

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

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the Benton Harbor
Soup Kitchen.
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A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION · 269-925-8204 · Fall 2024 EDITION

Who Might You Meet at The Soup Kitchen?



Shelly Bruce and Paula Kane

and providing security for the NFL Super Bowl in 2006. The Niles post's service at the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen is just one more example of service worth highlighting.

Seven years ago Shelley Bruce of Post 53 proposed forming a State Police service group; she was already very familiar with the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen through her church. One might think this would have been an unusual arrangement for a police force, but nothing could be further from the truth. The overriding sense of selflessness of our Michigan State Police is completely consistent with their service here at the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen. We thank them for all they do for this state—they are truly a blessing.

Some 40 groups help serve the daily meal at the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen; one of these is Post 53 of the Michigan State Police in Niles. Michigan State Police have a very long history of service to this state, going back over one hundred years. And as various municipal police departments across the state grapple with budget cuts while trying to protect our citizens, Michigan State Police are frequently called upon to plug the gaps. Other things people may not know about our State Police include their service in Louisiana to assist with hurricane relief efforts following hurricane Katrina



Meet Two Soup Kitchen Guests

Anyone who wishes to come is welcome to join us for lunch. We serve a quality, nutritious meal every day of the year.

This story will introduce you to Drusilla and Helen, two guests who join us almost daily.



Drusilla and Robert

Drusilla walks to The Soup Kitchen to eat most days. A pretty woman, she always has a smile for everyone. Drusilla has lived near The Soup Kitchen, in the Fidelity building, for twelve years. She is a little worried because the price of her apartment is rumored to be going up. Like most people supported by disability benefits, her price in Section 8 housing is adjusted according to her ability to pay.

Drusilla worked at the Gillespie Drug store in downtown St. Joseph and at Heath Company. She usually worked three jobs at a time. Drusilla stopped speaking briefly, and then said, "I can't think of the jobs. I've had three strokes."

Later on she said, "I used to drive, and I cleaned people's houses too." Her friend Robert helps her walk to The Soup Kitchen. He has lived with Drusilla for fifteen years and does the cooking and cleaning. Drusilla's balance problems make walking and cooking difficult.

Drusilla wants you to know that she is very grateful for the help The Soup Kitchen provides.

Helen has been coming to The Soup Kitchen for many years. She is a graduate of Benton Harbor High School. Many years ago, she volunteered at The Soup Kitchen with the St. Paul Baptist Church.



Helen Johnson

Helen surprised me when she told me that she had graduated from the "Jobs for Life" program. Helen said, "I wish I'd known some of that when I got my first job." She then explained that many years ago she had returned home from Arkansas with her two young sons, and was encouraged to apply for ACD. Her sons are now 55 and 57 years old.

But then, in 1974, she was more interested in a program at Memorial Hospital that she called "nursing school." They took two weeks of class followed by 30 days working on the floor. If the nursing assistant graduates did good work on the floor they were hired. Helen explained that patients in the orthopedics department spent much more time in the hospital back then, so much of what they did was assist with physical therapy. After she finished the day's therapy sessions, she then was a floater for the rest of the day. Helen is proud of her work at the hospital in the orthopedics ward and mentioned working with Drs. Doshi, Westerbeke, and Hudnutt.

After leaving hospital work, Helen did home health work. The home jobs were usually twelve-hours-per-day, from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Helen came to eat at The Soup Kitchen almost every day, usually with her son. She said, "It's not that I don't have no food at home. I like to come to the Kitchen – this is my family."

I am sorry to tell you that Helen's story is now her memorial story. Three days after I took her photo, Helen was crossing Napier Avenue near Milton Street and was fatally struck by a car. She was 74 years old.



Benefit Dinner at The Bistro on the Boulevard

The ever-popular Soup Kitchen Benefit Dinner at the Bistro on the Boulevard returns on Sunday, November 3, 2024.

Once again, Soup Kitchen donors will have one of two choices: the special dine-in meal in the restaurant or a take-out, curbside pick-up meal. The menu is the same. The donation remains at \$80 per person, with all proceeds donated by the generous Bistro family to The Soup Kitchen.

This elegant dining experience includes hors d'oeuvres, the entree of your choice, salad, dessert, wine, beer, and gratuity, with a cash bar for cocktails.

Dinner seatings will be a 4 p.m., 5:30 p.m., and 7 p.m. for 90 minutes each. Curbside meal pick-up times are between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m.

All past diners and donors to the Benefit Dinner will receive an invitation in the mail. If you haven't donated to or attended the dinner, please contact The Soup Kitchen at (269) 925-8204 or email m@soupk.org to receive one.

When your invitation arrives, please read it carefully, fill out the menu card, and, along with your check, mail it in the pre-addressed envelope. It is crucial that you include your PHONE NUMBER because you will be called by the Bistro to set up your reservation time for dining-in or for your curbside pick-up time.

We salute the generosity of the Bistro on the Boulevard team: president Mark Whitwam, general manager Rita Downey; executive chef Cheryl Bernacchi, and the servers and kitchen staff.



Tutu and his great-grandfather Vernon join us for lunch frequently.

Sometimes two of Tutu's sisters also come for lunch. It is rare, but sometimes all six children come with their mother. The two youngest, twins, are still babies.

They all love Vernon, and all four of them have a great time riding to and from The Soup Kitchen on Vernon's electric wheel chair.



Sunday, February 2nd, 2025



Save the date for our annual Euchre tournament! All proceeds feed the hungry in our community. Along with free Livery pizza and great prizes, just like last year, we are offering the partner format. If you wish to play with a favorite partner, you may do so. If you don't have a partner, we will find you one. You and your partner will move together from table to table. Door prizes will be announced in between games. The cash prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place teams are \$200, \$100, and \$50. Online sign-up will begin in January. Catch the link on Facebook or our website, www.soupk.org. Cost is \$40 per team member. Doors open at noon; play starts at 1:00.

Sunday, March 23th, 2025



If you've never experienced the great Gillespie Soup Bowl, please come...even if you're not a bowler. There are lots and lots of prizes to bid on and free pizza from our sponsor Silver Beach Pizza.

This is one of the area's biggest and most fun get-togethers, and all the proceeds stay here to feed the needy in our community.

Four-member teams play for \$120.00 per team. There are prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place finishers. Doors open at noon and play starts promptly at 1:00. Online sign-up will begin on our website, www.soupk.org, in February. Don't miss it!

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 the federal law.** Please consult your tax advisor for further information on the tax benefits of your generous donation.

GIFTS of STOCK SHARES :

The Soup Kitchen can accept direct donation of stock shares. Please email m@soupk.org for more information.

SOUP KITCHEN PRESENTATIONS

We would be honored to present The Soup Kitchen story to your organization. Please call 925-8204 or email m@soupk.org to schedule.

The Soup Kitchen has attained Guidestar's Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest level ranking.

Platinum
Transparency
2023

Candid.

Our Facebook page is named "Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen." Please check it for Soup Kitchen updates, event announcements, and links to event registrations. We will be honored if you follow us and share our page with your friends.

Remember, anyone can come to the Soup Kitchen to eat, participate in our free vaccination clinics, or just to visit with friends. Everyone is welcome!



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