The Community Kitchen Inc.

thecommunitykitchen.org

VOLUME 16, ISSUE 1 2025

Working Every Day to Build Food Security in the Monadnock Region

>>> FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Gratefully supported by Monadnock United Way

Summer has arrived, bringing renewal and abundance to our beautiful community. As we witness the flourishing of local gardens, farms, and orchards, I'm reminded of the incredible generosity that fuels our mission at The Community Kitchen.

As our partners work tirelessly to cultivate fresh produce, many are also participating in gleaning programs, ensuring that excess bounty is shared with those who need it most. This spirit of generosity and commitment to reducing food waste is a shining example of the values that make our community so special.

Our Mobile Pantry initiative is now underway, delivering much-needed resources directly to individuals and families in need across the region. This vital program would not be possible without your continued support and the dedicated efforts of our small but mighty staff, to whom I extend a warm welcome to our newest members.

At The Community Kitchen, we are proud of our collaborations with local pantries and agencies, working together to strengthen the safety net for our neighbors experiencing food insecurity. These partnerships are a testament to the power of unity in addressing the challenges faced by our community.

I would be remiss if I didn't take a moment to express our profound gratitude to the hundreds of volunteers who make our work possible. Your tireless dedication to serving others is the foundation of The Community Kitchen's success.

In this season of growth and abundance, let us remember the importance of sharing and caring for one another. Thank you for your continued support, and I wish you a joyful and bountiful season.

STAFF NEWS

>>> NEW STAFF

Samantha Belle, Purchasing & Logistics Manager

Samantha comes to us from the Monadnock Food Coop where she was the Produce Buyer for almost 7 years. She has forged business relationships and friendships with many farmers in the Monadnock Region. She is passionate about locally grown produce and supporting family farms. She is thrilled to be a part of The Community Kitchen Family.

Bri Plett, Pantry Operator

Born and raised in a suburb of Los Angeles, Brie has lived in Keene for almost two years. They volunteered at TCK for a year before being formally welcomed onto the TCK team. Brie has found their true life calling: making people happy through food, and is excited to continue spreading food and joy to the residents of their new home.

Dan Swanson, Volunteer & Guest Services Coordinator

Originally a volunteer himself, Dan's background is in service and advocating for others, specifically in the field of mental health. At The Community Kitchen, Dan organizes and schedules the various volunteer opportunities. He looks forward to cultivating a vibrant volunteer community while continuing the mission of addressing food insecurity.

Alicia Clinton, Communication and Development Assistant

Alicia's adventures at The Community Kitchen started as a volunteer. Soon after, she stepped into the role of Gleaning Coordinator, bringing in fresh produce from local farms. Now, in addition to gleaning, she is promoting the work of The Community Kitchen and learning a little more about the crucial role donors and volunteers play in keeping the doors open.

>>> STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

Kate Leversee, Director of Operations

Kate was awarded the 2025 Trendsetter Award by Keene Sentinel for her work in rolling out the mobile pantry to our rural communities.!

Barb Weisman, Executive Director

Barb recently participated in and completed the Leadership Monadnock program. The nine month series is an offering of The Greater Monadnock Collaborative and a great way to learn more about the Monadnock region.

THE COMMUNITY KITCHEN PROGRAMS

>>> 2025 MOBILE FOOD PANTRY

The Community Kitchen continues to pursue the goal of increasing food delivery to the rural areas of Gilsum, Fitzwilliam, Winchester, and Richmond. We are working to build each community's capacity to directly support their neighbors in need, while further developing and refining the program to support their efforts toward food sovereignty and sustainable food access. TCK is offering a full range of pantry items for kids and adults, locally grown and raised fresh food products, and continued administrative support coupled with more in-depth volunteer technical training.

The 2025 hybrid model combines staffed farmer's market-style events and food drops, supporting host communities in conducting the intake process and holding their own food distributions without TCK staff present.

April-May: Community Education & Reviewing Infrastructure Inventory

During the planning phase we reconfirmed with host communities that Mobile Pantry events were still wanted, needed, and could be supported. TCK revisited community cold storage capacity, and began outreach to area farmers to plan for season-long purchasing while host communities put out a call for volunteers.

June: Staffed Events

Each community had a "kick-off" event hosted by community stakeholders, Community Kitchen staff, and various social and human service providers in the area. Gilsum was up first on June 7th, the earliest start date so far, followed by Fitzwilliam on the 14th, Winchester on the 21st, and Richmond on the 28th.

July-October: Food Drops

Most Saturdays will see a food distribution held in one of the four towns in the Monadnock Region currently engaged with the Mobile Food Pantry. Most distributions are held at **1:00,** but please check before attending, whether you're a guest or a volunteer!

Locations

- Gilsum, Steam Academy
- Fitzwilliam, Fitzwilliam Inn
- Winchester, ELMM Center
- Richmond, Veteran's Hall

JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
Gilsum: July 5 Fitzwilliam: SKIP Winchester: July 19 Richmond: July 26	Gilsum: August 2 Fitzwilliam/Richmond: Aug 16th Winchester: August 23	Gilsum: September 6 Fitzwilliam: September 13 Winchester: September 20 Richmond: September 27	Fitzwilliam: October 18

>>> HOT MEALS

Our commitment extends beyond the menu; we foster a warm and caring environment that is free from discrimination, thanks to the dedicated efforts of our community volunteers. Come join us at the community table.

Hot meals are served 5 evenings a week
Monday - Friday, 5 PM-6:20 PM

>>> PANTRY PROGRAM

Take-home supplemental food boxes are available once a week on either day:

Wednesdays drive-thru 12:30pm-5:30pm
OR **Thursdays** walk-thru from 11:30am-4:00pm.
Verification of name and address is required.

We accept donations of food Monday - Friday 10:00 AM to 4 PM

EVENT UPDATES

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!

33RD ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

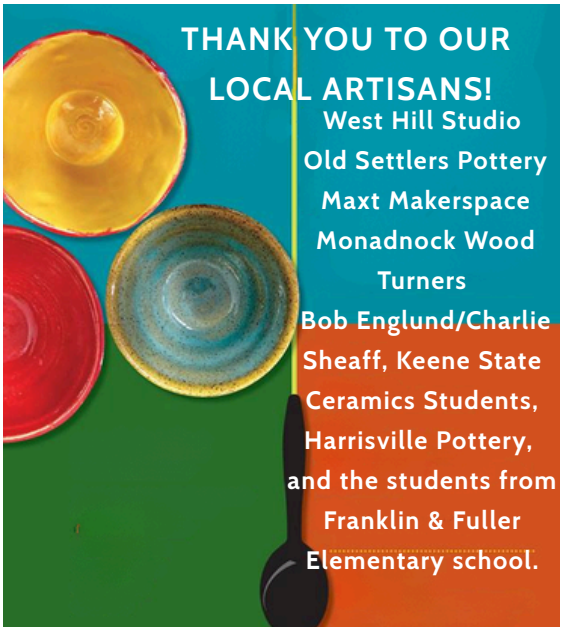
Imagine if you will, the scent of freshly cut grass and sunscreen, clear blue skies, and a sea of golfers eagerly awaiting a great day of golf. Such was the scene at the Keene Country Club on June 2, 2025, where everyone assembled before the start of the 33rd Fenton Family Golf Tournament to benefit The Community Kitchen. This is our largest fundraiser of the year and attracts new and returning players alike; each one there to support a great cause and enjoy a day of golf and camaraderie.

The weather could not have been better. Golfers enjoyed 18 holes of golf with the opportunity to win amazing prizes at holes along the green, to take part in raffles and a silent auction and enjoy a delicious dinner provided by the Country Club.

Thank you to all the golfers, sponsors, donors and volunteers for their time, support and tireless effort. Thank you to the Fenton Family and the Golf Committee; without their continued effort and generosity, we would not have successfully achieved an amazing 33rd year, which allows us to continue our mission to provide nutritious meals and groceries; to educate and empower our guests, community and partners; and to be a leading advocate to strengthen food security in the Monadnock Region.

We greatly appreciate everyone's support!

EMPTY BOWLS



Sometimes the best we can do is show up, and that's what we did on a very rainy day at Taste of Keene on June 7th. Our Empty Bowls Fundraiser displayed beautiful bowls, made and donated by local artists. In the neighboring tent, Chef Anthony and volunteers laid out trays of spring rolls, quinoa salad, and sesame peanut Asian noodles, while also pushing big puddles of water off the tent so it wouldn't collapse. Sometimes you have to find the humor! We hope you enjoyed some delicious food and returned home with a bowl, If you didn't get a chance to purchase one don't worry. There will be more another opportunity at the Harvest Dinner!

>>> UPCOMING EVENT: LOCAL HARVEST DINNER

Our Local Harvest Dinner will be held on October 4th. Seating is limited - early bird tickets can be secured using the QR code below. We hope to see you at this great event!

>>> VOLUNTEER NEWS

On July 1st The Community Kitchen officially transitioned to a new system, called Sustain. This system will be used for signing in when you arrive. Many of you are already familiar with it. There is also a mobile application called Causer that can be used on smart phones.

For anyone who has been in recently, you will see we have posted a link to both of these online applications at our sign in station! This is part of our goal in reducing the use of paper in our reporting procedures. We are very excited in the development of a system that will facilitate the process for organizations trying to schedule dinners. Volunteers will be able to track their hours via the new system too!

We appreciate you all working with us as we make this transition, and look forward to teaching you all about the new system. Please reach out with any questions you may have.

Our amazing volunteers help ensure that operations run smoothly year round.

>>> A SPECIAL RECIPE FROM CHEF ANTHONY

TCK LOBSTER CAKES

- 6 pounds lobster meat (minced)
- ½ pound assorted peppers (small dice)
- ½ white onion (small dice)
- 1 pound celery (small dice)
- 3 cups of breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 1 tablespoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon granulated garlic
- 8 eggs or egg substitute
- parsley and lemon for garnish

Directions

1. De-shell and mince lobster
2. Dice peppers, onion, and celery
3. Mix the eggs
4. Combine all ingredients in large bowl
5. Form 3-4 oz patties
6. Fry in vegetable or other cooking oil a few minutes on each side until browned.
7. Garnish with parsley and lemon slices

Yields about 15

>>> THE MORE YOU KNOW...

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits

- U.S. Census Bureau data from September 2024 shows 31% of adults and 39% of children in NH live in households that report insufficient food. There are many New Hampshire residents that are eligible for benefits who are not registered.
- More specifically, 40% of adults over 60 and 17,000 children are not receiving food assistance that they are eligible to receive.

Common Thoughts and Misconceptions that Keep People from Signing Up for Benefits

Belief	Fact
I make too much money to qualify	Program eligibility is based on income AND expenses, with deductions given for childcare, rent/mortgage, medical expenses, and utilities.
I don't have children	44% of paricipants don't have children
I don't want to take benefits from a needier family	Anyone and everyone who qualifies will receive SNAP benefits.
I don't want to be seen using Food stamps	The Food Stamp program uses an electronic benefits card that functions like a debit card. Only you and the cashier will know.
It's not worth the effort to sign up since I'll only get a small amount	In NH, the average benefit is $230 per household. Nationally, the average food stamp household received $260 per month. If you don't spend your money, it rolls over to the next month.
I'm homeless	Even if you don't have a phone or address you can receive snap benefits.
SNAP is a drain on taxpayers	Every $1 in Snap benefits generates $1.73 in economic activity. Snap helps low income people buy groceries freeing up income for medical expenses, clothing, home repair and childcare. That benefits local businesses and their employees which boosts the economy as a whole.
**Food & Gardens for a Resilient Monadnock*	

The Community Kitchen Inc.
37 Mechanic Street
PO Box 1315
Keene, Nh 03431

CHANGE SERVICE REQUEST

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
KEENE, NH
PERMIT NO. 17

LOCAL HUNGER. LOCAL NEED. LOCAL SUPPORT.

Dedicated to serving families and individuals for over 40 years.