know of a Kitchen Angels client who would benefit from the Caring Callers program or of someone interested in becoming a Caring Callers volunteer, please contact Adrienne Attaberry at **505-471-7780**, extension **207**. ♥



Lauren LaVail checking in with our Caring Callers co-ordinator



Sometimes even pets must rely on the kindness of strangers

The Importance of Pet Angels

Companion animals are especially important to our homebound clients. Although research on human-animal interactions is still relatively new, many studies have shown positive health effects, according to a report published by the National Institutes of Health. Among the effects noted, interacting with animals has been shown to decrease levels of cortisol (a stress-related hormone) and lower blood pressure. Other studies have found that animals can reduce loneliness, increase feelings of social support, and boost people's mood.

Keeping our clients' pets fed is just as important as keeping our clients fed. Kitchen Angels now provides kibble to 25 dogs and 34 cats. It's a much bigger (not to mention heavier) undertaking than most folks might imagine. A typical delivery of bags of kibble to our facility weighs 350 pounds, so processing can be quite a workout. Our intrepid volunteers Michaelene Kyrala and Judith Erger keep the program running smoothly, dividing the big sacks of pet food into smaller bags our drivers deliver to clients once each week. We're also extremely grateful to our local business partner Jose Laranga at The Feed Bin, who's been supplying a consistently high-quality product for a number of years. But it costs money to keep Pet Angels going. That's why your gifts to support this program are important. You may designate a donation to Pet Angels from the drop-down menu on the donation payment page on our website. ♥

Sales for a Cause

Congratulations KITCHENALITY volunteers as the store enjoys its eighth year in operation! Thanks to our many customers and donors, the store surpassed our 2022 sales goal and delivered 30% of our annual operating budget. In addition to the donated treasures, we also sell Kei & Molly kitchen towels, made in Albuquerque, and zany greeting cards designed by Lori Faye Bock of Abiquiu. The store also has an eBay presence and sales continue to be brisk through eBay. To find the online store, scroll down the left-hand side of the eBay home page to the "Show only" menu, click "see all" and select "benefits charity." Hit "apply" and then type in "Kitchenality Santa Fe." We always welcome your gently used kitchenware to benefit our store and our program. If you want to make a donation, drive through the gate on the south side of the Kitchen Angels facility, turn right and stop at the first loading dock. Ring the bell and a volunteer will be happy to assist you. So, please think of us during the upcoming Spring cleaning season, or whenever you find yourself "decluttering" your kitchen or dining room. ♥



Marti Royer and Kate Kastamo preparing inventory for a new day of sales



From the Director

Kitchen Angels celebrated its 30-year anniversary in 2022, having delivered a total of 1,899,440 meals to 8,211 clients since opening our doors in 1992. For three decades, our program has been a critical element in addressing the nutrition needs for some of the most vulnerable residents of our community. Our meal delivery services mitigate the impact of poverty on the long-term health and quality of life for chronically ill and homebound individuals who might not otherwise have consistent access to healthy and nutritious food. Access to healthy food is one of the most important social determinants of health.

Thanks to the foresight and diligence of some extraordinary visionaries who responded to the need for home-delivered meals thirty years ago, Kitchen Angels has been there to bolster the safety net and ensure folks in our community have access to enough food to stay healthy.

While the pandemic played havoc with many organizations and their ability to function, our staff, volunteers, donors and Board kept Kitchen Angels true to our mission. Our volunteers are some of the most intrepid and community-minded people I've ever encountered. Every day, a cadre of kitchen, meal prep and delivery volunteers show up like clockwork to cook, package, and drive meals to clients' homes. We still see the ebb and flow of COVID infections affecting the availability of volunteers, but the degree has lessened. The lessons from the pandemic have helped us to refine our overall infectious disease management protocols (for example, during the flu season), keeping us as safe and as healthy as possible. And many of the operational changes we made in response to the pandemic have become part of our standard operating procedures. The pandemic taught us to take nothing for granted.

Client enrollment began to edge back up in 2022, to 518 from 501 in 2021, and the number of meals delivered also climbed, to 144,028. The financial support we received from our community of donors and funders remained strong and our resale store, KITCHENALITY, brought in a record amount of revenue, all of which is used to subsidize our meal delivery services. In fact, the success of our fund-raising efforts coupled with consistent store sales made it possible to grow our endowment to \$1.5 million – the realization of a long-term goal.

The pandemic that spurred the creation of Kitchen Angels may have faded just as the COVID-19 pandemic is fading. But one thing that will never fade is the strength, resilience, and tenacity of the Kitchen Angels community. As I've said many times, we were born out of challenging times and rising to a challenge is part of our DNA. Our volunteers know this, our staff knows this, our donors know this, and our clients count on this. ♥



Tony McCarty, Executive Director



Sue Angel shows off her wings as a member of the Bread & Butter Club

Sustaining Meals

The Bread & Butter Club is our monthly recurring donation program. It's an easy way to give every month and provide nutritious meals to our clients year-round. We hosted our first Bread & Butter Club brunch at Kitchen Angels in February and gave tours of our facility and coupons to shop at Kitchenality. It was also an opportunity for the 42 Bread & Butter Club members to meet and get acquainted with each other. If you'd like to become a Bread & Butter Club member, contact Dwayne Trujillo, Development Officer, at 505-471-7780, extension 204, or email him at dtrujillo@kitchenangels.org. ♥

Texans on a Mission

Kitchen Angels recently received an offer from a group of volunteers with the Granbury First United Methodist Church in Granbury, Texas, to fix up the homes of our clients.

The group selected Kitchen Angels after a recent visit to Santa Fe and will provide all of the materials and labor, with teams made up of six to nine youths and two adults. They plan on coming to Santa Fe in June to tackle the projects. They've offered to build wheelchair ramps, repair handrails, paint, haul trash and tackle yard work. So far, nine of our clients have submitted applications. We'll update you when the work is completed. Thanks neighbors! ♥



No job is too complicated for the intrepid volunteers



CLIENT NOTE

"Your program is every bit as much needed as it is truly exceptional. And, too, your portion sizes are plentiful. Your delivery people are always reliable, courteous, and cheerful! By and large, your program is good enough to induce a lot of lonely souls to cast a glance towards the Heavens... and say, 'Somebody up there must like me!'"

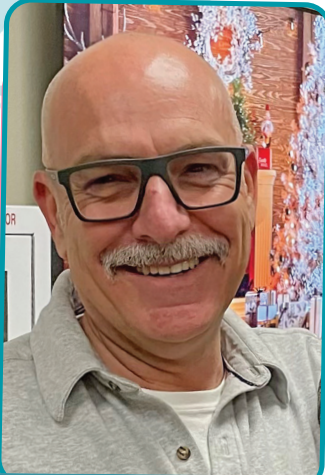
- Jen

Everyday Hero

Kitchen Angels often talks about how we provide more than just food to our home bound clients. Our delivery drivers provide connection, a friendly daily check-in, and sometimes they even act as a life-line. That was the case back in March when volunteer Joel Grimstad was subbing for his wife Alana. Their two daughters Raya & Sloane always join in the volunteer efforts and were riding along with dad. On this particular day, the client they were delivering to did not respond, but Joel heard a small voice calling for help. He called 911 and waited for the paramedics to arrive, jump the fence, and assist our client. As it turned out, she had fallen from her wheelchair on Friday after her delivery and had been on the floor until our Monday volunteer found her. She was so very grateful for her delivery angel "saving her life." Raya & Sloane are so proud of their father for being a hero! ♥



Joel with his daughters Raya and Sloane getting set for deliveries



Darrin Abby leader of the pack

New Leadership

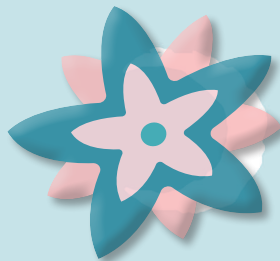
The Kitchen Angels Board elected its officers at their January meeting held at the Bishop's Lodge Auberge Resort Collections. Darrin Abby, who has been on the Board for four years, will serve as president, Morgan Honeycutt and Karen Wolfe-Mattison continue as co-vice presidents, Yash Morimoto is stepping into the secretary position and Elizabeth Pettus is our treasurer. Thank you to board member Peter Lovato, who is Director of Catering at the Lodge, and Angelica Palladino, General Manager, for underwriting for this event.

In addition to electing officers and approving the operating budget, the January meeting gives the Board an opportunity to plan for the year, reviewing and updating our strategic plan. Board member Martha Romero guided the group through a strategic planning process, developing a plan that will direct our path over the next three years.

Also, at the meeting, Mark Cox became our newest member of the Board. Mark is a New Mexico native and received his law degree from the University of New Mexico in 2013. He is committed to giving back to the community he loves and wants to be a part of a group that helps nourish and sustain its community members. We're off to a splendid start in 2023. ♥



Morgan Honeycutt was featured in our volunteer ad campaign last year



Katherine Meirose settling into her new office

A New Look

Thank you to our great friend Rose Tourje of ANEW Foundation for introducing our program to Stuart Hamilton and Goodman's Interior Structures of Albuquerque. ANEW works with corporate companies to steward their surplus office furniture and other items away from landfills and back into their communities by matching these items to local organizations. Shortly after an inquiry to Rose about needing furniture for our new staff, Stuart stopped by with electronic ruler in hand and assessed our needs. A few weeks later, his technical crew showed up to assemble and install the office suite. Three office chairs and a sit/stand desk later, we're all appreciative of Goodman's generosity! And our work goes on – just a bit more comfortably thanks to this community effort.

ANEW's tag line is "doing what's right with what's left." Rose and the foundation have been extremely supportive of Kitchen Angels over the years, securing our Board room table, the carpeting throughout our facility and now office furniture. ♥

CLIENT NOTE

"Thanks so very much to all of you for your help to me!! (And I know there are dozens and dozens of you!) The meals are such a treat, and of course, I don't know what I would have done without them, not being able to drive, or stand long enough to cook. The quality, the thoughtfulness, is just overwhelming! I'm going to need a few more meals before I'm up and about, so THANK YOU in advance for those!! And God bless all of you!" - Jere

Thank you Santa Fe, Event Sponsors & Participating Restaurants



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Unexpected Outcome

Our resale store, KITCHENALITY, is a remarkable source of income for our program. But there is an additional benefit to the community that many don't realize. Items that don't make it into the store are used to help set up kitchens for re-housed domestic abuse survivors, formerly homeless individuals, refugees, and folks re-establishing a home after a disastrous event. Our referrals come through Santa Fe Connect, a network of clinics, community organizations, and city and county programs that link people to services and resources in our community. Last year, we assisted 66 individuals from 15 agencies around Santa Fe. This is a terrific and unexpected outcome that we are pleased to offer our community. ♥



CLIENT NOTE

"You truly are heroes to this community. It's so nice to have something to look forward to everyday. And the food is delicious!" - Gerry

