



SPRING 2024



Hale & Farewell!

The close of 2023 brought with it the completion of terms for two long-term Board Members. After leading our Strategic Planning process for eight years, **Martha Gandert Romero** has stepped back from Board service. While she may be living in Boulder, Colorado, Martha has graciously offered to work with us when we renew our Strategic Plan in 2026. **Peter Lovato** resigned from the Board after six years of service when he received a fantastic job opportunity in California. We're immensely grateful for the contributions these two individuals made to Kitchen Angels and wish them continued success in current and future endeavors.

Although we lost two board members, we elected three new members to the Board at our annual meeting in January. **Amanda Godlove Erwin, Angelica Palladino** and **Wendy Smith** bring new vitality and experience to the group.

When asked about her interest in Kitchen Angels, Amanda responded, *"I believe in the cause. I find the fact that an organization can provide healthy and wholesome food to a population in need of assistance to be a very worthy cause. I have enjoyed working in the kitchen and delivering as well. I would like to help Kitchen Angels continue to be successful."*

Angelica comes to our Board from the hospitality industry. Her career has equipped her with the expertise and knowledge to elevate the level of our client service program. Angelica believes *"... in the importance of giving back to our communities and helping those who are less fortunate. In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to overlook the needs of others or become disconnected from the realities of poverty, hunger, and homelessness. By being part of Kitchen Angels, one can gain a deeper understanding of these issues and take tangible steps towards creating positive change."*


Wendy retired from teaching after 40 years and found us through her time volunteering at God's Love We Deliver in New York City. She bases her life's motto on Martin Luther King Jr's challenge, *"What are you doing for others?"* Wendy wants to educate the community about how vital it is to have an organization like Kitchen Angels. She adds, *"Such a miracle in a small city!"* 

photo: L-R Tony McCarty, Karen Wolfe-Mattison, Sarah Taylor, Peter Lovato, Linda Dressman, Kathy Segala, Liz Montoya, Maureen Vosburgh, Dwayne Trujillo and Martha Romero



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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 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.*

Two Million and Counting

Last year marked Kitchen Angels 31st year and with that milestone we achieved something else: **we prepared and delivered our two millionth meal.**

Over the course of more than three decades, we've helped nearly 8,500 individuals stay in the comfort and safety of their own homes, managing the challenges that come with chronic or terminal illness and mitigating the loneliness that frequently comes with the isolation these folks face. Our clients are people for whom there is no family or social support. More often than not, they have very little income and, without our services, would struggle to stay fed.

Food security is something that most of us take for granted. Even as the price of everything at the grocery store keeps rising, we can still afford to go shopping and not fear that we won't be able to pay for what we need or want. However, the number of people who can do that is shrinking. In 2022, the USDA reported that the number of households in the United States that were food secure (households that had access, at all times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all members) dropped to 115.8 million, down from 118.5 million in 2021. Nearly three million more households were uncertain of having (or were unable to acquire) enough food because they had insufficient money or other resources for food. In Santa Fe County, the rate of food insecurity last year was 10%. That means 15,420 people didn't know if they'd be able to feed themselves or their families. Things are even more difficult for people living with chronic disease. The USDA reports that chronic disease increases the likelihood of a person becoming food insecure by 18 percent.

That's why we exist. Through the efforts of staff, Board and volunteers, we've cooked, packaged and delivered meals to many of our community's most vulnerable, and frequently invisible, residents every weekday, all year long. 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.

In 2023, we prepared and delivered 145,619 meals to 464 clients. While the number of clients dropped a bit from the 518 we served in 2022, the number of meals delivered actually increased, by 1,591 deliveries. That tells us is that, while we may



Tony McCarty speaking at our 2M+ celebration

have served fewer clients last year than in 2022, those clients needed more services than clients did the previous year. This seems consistent with the USDA's assessment.

Although providing free, nutritious and freshly prepared meals to our homebound clients is the core of Kitchen Angels services, it's not all we do.

Many of our clients have pets and the companionship those pets provide is critical to clients' mental wellbeing.

Through **Pet Angels**, we provide free weekly dog and cat food for fifty-six clients. When funding permits, we also help defray some of the pet care costs clients may have difficulty managing

on their own. **Caring Callers** pairs volunteers with clients who have expressed interest in receiving regular check-in phone calls. While delivery volunteers frequently spend time chatting with clients, Caring Callers allows clients and volunteer callers to develop a deeper and often mutually supportive relationship. Not surprisingly, volunteers express as much enjoyment from these check-in phone calls as do our clients. And finally, **Encore Bites** provides a monthly delivery of healthy snack foods to supplement our regular meal deliveries.

The snacks are primarily shelf-stable items and can include such things as crackers, fruit packs, apple sauce, hummus, canned chicken or tuna, nuts, trail mix, sunflower seeds, dry milk, and peanut or other nut butters. We also send out fresh fruits and vegetables as they're available.

We've seen the cost for keeping our clients fed go up, especially since the pandemic. For example, in 2015, our average daily cost per client delivery was \$6.80. In 2023, it was \$10.00. Last year, the average annual cost per client was \$3,151. While this may seem like a lot, consider that the annual Medicaid cost for a nursing home bed in 2015 was \$74,825. In 2023, it was \$103,700. Nursing homes are where most of our clients would go were it not for Kitchen Angels. Consequently, in simple economic terms, for each client we keep out of a nursing home, the return-on-investment is 33:1. Put another way, for every one dollar we invest in feeding a homebound client, our program saves roughly \$33 in avoided nursing home costs. And since Medicaid is taxpayer funded and most of our clients live at or below the federal poverty level, the savings is to taxpayer dollars.

But the economic return isn't why Kitchen Angels volunteers, staff and Board members do what we do, although it's a handy way to explain to some of our funders why their support makes good economic sense. It's because no one in our community, regardless of their financial or health status, should go without proper nutrition. Each one of us deserves to be treated with dignity, kindness and compassion. Kitchen Angels was born out of challenging times and rising to every challenge is part of our DNA. Our volunteers know this; our staff knows this; our donors know this; and our clients count on this. 

2M
two million
&
counting

I just wanted to say thank you for the wonderful thanksgiving meal yesterday. It definitely was important because I can't get out and didn't have any friends or family to go to. The meal was a lifesaver. It was delicious and abundant. And I just wanted to show my appreciation. So anyway, thank you so much. You're very appreciated. ~ Garnett



Mary Ann Hart, Judy Costlow, Judith Gabriele & Ann Puterman

Kitchenality

Once again, the little store that could has proven its worth. At the close of business in 2023, our beloved resale shop realized 30% of the operating budget for Kitchen Angels meal programs. We've come a long way since **Jill Markstein** and **Sarah Taylor** first presented the idea at our annual meeting in 2015. As some of us remember, the first store opened in 2016 in a modest 468 square foot Board Room! Over the next eight years, the store grew in size and popularity to its current location at the south end of the Coll Green Angel Depot. But we're not limited

to that one location. Kitchenality sells unique items on eBay. Once at eBay, search **kitchenalitysf** and check out our offerings.

Our success is due to the more than 50 volunteers whose dedication keeps our store fresh! Last year they gave more than nine thousand hours receiving,

prepping, pricing, merchandising and staffing the showroom. And let's not forget our intrepid donors who provide the stock we sell. Thank you for continuing to bring your eclectic treasures in support of our meal program. We definitely could not function without your gifts.

Kitchenality is more than just a delightful place to shop. Through our relationship with 11 other social service non-profits across Santa Fe, including The Life Link, Adelante and Santa Fe County's Human Services Division, Kitchenality also helps families set up

their kitchens when transitioning from homelessness into housing. Last year, we provided cookware, dishes and other kitchen essentials to more than 80 families. So, even the donations that don't make it into the Kitchenality store can make a difference in someone's life.

We accept donations on the loading dock located directly behind the showroom. Just drive through the south gate, make an immediate right and park at the first dock you see. Ring the bell and one of our cheerful volunteers will accept your treasures and issue a receipt for tax purposes. We accept donations whenever the store is open for business - Monday through Saturday from 10 until 2 - and by appointment.

Please remember to nominate Kitchenality for Best Kitchen Store in this year's **Santa Fe Reporter Best of Santa Fe!** Last year your votes earned our store

second place! So, thanks all around to each of you who contributes to our success. Also, please follow us on Instagram and Facebook for announcements of special events **Michael Reper**, our Store Manager, has planned throughout the year. 📱



Trish Bellia found a treasure



Keith Andresen searching for treasure



Shoppers considering the merchandise

I feel like it's time to let it go. It has been absolutely great not having to worry or think about food and the food has been super good. I'm doing better, not as good or fast as I had hoped, but still progressing. I think today will be my last day for this wonderful service. I am so anxious to get back to cooking for people instead of reaping the benefits. Thanks so much. ~ Delores

Our Amazing Volunteers

It takes a lot of people to keep a program like Kitchen Angels running. Last year, it took 654 volunteers to prepare, package and deliver meals. By contrast, in 2019, we had 1,010 volunteers. As a result of the pandemic (because of volunteers who had to step back and public health mandates to decrease the number of people in the building), we dropped to 671 volunteers.

But what's particularly noteworthy about our volunteers is not just that they volunteer, it's **how much** they volunteer.

HERE ARE SOME NOTEWORTHY STATISTICS:

- **In 2019**, 1,010 volunteers donated 33,597 hours to prepare and deliver 135,935 meals
- **In 2020**, 671 volunteers donated 27,914 hours to prepare and deliver 146,259 meals
- **In 2021**, 504 volunteers donated 31,520 hours to prepare and deliver 136,228 meals
- **In 2022**, 570 volunteers donated 33,909 hours to prepare and deliver 144,028 meals
- **In 2023**, 654 volunteers donated 35,333 hours to prepare and deliver 145,619 meals.

During the height of the pandemic, each volunteer gave, on average, more than 62 hours to our program. Their commitment is what carried us through the worst of times and it's what keeps us strong today!

Once part of the Kitchen Angels family, volunteers stay an average of 4.7 years with our program. Our longest serving volunteer has been with the program for practically as long as we've been a program! Thank you, **Rob Higgins!** Your dedication is inspiring.

Whether you've been a volunteer for a day or thirty-two years, one thing is clear: Kitchen Angels thrives because of the many volunteers who give selflessly of their time and talents, each and every week of the year! 

Average number of volunteers per week to cook, pack bags, deliver & run Kitchenality: 287

We had a 24% increase in the number of new volunteers over the previous year: 262

Kitchen Angels has seen over 4,473 volunteers contribute their time since we opened our doors in 1992.

Since 1992 volunteers have dedicated a cumulative total of 2,491 years to our organization.

The average number of years our volunteers serve: 4.7

61% of our volunteers are long-term, working at Kitchen Angels between 1-32 years.

Judith Farmer & Patricia Henton portioning the entrees





Kitchen Angels has been transformative for me. It is the best thing that has happened for me in years. Truly. I cannot express my gratitude enough. Thank you from the bottom of my heart! I know the hours of work and love that go into this, and I'm sincerely appreciative. My life has seemed impossible at times over the past four years especially. I needed a lift, and Kitchen Angels has given me that lift. ~ Roger



A Work of Art



We are celebrating the completion of our loading dock mural by **Brandon Behning**, Art Director at Meow Wolf. Come join Kitchen Angels for a **Neighborhood Social** presented by **Siler Rufina District** on Tuesday, March 19, from 4:30 until 6:00 PM. Brandon will be onsite to speak about the mural and refreshments will be available.

Thank you, Brandon for a lively backdrop to our delivery process. We love the ethereal environment you created. Special thanks to **Francesca Searer**, Creative Producer, for steering us through the red tape and seeing the project through to completion. The mural was two years in the making. We are extremely grateful to **Meow Wolf** for sponsoring this project and their commitment to the Siler Rufina District.

If you can't make it to the event on the 19th, drive through anytime during business hours to see the new artwork from the comfort of your car! 🚗



The completed mural by Brandon Behning

Encore Bites

Happy first anniversary to **Encore Bites!** This program was developed following a client's comment on last year's Client Satisfaction Survey. "Thank you for the extra fruit last week. I loved it! I wish you could afford to do that more often!"

Client feedback is critical to our program. As a result of that comment, we made supplemental food a priority and now provide a monthly box of healthy treats along with our meal delivery. Included in the rotation is hummus with vegetable sticks, zucchini dip (from our Seasons of Santa Fe cookbook) and the wildly popular Peanut Butter and Tofu dip! We also send out rice cakes, almond butter, oat milk, carrot chips and fresh fruit, as well as protein bars and trail mix. This year we hope to expand the program to include more of our clients on modified diet tracks. Special thanks to **John Johnston** and **Ruth Vineyard** for the extra care you take preparing each bag for delivery. 



Elizabeth Sutton off for delivery




Ruth and John packing Encore Bites for distribution

Hungry For Art?

Join us on **Saturday, May 4th**, from 4:00 to 7:00 PM, for the opening reception of an exquisite and fun Artist Invitational and Sale. We'll be serving food and drinks and **The Bohemiacs** will be providing live music. The event, where creativity meets compassion, will be a unique art exhibition featuring stunning works inspired by **Flowers, Fruit & Vegetables**. And the best part is that all the beautiful pieces are being donated as a fundraiser for Kitchen Angels.

Many thanks to **Janet O'Neal** and **Daithi Kelley**

for curating this show and connecting artists to our community. Janet remarked, "Let's turn art into nourishment for both the soul and community." Thanks, too, to our neighbors at **Meow Wolf** for sponsoring this exhibition.

Admission is free and will be limited so RSVP starting **April 1st** by visiting kitchenangels.org. 



Painting by Daithi



Peach Lotus by Janet O'Neal



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KitchenAngelsSF



KITCHEN ANGELS
1222 Siler Road
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THURSDAY ■ 4. 18. 2024

Restaurants

Join us for our 25th annual **Angels Dine Out** benefit.

Enjoy a great meal with your friends and family.

The restaurant will donate 25% of your bill to Kitchen Angels.

Call early for reservations!

For details visit

kitchenangels.org

315 Restaurant & Wine Bar
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Jambo Café
Joe's Dining

Legal Tender *
Maria's NM Kitchen
Mariscos Costa Azul
Mille
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Palace Prime
Paloma
Paper Dosa
Pecos Trail Café
Piccolino
Plaza Café, Downtown
Plaza Café, Southside
Posa's Tamale Factory & Restaurant

The Ranch House
Rio Chama
Rustica
Santa Fe Bite
Second St. Brewery,
Rufina Tap Room
Sky Fire,
Bishops Lodge
Terra,
The Four Seasons
TerraCotta Wine Bistro
Tune Up Café

*Angels Dine Out at Legal Tender will be on Sunday, April 21.

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