

**Mission:**

To provide a nutritious daily meal to the hungry of the area, as well as to provide a safe and sheltered place for social gathering.



Learn about The Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen. Read all the newsletters. Donate any time. [www.soupk.org](http://www.soupk.org)

**A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION**

**1-269-925-8204**

**SPRING 2018 EDITION**

**FLOODING HITS CLOSE TO HOME**

As a result of recent regional flooding, many in our area were without food, housing, and other basic necessities...some are still doing without. Victims of the flooding include some of your Soup Kitchen volunteers and also a Soup Kitchen Board member. Disaster aid is still a priority for these who serve yet whose homes are still not habitable.

We are grateful for the first responders during the flooding, especially the Berrien County Sheriff's Department, the Royalton Township Fire Department, and the United States Coast Guard--some of whom made the trip from Indiana to help with evacuation. After the evacuation, the Southwestern Michigan United Way and Berrien Community Foundation began our ongoing relief efforts. At the time this article was written, over 600 volunteers had helped to restore some sense of order, \$30,000.00 in relief funds had been donated by private individuals, and some 200 individuals and organizations had begun the process of collecting much needed supplies.

Our thoughts and prayers are with those we've mentioned here. If you are one of those individuals who helped in any way to deal with this disaster, thank you on behalf of those who can't thank you in person.

**SNL ... WHAT IS THAT?**

The SNL, or Short Notice List, is a list of Soup Kitchen volunteers who are willing to come to fill in as needed. It is called the SNL for a very good reason – sometimes it really is short notice! Sometimes we know weeks in advance, but sometimes it's a surprise.

Volunteers from the SNL went into action on the second day of flooding, Thursday. Our scheduled Thursday group would have been student and teacher volunteers from Berrien Springs Middle School. On the Wednesday before, I began an email conversation with Cindy Chaney, the SK group coordinator and one of the Berrien Springs teachers. She alerted me that the flooding in Berrien Springs was already significant, and that she thought that the school would be closed on Thursday. That meant no serving group and no food coming to the Soup Kitchen.

I decided to bet that she was correct, and started calling volunteers to serve on Thursday. I planned the food for Thursday while waiting for volunteers to respond. Cindy was correct – school was closed Thursday and several more days. In fact their school, the Junior High school, was used to house many of the people displaced from flooded trailer parks in Berrien Springs.

If you are a member of the SNL, we thank you for your help! If you wish to join the SNL, please contact the Soup Kitchen office.

— *Merry*





**WELCOME  
ALEX SCHAEFFER**

Hello, my name is Alex Schaeffer, and I recently joined the Soup Kitchen board. In January, I was honored to become the Board Treasurer. I joined this Board because I believe

in the Soup Kitchen's mission and I love giving back to our great community. When I went through my Board orientation day in December, I was blown away by how caring the volunteers and the staff are. I also enjoyed getting to know the people that we served that day. I am very humbled and proud to be able to volunteer for this amazing Organization.

I currently serve as the Treasurer of the Southwest Michigan Humane Society and as the Secretary for the Southwest Michigan Chapter of the American Red Cross as well. I believe the Soup Kitchen fits well with my other volunteer passions.

I have lived in Southwest Michigan my whole life. I graduated from Lakeshore High School in 1997 and then went to Lake Michigan College for two years. After Lake Michigan College, I transferred to Western Michigan University and double majored in Finance and Accounting. After College, I passed the CPA exam, I worked at Gerbel and Company, CPAs, and in September of 2009, I started working for Schaffer & Layher, CPAs, which now has merged with Kruggel and Lawton, CPAs. I am currently the Senior Audit Manager for the St. Joseph office and specialize in the governmental and not-for-profit audits. I am proud to work for a firm that supports and promotes community involvement, the clients that I currently serve professionally, and I am excited to bring my skills to the Soup Kitchen's board. I am looking forward to this opportunity to serve this great Organization!

**SOUP KITCHEN PRESENTATIONS**  
**We would be honored to present The Soup Kitchen story to your organization. Please call today to schedule a time and date**

**Bistro**  
ON THE BOULEVARD



Join us for a special evening to honor Barbara Whitwam and her many wonderful years of service to The Soup Kitchen.

The benefit dinner will be held on Sunday, April 29, 2018 at The Bistro on The Boulevard Restaurant, to benefit the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen and its many clients.

Hosted by The Bistro and The Soup Kitchen, seatings will be between 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm.

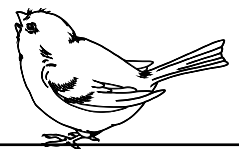
The donation is \$80 per person. All proceeds go to The Soup Kitchen.

The price of the dinner includes appetizers, salad, entrée, dessert, beer, wine or cash bar, and gratuity.

Please make check payable to The Soup Kitchen, fill out the menu form, and mail in the enclosed envelope by April 17, 2018. Call Kayla Betker at The Bistro (269) 983-6600, ext. 383 to reserve time and table.

Due to limited seating, it is important that you call Kayla Betker when you mail your card and check. Preferred times fill quickly and those who call first get first choice.

The Bistro family will be pleased to serve you, gratis!



Easter entertainers at The Soup Kitchen.

## REMEMBERING BARBARA WHITWAM

The Barbara I remember is probably not the one many of you know. I only saw Barbara two times when she looked as one would expect, wearing a fine wool suit in a soft blue with elegant, understated jewelry. That person was Mrs. David Whitwam.

The Barbara I knew was "Miss Barbara," a term that she hated, by the way. She felt that calling her "Miss" demeaned the Soup Kitchen guests who were trying to honor her. But they knew her as Barbara, the nice lady who helped people.

The Barbara I knew came into the Soup Kitchen every Monday through Friday wearing neat blue jeans with a sweater. Accessories? Oh my, yes. Barbara's Soup Kitchen earrings were often large, vibrantly-colored plastic rings or layered fake diamond studs with multicolored imitation stone layers underneath. Earrings were a common discussion topic at Barbara's table.

The other kind of discussion was about real help. Barbara bought hundreds of birth certificates for Soup Kitchen guests. She had the forms for almost every state. Without a birth certificate, you can't get an ID, and without an ID, you can't get a job. Barbara would get the new birth certificate in the mail and present it to the lucky guest, along with the \$10 fee for the ID.

Spring break always reminds me of Barbara's last year, about three weeks before she died. She came in with a half-dozen bags of toys and coloring books. She had been at Wal-Mart buying them for the children who flood the Soup Kitchen during spring break. The children were Barbara's favorite guests, and they would flock to her.

Barbara looked worn that day, and told me that she had taken a couple breaks from shopping to be sick. I thought, who else but Barbara would go through that to buy gifts for the children? In an unusual move, she told me how she wanted them handed out. That was when I guessed that I would probably not see her again.

Barbara is well-remembered at the Soup Kitchen. As Soup Kitchen guests talk about Barbara now, it is not the gifts – the money, or medicine, or birthday cakes, or books, or IDs that they cherish. The most common sentiment is, "She listened to me," or "Miss Barbara would talk with me."

Despite her many accomplishments and great legacy of philanthropy, I believe that Barbara preferred to be known as that Barbara, the nice lady who helped people.



## FIRST ANNUAL EUCHRE TOURNAMENT IS A HUGE SUCCESS

Soup Kitchen Board Member, Chris Woodruff organized the first Soup Kitchen Euchre Tournament held at the Livery in Benton Harbor on January 28th. The players loved the event and the venue...so much in fact, that next year's tournament will also be at the Livery. Mark your calendars for January 27th, 2019.

Tournament winners:

First place was Sue Mennucci with 75 points

Second place was Alex Schaeffer with 72 points

Third place was Jake Kane with 70 points

All three winners donated their prize money (\$150, \$130, \$100) back to Soup Kitchen! Wow, do we have great supporters!

Many thanks to Event Manager Kelly Vega and Chef Becky Wehmer from the Livery for their support. The Livery donated the use of the room and gave us a discount on the food.

Please plan to join us next year. We are hoping for 100 players!

## 7TH ANNUAL GOLF KITCHEN GOLF OUTING

On Monday, June 11 the Soup Kitchen will host its annual golf scramble at Harbor Shores. Over the years this has been an important fund raiser for the Soup Kitchen and we're very grateful for all those who have participated in the past. The cost is still just \$140.00 per player for 18 holes with cart and dinner afterwards under the tent. Shotgun start is at 1:00; dinner and awards at 6:00. To get a sign-up form by e-mail, please contact [kcgast@yahoo.com](mailto:kcgast@yahoo.com) by June 1.





Making pizza - volunteers Jim and Clare from Berrien Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church.



Steven and Terry leading a jam on Easter Sunday.

Donated eggs that we handed out to Soup Kitchen guests.



**BOARD MEMBERS:**

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Les Ashmore      | Rob Romano     |
| Rob Burgess      | Alex Schaeffer |
| KC Gast          | Andy Takacs    |
| Debbie Gillespie | Paula Vogie    |
| Sue Pscholka     | Chris Woodruff |

**SOUP KITCHEN DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE**

The Soup Kitchen is a non-profit, 501c(3) organization. Our mission is to feed a nutritious meal to the hungry. Donations to The Soup Kitchen are deductible to the full extent of the federal law. Please consult your tax advisor for further information on the tax benefits of your generous donation.

**FEEDING AMERICA WEST MICHIGAN**

Churches are automatically eligible to purchase food at 17 cents (or less) per pound, including food in #10 cans, from Feeding America West Michigan, 1488 E. Empire Ave., Benton Harbor. Unlike other organizations, churches are not required to be a 501c(3). Please think about shopping there first.

For more information, contact Feeding America Manager, Rich Glista at 269-926-2646.

**MATCHING GIFTS PROGRAMS**

**The Whirlpool Corporation matching gift program** matches personal contributions of \$50 to \$10,000 with dollars from the Whirlpool Foundation. Full-time, salaried and hourly U.S. Whirlpool employees and retirees are eligible. If you are eligible, please make the match. Because of your support, the Whirlpool Foundation is always one of our top five revenue sources. The Soup Kitchen office can email you the matching gifts form.

**The Thrivent Choice® program** is a charitable grant program that allows members to recommend where Thrivent Financial distributes a portion of its charitable grant funds each year.

Eligible members invited to direct Choice Dollars can recommend where Thrivent should distribute some of its charitable funds among thousands of enrolled 501(c) (3) nonprofit organizations, including The Soup Kitchen Inc. Visit [Thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://Thrivent.com/thriventchoice) or ask your representative for more information.

**Save on Taxes and Benefit The Soup Kitchen with Stock Donations**

Gifts of stock and other securities are a popular way to give to charities like The Soup Kitchen. There are very favorable tax rules for donors who want to donate long-term stock (stock they have owned for more than one year) that has appreciated in value. Basically, the donor never has to pay capital gains on the appreciated stock. This can be a tremendous tax benefit and a great blessing for The Soup Kitchen.

If you want to save on taxes and benefit the needy who are served a wholesome meal daily at The Soup Kitchen, please contact or have your financial advisor or broker contact our Executive Director Merry Stover.