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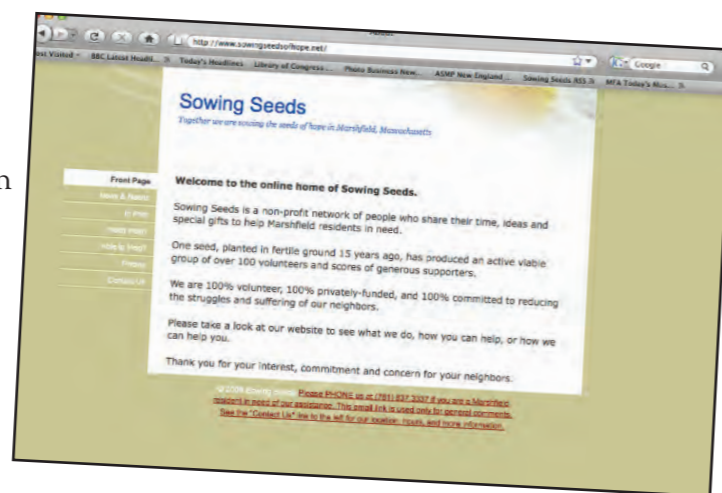
With our new website, Sowing Seeds news and information are as close as your computer. For the most current:

- Needs at the Clothing Bank
- Volunteer opportunities
- Photos
- Newsletter and flyers
- Information about how to get help

Log on to:

[www.sowingseedsofhope.net](http://www.sowingseedsofhope.net)

*When you are finished reading our newsletter, please pass it on to a friend.*



# SOWING SEEDS

WINTER 2008

VOLUME 4, NO. 2

*of Hope*

*From the Directors*

**VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT**

**A treasure to those who need our help**

## CONTINUING TO MEET NEEDS

In the past, our newsletters have highlighted our volunteers' work, our community's generosity, and the gratitude of the recipients of our services. When we decided that this issue would focus on the needs in our community, it was clear that there are many types of need that Sowing Seeds addresses.

Surely we try to meet our neighbors' most basic needs. We assist in clothing people, finding stable housing and providing essential transportation. Working with other area resources, we attend to the needs for food, electricity and heat. We also help to satisfy social needs for guidance, compassionate listening, friendship and trust.

In fulfilling those needs, we carry out a ministry that continues to perpetuate itself. In the film *Pay it Forward*, Trevor, a 7th grader, is given an assignment to "think of an idea to change our world – and put it into action!" As the story unfolds, we learn that the simplest idea may be the most effective.

Trevor's idea is to help three people, who in turn will each help three other people. No one is to "pay back" a favor, but rather "pay it forward" to help others. It's a pyramid scheme at its best.

So it is with Sowing Seeds. We began with the simple idea that we could help our neighbors more effectively if we all worked together. Reflecting on our 15 years of service, we see that we have made a difference, helping thousands of Marshfield residents. As with *Pay it Forward*, we've seen those we've helped succeed and, in turn, help others. We've also seen that people not only have basic needs to be met but also have a vital need to help one another.

The current economic climate has our phone ringing like never before. As difficult as these days may be, we remain committed to helping our neighbors in need. If you need some guidance, please let us know. If you want to give us a hand, our need has never been greater.

Thank you for taking an interest in our work, and thank you for your good deeds, which have helped to build a better world and a better Marshfield.

— Connie Drapeau Kennedy

With 34 years' experience working in a small business with her husband David, Julie Desmond has used her skills and knowledge to carry out her duties as Sowing Seeds treasurer for more than ten years. Reporting to the Board of Directors, she tracks the donations and expenses that support our Marshfield neighbors in need. Julie also serves on the Intake team that visits families to assess their needs, bringing a true sense of understanding and compassion to those who need our help.

### **Where does Sowing Seeds get its funding?**

Sowing Seeds has been blessed over the years by many generous people and organizations who have responded to God's call to share their treasures with others. We are an all-volunteer organization. Sowing Seeds does not actively fund-raise. That means most of the services we provide—assistance with clothing, transportation, budgeting, home repairs, and legal advocacy, to name a few—are offered by people willing to give their time, talent, and resources without cost. These services, at the heart of our organization, are priceless.

Fifteen years ago when Sowing Seeds began, the Board members would chip in coins to pay for postage. Over the years our support has come increasingly from contributions and fund-raising by individuals and groups who believe in our grassroots ministry of helping our Marshfield neighbors in need.

### **What types of contributions do people make?**

Our support comes from recurring as well as one-time donations: a payroll deduction by United Way earmarked for Sowing Seeds, a donation by check, contributions when a bereaved family designates Sowing Seeds as the recipient for memorial donations, and the Good Friday collection from the Marshfield Clergy Association. Also, community and church groups collect items like school supplies or mittens and gloves, and local businesses contribute surplus goods.

Over the years, community organizations have sponsored fashion shows, yard sales, drama productions, and one-time events, donating the proceeds to Sowing Seeds.

### **How are donations used?**

We maintain our Clothing Bank year-round in the former First Baptist Church building on Plain Street. Once our expenses for heat, electricity, telephone, and insurance are met, everything we receive in contributions is used to help our neighbors in need. We purchase gift cards to meet the specific needs of our Clothing Bank clients—a hard-to-fit size, sneakers, underwear, or diapers, for instance—or gas or food cards. In cases where the need is crucial, after careful assessment during a home visit, we might assist a struggling family with a bill payment, writing the check directly to the company providing the service. At the end of each year, we find that our contributions have equaled our requests for assistance.

### **How do you decide who gets help?**

When Sowing Seeds receives a call for help, an Intake team makes a home visit. We assess the validity of the need, and then we help the family brainstorm solutions, making sure that all available resources are being used. The Intake Committee, which reports to the Board of Directors, meets each month to review cases, prioritize needs, and share resource information that can bring stability to individuals and families.

### **Are donations tax-deductible?**

Yes. Sowing Seeds is a registered public charity and a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, so qualified donations are tax-deductible. Especially this time of year, when charitable giving is at its height, we sincerely hope that people remember the families, elders, and disabled that Sowing Seeds helps year-round right here in Marshfield.



*Sowing Seeds treasurer  
Julie Desmond*

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# Seeing the Need...

## On the Home Front

There is no escaping the news: Our country is facing a housing crisis. What we hear less about is the crisis in our own Marshfield community. It is not uncommon these days for a family to find themselves behind on their mortgage payments and unable to catch up, losing their home to foreclosure when they owe more to the bank than their house is worth. For families forced to move, the challenge is to come up with the first and last month's rent for an apartment—easily \$2,400 - \$3,600—and then pay a market rate of \$1,200 - \$1,800 per month. This surely limits a family's ability to meet daily expenses or to save money to own a home again someday.

How does a family fall behind? Any number of factors may be at work: A wage-earner becomes ill or is laid off from a job, a mortgage payment with an adjustable rate suddenly rises, medical expenses mount up, heating costs escalate, or factors act in combination. Working families and those on fixed incomes are blind-sided by an unforeseen event, or they simply cannot keep up with rising costs.

When a struggling family calls Sowing Seeds, we pull together every resource to help. After an Intake team assesses the need, we may refer the family to local agencies for housing and fuel assistance, or our volunteers might support them with legal advocacy, financial and career counseling, and spiritual encouragement. Knowing that others care can be a ray of hope to families facing the darkness of the housing crisis.

— Mary Price

### DRESSED WITH CARE

A German proverb declares, "Charity sees the need, not the cause." At the Sowing Seeds Clothing Bank, we continually see the need in Marshfield, and we are privileged to fill that need, thanks to a caring community.

We are fortunate that residents in Marshfield and the surrounding towns are generous with their contributions, because these are critical to the Clothing Bank's success. Every Thursday and Saturday morning, donations come in—coats, hats, gloves, school supplies, blankets (never enough of them), detergent, and in-season clothing of all sizes. Our nearly fifty volunteers work in shifts to sort the clothing and display it in an attractive setting.

On average, each week, forty Marshfield families in need come to the Clothing Bank to look through our racks. While we usually fill their needs, we are delighted when we fill their wants as well. Occasionally, we improvise; if we have a request for a hard-to-fit size, or diapers,

Clothing Bank volunteers Kim Kulp, Karen Dronzek, and Kathy Sheehan display some of the items needed most during the winter months.



or new socks and underwear, we might be able to offer a gift certificate from a neighborhood store like Payless Shoe, Wal-Mart, Marshall's, or Stop and Shop—all from contributions made by our generous donors.

The Clothing Bank volunteers feel especially blessed because we personally receive the heartfelt thanks and hugs from the families whose needs we fill. Our lives these days are harried, hurried, and stressful, yet the service we provide renews and refreshes both our clients and our volunteers. Filling needs is a blessing we can share.

— Kim Kulp

### WHO WE ARE

Sowing Seeds is a nonprofit network of people who share their time, ideas and special gifts to help Marshfield residents in need. One seed, planted in fertile ground over 15 years ago, has produced an active, viable group of over 100 volunteers and scores of generous supporters.

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Mary Doolan, *President*
- William Last, *Vice President*
- Julia Desmond, *Treasurer*
- Mary Price, *Clerk*
- Kim Kulp, *Clothing Bank Director*
- Jacqueline Egan, *Secretary*
- Connie Drapeau Kennedy, *Publicity*
- Karen Dunderdale, *Volunteer Management*

- Virginia Gill, *Representative, North Community Church*
- Thomas Kramer, *Representative, Marshfield Methodist Church*
- Donna Adams, *Representative, Trinity Episcopal Church*
- Bitsy Bullock, *Representative, Our Lady of the Assumption Church*
- Lorraine Sproul, *Representative, First Congregational Church*

#### NEWSLETTER

- Karen Dunderdale, *Editor*
- Connie Drapeau Kennedy, *Photographer*
- Marianne Bakula, *Designer*

#### CLOTHING BANK

Located at 974 Plain Street, in the white church on the corner of Route 139 and School Street, Marshfield

Open for donations or needs  
Thursday: 10 AM - 12 Noon  
Saturday: 10 AM - 12 Noon

SOWING SEEDS, P.O. Box 1001,  
Marshfield, MA 02050  
781-837-3337 or 781-83-SEEDS  
www.sowingseedsofhope.net

Thank you to our newsletter sponsors  
Bitsy and Tom Bullock

## Driven to Serve

From Brockton to Boston, Pembroke to Plymouth and all of the towns in between on the South Shore, Sowing Seeds provides a busy and important transportation service for over 300 Marshfield residents each year. We drive to medical appointments both local and in Boston, to grocery stores and the food bank, and to therapy sessions, wherever they may be. With clients ranging from seniors to young people, from married couples to single parents, we are a lifeline for people who have no other means to get where they need to go.

Our thirty drivers are all volunteers who simply want to make a difference in someone's life. Emotionally and spiritually, the experience is a rewarding one, and many friendships have formed as drivers and riders travel together to appointments. We ask only that those who call the Sowing Seeds line for a ride provide us with 72-hours' notice and limit requests to three per month.

How can you help? We always need drivers. You can specify what days of the week you are available and where you would be comfortable driving. Gas cards are also welcome—for families in need or for drivers who may be making frequent long trips. Finally, because many of our clients have drivers' licenses but not the means to purchase a car, donations of vehicles in good working condition are enormously appreciated. If you are able to help in any way, please give Sowing Seeds a call at (781) 837-3337.

## ...Filling the Need



Ray Joyal is one of three volunteers, with Clare Sheehan and Carol Whippen, who coordinate rides for those in need.

— Ray Joyal

### WHY I CONTRIBUTE TO SOWING SEEDS

A few months after the founding of Sowing Seeds, I spoke to Mary Doolan. "Truly the hand of God is here." The seed had been sown and how many have benefited from its fruition. So many lives have been changed, but most importantly we have been changed.

In the gospel of Matthew we find one of the few passages in which we ask a question of Jesus, "Lord when did we see you?" The answer to this will determine our eternal destiny. Sowing Seeds is the very personification of this dialogue. "Lord when did we see you hungry, thirsty, naked, homeless?"

Sowing Seeds has a dynamic ecumenical dimension. Since the Second Vatican Council, theologians have introduced plans and proposals to achieve Christian Unity. "The Unity we seek" was the watchword of the day until a dose of humility made us say that our goal is "the Unity Christ seeks." Sowing Seeds reminds the people of Marshfield that the question, "Lord when did we see you?" continues to be asked, and together we seek to provide a response.

— Rev. Frank Regan

## I'D LIKE TO HELP SOWING SEEDS!

Want to make a difference in someone's life? Please tell us how you'd like to help.

- Transportation, driving locally or to Boston
- Clothing Bank, on Thursday or Saturday morning
- Home maintenance
- Fundraising
- Counseling, family, financial, career, or individual
- Other (please tell us what!)
- Donation (your tax-deductible check can be made payable to Sowing Seeds)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to Sowing Seeds, PO Box 1001, Marshfield, MA 02050. Or, give us a call at 781-83-SEEDS.

## Thank You, Thank You, Sowing Seeds

Love and peace and thanks for keeping us all warm, cozy, and dressed with dignity!

Thank you for the gift cards. They are going to help out a lot. I'm almost out of diapers and I have no money. I'm trying to save, but right now, it's too much for me. I am so grateful to Sowing Seeds for all your help.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for caring for me and working so hard to get me to work. I thank my drivers and all behind the scenes who work so hard with phone calls each week.

You are giving so much to those who have so little in Marshfield.

