

# NEWS

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# FOOD & HOSPITALITY

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## OUR MISSION

The mission of The Open Door is to alleviate the impact of hunger in our community. We use practical strategies to connect people to good food, to advocate on behalf of those in need, and to engage others in the work of building food security.

## WHAT WE DO

Food Pantry  
Community Meals  
Summer Lunch  
Mobile Market  
Senior Market  
Holiday Baskets  
SNAP Application Assistance  
Nutrition Education and Outreach  
Second Glance Thrift Store & Furniture Annex  
Job Training  
Advocacy  
Community Service

## Prescription Food Bag Program

If you enter the emergency room at Addison Gilbert and Beverly hospitals, along with asking about your medical history, medications and allergies, you will now be asked whether you or any member of your family has skipped a meal recently because there was not enough food to eat.

The Open Door and Beverly Bootstraps teamed up with Northeast Health System this fall to launch a Prescription Food Bag program for the North Shore. Along with reading vital signs such as temperature, pulse, blood pressure and medical history, patients are now assessed for being at-risk for hunger or food insecurity.

The new program incorporates the USDA food security assessment question during standard emergency room screenings. Before leaving the hospital, those patients who have been identified as “food insecure” are given a nutrition-specific bag of food, supplied by the food pantry serving their area and a “prescription” with details of how to access programs at The Open Door or Beverly Bootstraps.

Designed to meet a vital community need, the physician-approved Prescription Food Bag program targets low-income patients who are already undergoing a health crisis and reaches out to those who may not traditionally seek help from a food pantry.

“Food insecurity is a growing public health issue,” said Julie LaFontaine, executive director of The Open Door. “The Prescription Food Bag program puts another system in place to make sure people do not fall through the cracks.”

Studies show that poor nutrition can lead to many chronic health issues including obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. The Prescription Food Bag program helps identify and treat people experiencing food-insecurity at the source of their medical care — hospitals.

“Hunger is and has been associated with chronic disease and increased medical treatment,” says Gerald MacKillop, Jr., the community relations manager at Addison Gilbert Hospital, Northeast Health System. “As a community hospital, we are committed to addressing food insecurity with our partners.”

The Prescription Food Bag program, now finishing a pilot phase and evaluation, will operate as part of The Open Door’s Good Food Project which provides a variety of healthy foods to vulnerable populations who can better manage their health conditions with good nutrition. Funding for 2011 Good Food Project has been provided in part by New England Biolabs.



[facebook.com/TheOpenDoorMA](http://facebook.com/TheOpenDoorMA)

## SHOP LIKE A COUPON KING

Dear Friends,

“There is just too much month left at the end of the money,” he said. The man waiting in line at the food pantry looked apologetic even as his simple statement captured the truth of what brings people to the The Open Door.



Sometimes there is just not enough money remaining to buy food after the rent is paid, the heat bill is covered, and the medication is purchased.

Have you or anyone in your household ever gone without a meal because there wasn't enough food to eat? If you can answer “yes,” then you know what it is like to have an invisible question mark hanging in your cupboard or waiting just inside your refrigerator.

The programs of The Open Door help people answer the question of whether there will be enough food to eat. At the pantry people can get canned food, fresh vegetables, milk, eggs, meat and cheese. At our nightly Community Meals people are nourished by both the food and the companionship they find around the tables in our dining room. Summer Lunches reach children during the months they are not in school. The neighborhood and school-based Mobile Market provides fresh food to people right where they live or learn. Holiday Meal Baskets bring families the strength of tradition and the security of home.

Take a minute to think about your food memories from growing up. Did you eat at the table? Who did the cooking in your house? Was your favorite meal at home? Or was it Sunday dinner at Nana's house? What did the plates look like? Did you always have enough to eat?

Food memories are powerful. Good, bad, and everything in between, the lessons we learn around the dinner table stay with us throughout our lives. The food provided through The Open Door helps form food memories for people in our community all year round.

As we enter into the spirit of holiday joy and giving, will you please help The Open Door carry out its basic mission of connecting people to good food? Your financial contribution does make a difference for people who simply have “too much month left at the end of the money.”

Sincerely,



Julie LaFontaine, Executive Director

He can go shopping at the grocery store and bring home 3 boxes of cereal, 2 large boxes of Quaker Oats, 12 cans of Campbell's soup and 2 packages of English muffins for just \$5.95. He shops like a pro and delivers the bounty to the Food Pantry every Thursday.

His friends and family call him the “Can Man” or the “Coupon King” but for Roger Corbin the labels honor his commitment to helping others, a value he carries out in memory of his father.

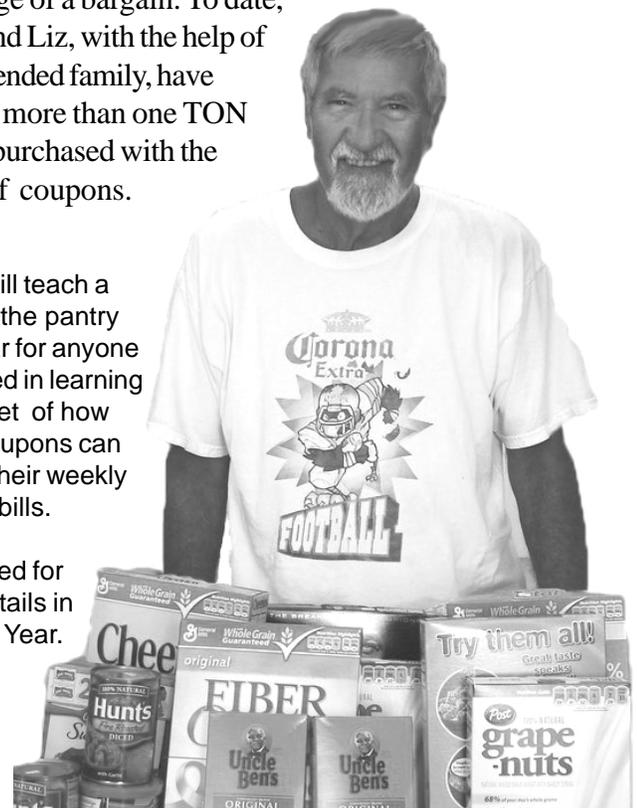
Roger's father, who lived through the Great Depression, taught his family to share what they had with someone who might need a helping hand. It was not unusual growing up, Roger said, to have strangers at the family dinner table.

When Roger retired from his career as a civil engineer, he knew he wanted to do more to help his community. For years, Roger would take a daily walk and stuff his oversized pockets with the cans he found along the way. He donated the redemption proceeds to local charities. But the “Can Man” soon turned into the “Coupon King” when he realized how much food he could buy with so little money using the magic of coupons.

For Roger couponing has become a family affair. His wife, Liz Serpa, has joined the cause enlisting friends and family from across the country to donate coupons. His daughter has purchased him a special coupon caddy to keep his treasure trove of manufacturer's coupons organized and ready to take advantage of a bargain. To date, Roger and Liz, with the help of their extended family, have donated more than one TON of food purchased with the power of coupons.

Roger will teach a class at the pantry next year for anyone interested in learning the secret of how using coupons can reduce their weekly grocery bills.

Stay tuned for more details in the New Year.



## A Tale of Two Volunteers

In 2004, The Open Door established the Helen Muise Community Service Award in memory of long-time volunteer, Helen Muise. This annual award recognizes an individual or individuals who have contributed more than 40 volunteer hours in the past 12 months and who exemplify the spirit of community service so dearly loved and appreciated in Helen Muise.

This year's award is shared by Millie Sanborn and Suzette Lomba who together bring almost 30 years of volunteer service to The Open Door.

Millie Sanborn was born and raised with her eight siblings on The Boulevard and has lived her entire life in Gloucester, volunteering at The Open Door for the better part of the past 23 years.



"If I see a need, I don't even think about it — I just do it," said Millie, who has volunteered in every program that The Open Door offers from stocking shelves in the Food Pantry, to dusting and sorting at Second Glance, to packing produce during the Emerson Market.

Millie, who hates drawing attention to herself, says "volunteering has enriched my life so much —and I'm still at it!"

Suzette Lomba moved to Gloucester in 2005 from New Bedford with her son. She found herself needing to use pantry services at The Open Door during that difficult transition period.

Suzette said she will never forget how welcome she felt when she found herself at The Open Door in need of help when she first moved here five years ago. She proudly recounts how thanks to those bags of groceries she can "do anything with a box of macaroni and cheese and a can of tuna fish."

"If someone helps you, you try to give back. Do what you can." This family mantra, instilled in her at an early age by her mother and father, encouraged her to volunteer at The Open Door's Mobile Market in 2005 when it opened in her community, Riverdale Park.

Every Saturday under the Mobile Market tents, you can find Suzette helping set up baskets of fresh potatoes, carrots and onions, or helping to cook up a warm batch of eggs for breakfast at the Riverdale Park Community Center. All are available for free to Mobile Market clients along with a smile, or warm exchange.

Although both Suzette and Millie are quick to deflect any praise, they have both rightly earned the Helen Muise Community Service Award. The Open Door salutes their hard work to help alleviate the impact of hunger in our community. If you would like to learn more about how to volunteer at The Open Door, please visit our web site at [www.foodpantry.org](http://www.foodpantry.org).



Photos by Cape Ann Beacon

# THANKSGIVING



Congressman John Tierney (left) and Stan Snavelly (right) bag turkeys for distribution. With the help of the Cape Ann community The Open Door provided 706 Thanksgiving Baskets this year.

# CELEBRATION



When Grace Boucher turned seven last month, she asked her friends to donate canned goods for The Open Door Food Pantry instead of bringing her presents. Grace is pictured here with some of the items at the Gloucester Crossing Market Basket where she dropped off her collection to be counted with the 5,123 pounds collected at the Thanksgiving Food Drive that day.

