

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.



The Benton Harbor
Soup Kitchen

Learn about
the Benton Harbor
Soup Kitchen.
Read all the newsletters.
Donate any time.
www.soupk.org

A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION · 269-925-8204 · Spring 2023 EDITION

Our Most Valuable Resource—Our Volunteers



Instead, Becky became a Military Police officer. She served in Iraq in the US Army for 8 months. There were only two other females assigned to her unit.

While serving in Iraq, Becky survived two bombings. The first bomb faced the wrong way, which saved her life and those serving beside her. The second suicide bombing resulted in more destruction and casualties. On August 23, 2005, her unit members were finishing lunch when a suicide bomber blew himself up in the dining facility. The blast killed one officer, an Iraqi Policeman, and one civilian law enforcement official. Six soldiers were wounded.

Four feet away from the bomber, Becky grabbed her gun to stop him but didn't have time. Becky was so close to the suicide bomber that her wounds were cauterized, and she didn't even realize she was injured. Becky leaped into action, radioed for help, and tried to help as many people as possible.

Becky was flown to almost died at Walter Reed National Military Medical Facility. She remained in a coma for almost two weeks, but, after several operations, she survived.

Today, Becky works at the Berrien County Courthouse as a Central Assignment Assistant Supervisor, where she works with the judges, handling paperwork, bonds, and training clerks.

Becky serves once a month at the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen, which she has done for the past four years. Every November and December, she gives personal hygiene bags to people living at the Salvation Army and guests in the Soup Kitchen. Becky said that helping people and talking to the guests is the most rewarding thing she does.

The September OSS Services Hometown Hero last was Soup Kitchen Volunteer Becky Payne. Becky was described by her nominator as "an amazing person who constantly gives back despite all she has been through."

Becky served in the US Army for three years, retiring as an E-5 Sergeant. She had planned to become an FBI agent after graduating Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School. Becky had passed most of the necessary tests to begin her career in the FBI by 2002, but a hiring freeze occurred once the war started, halting her FBI aspirations.

Soup Bowl 2023

The annual Gillespie Soup Bowl was held at Striker's Bowl in St, Joe on March 26th. We had the largest participation yet, with all lanes filled and everyone appearing to have a fantastic time, as always. We had great auction items and free pizza for all from Silver Beach Pizza. First Place was won by Ace Hardware; the coveted Spirit Award went to the Tom Lund team. So much preparation beforehand on the part of Kelli Hays and the Gillespie family continues to make this one of our area's premier events. If you've never seen this before, stop by next time on Sunday, March 24 at 1:00. If you don't bowl, have a slice of pizza and bid on auction items; we'll see you then!



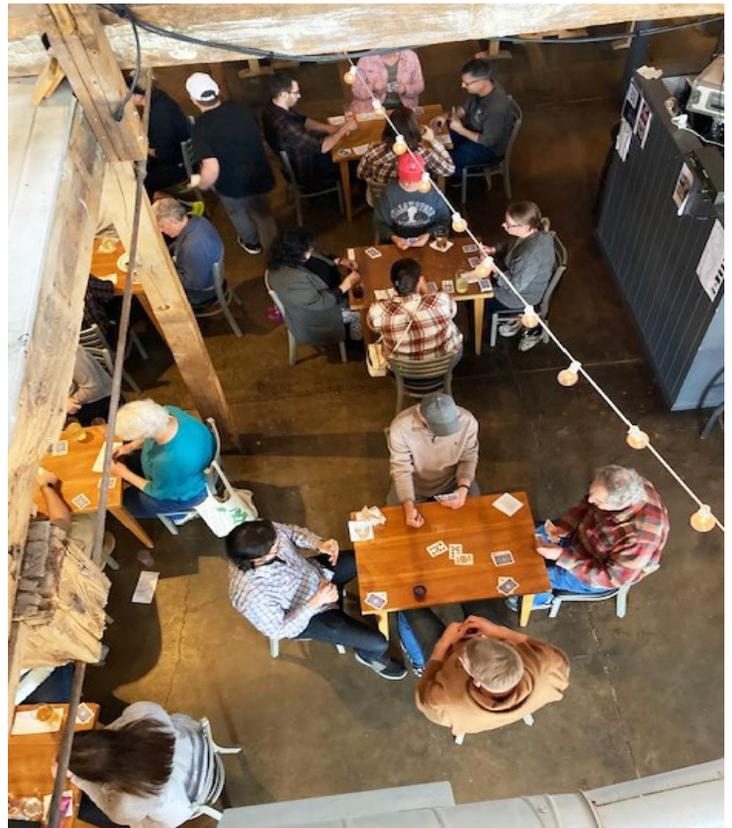
This year's first prize winners—Ace Hardware. Congratulation to you!



The enthusiastic Gillespie Family provides the spirit of the Gillespie Soup Bowl, named for their sister Debbie, former Board President of the Soup Kitchen.

Euchre 2023

On Sunday, February 5, the Soup Kitchen staged its annual Euchre Tournament at the Livery Brewery in Benton Harbor. As always, we held the event the Sunday before the Super Bowl. 60 players competed for 1st, 2nd and 3rd cash prizes. This year we also had door prizes from three area restaurants. And as usual, we had free pizza from the Livery. The competition was friendly but spirited nonetheless. Proceeds from the event went to the ministry of the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen. If you were one of the participants, thank you for being there! Not too soon to mark your calendar--we'll be doing this again next February 4 th (Sunday) at 1:00 at the Livery; we hope to see you there!



We fill both the upstairs and downstairs of the Livery Brewery. Our thanks to the Livery for providing the venue each year for this event.

Volunteers: Please check with your group coordinator to correct your mailing address AND email address. The invitations for the volunteer party next fall will be emailed.

May 20th Cornhole for a Cause in Downtown St Joe

Below are some of last year's
players enjoying the day.



Cornhole for a Cause

is a tournament benefitting The Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen. The tournament will be held May 20th on Pleasant Street between The Market and 211 Main Restaurant and Cocktail House in downtown St Joseph Michigan. (The Market is at 301 Main St.)

Registration starts at 9:00 AM, play starts at 10:30 AM. Cost per two-player team is \$70. (Players must be at least 16 years old to play.) Note: It is first come, first served on T-shirt sizes!

Each team receives 2 t-shirts and two beer tokens. The top prize is \$500. Other activities include a silent auction, pay to play cornhole toss, swag purchase, and all kinds of other fun. If you are not playing, there are a dozen shops, several restaurants, and even a Brewery within a one-block radius. Lots of fun to be had by spectators as well as players!

The RAIN date is May 27th.

Don't wait! 30 team limit!



Vaccination Clinic a Big Success

We held a vaccination clinic May 13th with the aid of the Health Department and a nonprofit group named Vision of Wisdom.

Forty people received vaccinations. Numbers were: 17 for Covid-9, 10 for Hepatitis A, and 13 for Influenza. This is the largest total number we have vaccinated at one clinic at the Soup Kitchen.

**Source
St Bank**

*Less than 1% of Benton Harbor's total food expenditures go to local businesses and local farmers.

*This city spends \$35 million annually on food purchases

*Household income is just a little over \$19,000 on average compared to MI average of \$47,000

*60% of Benton Harbor households do not have access to a car (flipping the national average)

*Benton Harbor has more than one census tract that is a USDA food desert

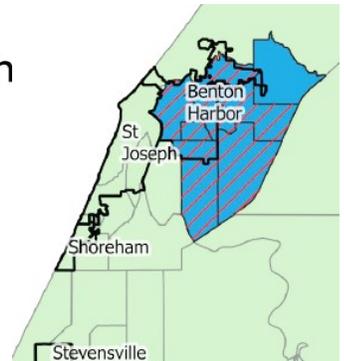
*34.4% are obese compared to 32.8% in the county and 28.8% state wide

*18.6 % have diabetes while Michigan averages 10.9% state wide

Census Tracts in Berrien County with Limited Access to Healthy Food

Map Key

- City or Village
- Food Desert
- Access Burdened



The Thrivent Choice® Dollars® Program

Eligible clients can recommend where some of Thrivent's charitable outreach funds go.

The Soup Kitchen is eligible. Visit Thrivent.com/thriventchoice or ask your representative for more information.

SOUP KITCHEN DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

The Soup Kitchen is a non-profit, 501(c)(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 federal law.** Please consult your tax advisor for further information on the tax benefits of your generous donation.

The Soup Kitchen On Guidestar



Vaccination Clinic a Big Success

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Forty is the most significant number vaccinated at one clinic at the Soup Kitchen.

“Sometimes me think, ‘What is Friend?’ and then me say, ‘Friend is someone to share the last cookie with.’”

—Cookie Monster