



Beth-El Center News Summer 2016

A Mother and her Son Learn to Live Independently



has laid out the goals she intends to achieve while at Beth-El. In addition to finding housing and stable child care, she opened a bank account and is learning how to budget and save money for the long term. Elisandra is working diligently to get on her feet and is now employed full time on a production line at a local manufacturing company.

"With the obstacles that Elisandra has faced as a young, single mother with very little family support, she has shown strength, courage and a determination to succeed," says Craig. "She is a great mom and she and Felix have been a pleasure to have here at the Beth-El Center." Elisandra receives assistance from programs offered by the Beth-El Center including the bi-weekly GROW!

Truck. In addition to participating in educational classes, Elisandra and her son are provided with fresh, nutritional food. The GROW! Truck, a partnership with the Connecticut Food Bank, is a customized, refrigerated vehicle with shelves loaded with items such as fruits vegetables, fish, meat and shelf-stable foods. Families enrolled in the program attend a nutrition or financial education workshop before boarding the truck to "shop" for food. With the Grow! Truck Elisandra is able to reduce her food bill each month, enabling her to save money and take care of other financial responsibilities.

According to Elisandra, "I appreciate all of the help that I have received from Beth-El. It has been a good experience for me and my son."

Programs and resources offered at the Beth-El Center can provide much needed educational, financial and nutritional benefits to residents like Elisandra. A 21 year old single mother of a toddler, Elisandra is eager to learn how to live independently. With few examples in her life to follow and learn from, she's using the resources at the Beth-El Center to help her pave the way to a stable life.

Elisandra and her 18-month old son Felix arrived at the Beth-El Center in June of 2016. She became homeless in November 2015 after being evicted from her apartment. When Elisandra arrived at the Beth-El Center, she had very little emotional or financial support from her family and was not attached to any community services.

With the assistance of her case manager, Craig Wainwright, Elisandra

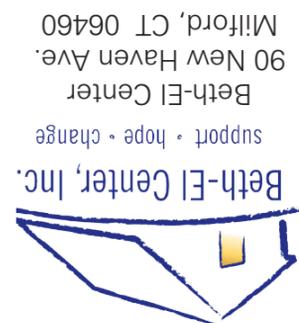
A Note from Toni Dolan, Executive Director

As summer comes to an end, those of us at the Beth-El Center are grateful for the community's care and generosity that we continue to experience.

Summer has brought us many wonderful things: The fresh faces of our student volunteers, the harvest of fruits and vegetables provided by many local gardeners, and the much needed donations from the community that help us during the summer months.

In the pages ahead, you'll get the details on all the good things that are happening here, from the efforts of our generous volunteers to successful outcomes for our clients.

Thanks for helping us pursue our mission to prevent and end homelessness and to provide a better future for the vulnerable in our community.



Thanks to our Board of Directors

The Beth-El Center appreciates the time and skills that each of our Board members contributes to help us achieve our mission.

- Ed Davies, President**
- Susan Lapine, Vice President**
- Max S. Case, Secretary**
- Suzanne Lyngaas, Treasurer**

- Dennis Brown, Marilyn Cormack,
- Richard Goulart, Matt S. Kelly,
- Shaileen Landsberg, Louis Massari,
- Elizabeth Nunes, Monique Osborn,
- Dr. Alex Quintner, Eileen Schuman,
- Jim Winkel, Esq.

September: Hunger Action Month 1 in 6 Americans struggle with hunger

Here's how you can help:
**Volunteer, Donate & Spread
the word about hunger**



**Help the Beth-El Center
Soup Kitchen**

**This month, we are looking
for the items listed at right**

- **Cooking oils**
(olive, canola, etc.)
- **Paper towels**
- **Industrial garbage bags**
- **Napkins**
- **Bottled water**
- **Salad dressings**
- **Canned tomatoes**
- **Tomato paste**
- **Seasonings:**
(garlic powder, parsley, salt, pepper)

Quilter Donates to Beth-El

Children and families who reside at the Beth-El Center are warm and cozy at night thanks to Milford resident, Flo Bennett. Flo, age 77, has been making and donating quilts to the Center for over four years. From crib quilts and children's bed quilts to fabric pillow cases, Flo has generously given her handmade creations to offer comfort to our residents.

In addition to crib and bed quilts, Flo makes stroller quilts and quilted books for children. She's donated approximately twenty unique handmade items to the Center every year. One year Flo made a stroller quilt for each resident family's holiday basket.

"When one of Flo's handmade quilts is offered to welcome a new family to Beth-El, it means a lot to them," says Jennifer Paradis, Director of Programs and Facilities at Beth-El Center.

It's symbolic of the care that the Milford community shows and these beautiful homemade items really offer the feel of "home" to each new family."

Flo has been quilting for over 13 years. She picked up the hobby by attending a quilting class at a quilt shop in North Haven. She started making quilts for herself and her family but soon she had so many, she began donating them. "I like to use flannel fabric with girl or boy themes and colors," says Bennett. "I recently made a Frozen-themed quilt and have done football and other sports themes too."

While arthritis is now preventing Flo from making larger bed quilts, she's determined to continue making the smaller quilts and pillow cases. Beth-El Center and its residents are grateful for all that Flo's caring hands have created.



DONATE

YOUR DONATIONS HELP US MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Your donation to the Beth-El Center supports our mission to alleviate homelessness and hunger in the Milford area through shelter, support services, advocacy and community education in partnership with the faith-based community and private and public organizations.

Make your donation online at <http://www.bethelmilford.org> or send a check using the enclosed envelope. Thank you for your interest and support.

Tynné Catapano IN MEMORIAM

Tynné Catapano, Beth-El Center Board member, passed away on July 20, 2016 after a courageous 15-month battle with cancer.

A lifelong Milford resident, Tynné was the owner of Wild Expressions Floral Designs of Milford for over 25 years. During that time, she was most passionate about creating expressive floral designs for brides. She was the founder of the CT Wedding Guild, a network of wedding venue professionals.

Tynné served on Beth-El's Board of Directors and assisted with the Spring Gala annual fundraiser. Her creativity and commitment to Beth-El was appreciated and will be greatly missed.



Shaileen Landsberg and the Fifth Sunday Brunch Bunch

Run or Walk for the Homeless

The 5th Annual Milford Trick or Trot 5K Run/Walk to benefit the Beth-El Center will take place on Saturday, October 29, 2016. Sign in begins at 7:30 am and the race starts at 9:00 am from Lisman's Landing in Downtown Milford. Breakfast is provided as well as entertainment by The Elwoods. Please bring a canned food donation for Beth-El's soup kitchen. Minimum registration donation is \$25.00 per person in advance/\$30 same day.

Go to www.bethelmilford.org for details.

Thanks to our event sponsors Harlow, Adams, and Friedman, P.C. and Sikorsky Credit Union.

St. Gabriel's Annual 'Sleep Out' Raises Funds for Beth-El

St. Gabriel's 7th grade students recently presented Toni Dolan with money from their annual 'Sleep Out for the Homeless' fundraiser. To understand what homeless people face, the students spent a night sleeping outside in boxes and went without food or electronics. They raised \$1350 in sponsorships for Beth-El Center and, more importantly, raised awareness of the plight of the homeless in the Milford area.

"This was an especially poignant day for me to accept this donation from the last class of 7th grade students at St. Gabriel's School", said Toni Dolan, Executive Director. "This has been a long-standing tradition started by Marilyn Mintell in memory of her brother and it's sad to see this tradition come to an end."



Family Volunteering at Beth-El's Soup Kitchen

For Shaileen Landsberg, volunteering has turned into a family affair. Shaileen and members of her immediate and extended family volunteer at the Beth-El Center Soup Kitchen whenever there's a fifth Sunday in a month (there are four months in 2016 with five Sundays).

This tradition started about three years ago by Shaileen's late husband Larry Landsberg. Larry, a former Beth-El Board member and local chef realized that when there was a fifth Sunday in a month, there was no food service at the Soup Kitchen. Larry began serving meals on every fifth Sunday and since his passing in 2014, Shaileen and her family have continued this tradition to carry on his legacy.

The Fifth Sunday Brunch Bunch, as they call themselves, is made up of Shaileen, her mom, dad, sister, son and daughter-in-law plus aunts, uncles, nephews and various friends. The group provides the only brunch meal that's served at Beth-El Center's soup kitchen.

According to Shaileen, "My favorite part about doing this is interacting with the guests and knowing they're getting a hearty meal."

The Fifth Sunday Brunch Bunch has become a well-oiled machine with everyone taking on their self-assigned tasks to prepare, cook and serve brunch. Weeks leading up to the brunch, the group comes up with a menu and then Shaileen shops at Costco with a family member. Shaileen is the chief cook using the skills her late husband taught her to plan meals for larger crowds.

"This has strengthened our bond as a family," says Shaileen. "Instead of gathering for a holiday or family event, when we're volunteering we're focusing outward and it's made us more cohesive as a family."