



THE CUPBOARD

THE WILLISTON COMMUNITY FOOD SHELF NEWSLETTER

November, 2024

Established in 2008

Mission Statement: Our mission is to provide high-quality food to those in need in our community, and to help connect our clients, and their families, with essential support services. We are the primary Food Shelf for Williston, St. George, and Richmond, and we provide Emergency Bags for others in need.

We are a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization with NO Guaranteed Source of Funding.

Website: www.willistonfoodshelf.com

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1605, Williston, VT 05495

Physical Address: 400 Cornerstone Drive, Suite 130, Williston, VT 05495

Telephone: 802-578-0586

Hours of Operation:

Tuesday:

5:00-6:30 pm

Thursday:

9:00-11:00 am

Saturday:

9:00-11:00 am

WCFS Board of Directors

Ginger Morton, President
Cindy Marcotte, V.P./Treasurer
Ilene Snow, Asst. Treasurer
Betsy Johnson, Secretary
Jennifer Selwah
Larry Pillsbury
Elise Polli

Sally Metro,
Operations Manager

Annual Turkey Day

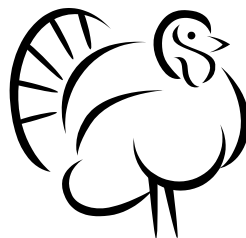
Saturday, November 23, 2024 8:00-11:00 am

The Food Shelf tries to collect at least 150 turkeys, and all of the "Fixins", on the Saturday before Thanksgiving each year to assure that our clients have what they need for a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner. Our team of volunteers will meet your vehicle as you drive-up, and collect your turkey and fixins. Clients will also be arriving to pick-up their groceries.

If you prefer, you may either drop off or mail-in gift cards for us to give out to clients. \$15.00 cards will usually allow a client to purchase a turkey. Gift cards can be mailed to WCFS, P.O. Box 1605, Williston, VT 05495.

If you cannot come on November 23, we are able to accept turkeys or groceries during any of our weekly shifts.

A heartfelt thank you to all of you who are willing to help support the WCFS mission with either food or gift card donations. This can be an especially taxing time of year when kids are home from school, family may be visiting, and the food budget is being stretched. Our clients are always very appreciative of the generous donations we receive at this time of the year.



GRANT FUNDING

So far in 2024, the Food Shelf has applied for, and been awarded, six grants.

From the *Vermont Food Bank Mini-Grant Program*, we received a \$950 grant that we used to purchase green wheeled carts for our clients who walk to the Food Shelf. We noticed that our walking clients were having difficulty carrying the boxes and bags of food they got from us. We were able to partner with Net Zero Vermont, Inc. and purchase wonderful, sturdy carts. Our clients have been very grateful.

We also received a \$3,500 grant from the *Vermont Food Bank's Vermonter Feeding Vermonters Mini-Grant Program*. With this grant we were required to purchase Vermont Grown Fruits, Vegetables, Eggs, Meat, Dairy or Maple Syrup from Vermont farmers. We used this grant to buy eggs from Farr Farms in Richmond, lettuce from New Traditions Farm in Huntington, and vegetables from Adams Market in Williston. We were thrilled to be able to support our local farmers.

The *Williston-Richmond Rotary Club* awarded us \$3,000 in grants to be used as follows: \$1,000 each to purchase personal hygiene products, pet food, and more wheeled grocery carts. As our clients struggle to feed their families, they often don't have enough money left for personal hygiene products or pet food. We are very grateful to the Williston-Richmond Rotary Club for helping us to provide these important items. As mentioned above, the wheeled grocery carts have been a big success, and this \$1,000 will allow us to keep a stock of the carts on hand.

The *Town of Williston Social Organization Committee* awarded us \$5,000 to use to support our mission of Feeding Our Hungry Neighbors. Non-profit organizations are invited to apply to the Committee annually, to receive a share of the \$30,000 lump sum that the Selectboard budgets annually.

The Board of Directors of the Food Shelf is very grateful for the grants we received. If anyone in the community has knowledge of any other grants that we might apply for, or would be willing to investigate some grant opportunities for us, we would appreciate your help. Because we have NO guaranteed source of funding, and the demand for our services is skyrocketing, grant monies are more important now than ever before, please contact us at info@willistonfoodshelf.com if you could help us with applying for some grants.

From the Treasurer:

*Over the last few years, I have seen a decline in donations coming in from our community, a sign that people are needing to cut back. I get that- the cost of fuel, electricity, housing, clothing and food have been taking bigger bites out of everyone's pockets. All those increased living expenses you feel, WCFS also feels. We are paying more for the supplies we give out, and we are serving 176 **More** families than we were in 2023 (see below). *WCFS has to buy the food and non-food supplies we provide our clients.* We are supported by The Vermont Food Bank, but, did you realize, it is not all "free" to WCFS? We have to pay the Foodbank for the majority of the items we order monthly. In addition, we have to fill in the gaps with weekly shopping trips to our local grocery stores, and *we pay what you pay.* We currently spend about \$10,000 per month in groceries, over and above the weekly donations that we get from Hannaford, Panera Bread, Starbucks and Healthy Living. With the holidays coming up we ask that you keep the Williston Community Food Shelf in mind, and support us any way you feel you can afford to. WCFS is here to support our less fortunate neighbors who are food insecure, and we could use your help.*

Thank you, Cindy Marcotte Treasurer

How 2024 is shaping up:

As of August 31, 2024, the WCFS has seen 2,582 families this year.

That is 176 MORE families than we had seen as of August 30, 2023.

We have welcomed 154 new clients this year through 8/31/24.

Feeding all of these folks is a bit of a challenge. **The Food Shelf has no guaranteed source of funding. We are 100% dependent on the generosity of our local community members.** Our President went in front of the Selectboard again in September, to ask that the Food Shelf be considered for \$35,000 of the remaining AARPA Funding to cover our rent for one year. We have not heard back from them as of this writing.

Earlier this month, the Food Shelf Board also presented a formal written request to the Town Manager and Selectboard asking that \$35,000 per year (adjusted annually for inflation) for the Food Shelf be included as a line item in the Town Budget. We would love to know that we had money for our rent each year, and that the wonderful space we have is secure. The Board is hoping that the members of the Selectboard vote to add us to the Budget.

How you can help:

- *Write a letter to Selectboard supporting our request to be added to town budget annually
- *Hold a Food drive at your business or in your neighborhood - there is a tab on our website (www.willistonfoodshelf.com) with some helpful hints.
- *Help us to find/apply for grant opportunities
- *Be willing to sponsor, or compete in, the Chowder Challenge in Fall of 2025
- *Help us to find a high traffic location where we could hold a Festival of Wreaths in 2025. We had hoped to hold a Festival in 2024, but could not find a suitable location.
- *Bequest money to the WCFS in your will/trust documents
- *Donate, donate, donate - your time, treasures and talents!

In the spirit of **Helping Other People Everyday**, the WCFS would like to thank Williston Dental Practices: Ryan Gosselin, D.D.S., Williston Road Family Dental, and Associates in Orthodontics for providing toothbrushes and tooth paste to support the dental health of our clients. We would also like to thank the congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Williston for their special donations to support some of our families for Christmas. This will be the third year that the IHM congregation has provided extra support to our families.

On Sunday, October 6, the Town of Williston sponsored a showing of the film [Just Getting By](#) at the Majestic 10 Theatre. The documentary was produced by Vermonter Bess O'Brien. It tells the story of Vermonters who are struggling through food and housing challenges. About 75 people came to the show. One of the organizations featured in the film had the following plaque up on their wall:

H – Helping

O – Other

P – People

E – Everyday

What wonderful words to live by!

Williston Community Food Shelf
P.O. Box 1605
Williston, VT 05495

The Williston Community Food Shelf Donation Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Donation Amount: _____

May we please have your email address? _____

Checks Payable to: Williston Community Food Shelf -P.O. Box 1605 Williston, VT 05495

On-line payments are available through PayPal. www.willistonfoodshelf.com