



Nowak

Funeral & Cremation Services



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS • FALL 2015

413.543.1892



15 Ludlow Avenue, Springfield, MA 01151



NowakFuneral.com

Community Survival Center: *A Bridge of Hope to the Hungry and Homeless Since 1983.*

*W*hat started out as a food pantry over 30 years ago quickly flourished to serve needs other than hunger alone. Year after year the client base has increased. Year after year the Community Survival Center continues to meet client needs as best they can. Executive Director Jackie Madden has been on the center's board since 1990, **"I heard a presentation on the Center and knew I wanted to be involved. It's very rewarding to see the reaction of the people we serve."**



Hunger and poverty affects people of all ages throughout the entire United States.

programs to combat hunger from childhood to later in life: Emergency Food, the Preschool Program, Senior Outreach, and the Holiday Food Program. Hours of operation are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 9:30am to 3:30pm, Thursday 9:30am to 5:00pm.

The Emergency Food Program offers a 5-day supply of necessary grocery items to individuals living in our service area. Families may receive Emergency Food up to six times per year. "Some clients pick up their supply in the first six months of the year," said Jackie. "Others spread it out. It's all up to the individual and

The Center is made up of three components: the Food Pantry, the Bridge of Hope Thrift Shop, and the Clothing and Household Goods Program. Each program is self-sustaining through community support, with the goal to provide survival items to the needy in the community.

Food Pantry

Hunger exists in every community in our country. The Food Pantry incorporates four

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Nowak Funeral & Cremation Services First Annual Candlelight Memorial Service

A very special day of remembrance will be held this December. Nowak Funeral & Cremation Services invites area residents to join them at 5pm on Friday December 4th at the Ludlow Country Club, 1 Tony Lema Drive in Ludlow. A non-denominational candlelight memorial service has been planned in remembrance for all the loved ones who will be missed this holiday season.

Holiday grief is often unanticipated. As those around you seem to be lost in the revelry of the season, you may find comfort in another type of community; one that is sharing your similar feelings during this difficult time. Attendees will find the event as a time to quietly reflect, pray or simply show support for one another in a calming environment.

"Our candlelight memorial is purposefully done during the holiday season," said Nydia Nowak Gallagher, Funeral Director for Nowak Funeral & Cremation Services. "The

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Nowak Funeral & Cremation Services First Annual Candlelight Memorial Service

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holidays are often a time for family and friends to gather together. We encourage families to attend this memorial together and share in memories of their loved one. Every family will receive a special memento to commemorate the service.

This is a free event; refreshments will be served following the memorial. Please RSVP by calling 413-543-1892 or emailing ngallagher@nowakfuneral.com. **“Grief can affect people in so many different ways,”** said Nydia. **“We hope this event will bring some peace and tranquility to those that attend.”**

“As we light candles, each with a different special intention, we hope our attendees experience a sense of comfort in community,” said Nydia Nowak Gallagher.



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what their needs are. They are just so thankful to get the food they need”

The Preschool Program is available to any family utilizing the Emergency Food Program. Twenty nutritious breakfasts, lunches, healthy snacks, milk (when available), and juice are bagged and available monthly until the child is old enough to attend school full time.

Seniors face a number of unique medical and mobility challenges that put them at a greater risk of hunger.

The Senior Outreach Program offers a monthly bag of food to any and all senior households. These bags can be up to 20 to 22 pounds! There is no geographic restriction on the program. The seniors also receive a traditional Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner each year through the **Holiday Food Program**. “It’s nice,” said Jackie, “they can sit down to a dinner at their own home. It’s a meal they can cook themselves.” Besides seniors, the Holiday Food Program offers a traditional holiday meal at Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Easter to any family who participates in the Emergency Food Program.

The Bridge of Hope Thrift Shop

With the purpose of making affordable clothing available to everyone, The Bridge of Hope Thrift Shop is going strong and enjoys great popularity with bargain conscious shoppers. Many brand names are carried for all ages. Each item is individually priced at roughly \$2.00 or \$3.00 per piece, just as they were when the Thrift Shop first opened in 1999. Last year more than 12,000 shoppers found exactly what they were looking for here. Hours of operation are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9:30am to 3:15pm and Thursday 9:30am to 4:45pm.

Clothing and Household Goods Program

The Center offers an organized store-like environment with pleasant volunteers and staff to assist you. There is a large assortment of clothing for everyone. A separate section offers a selection of comforters, sheets, and blankets, as well as sets of dishes, pots and pans, and a number of other necessities and decorative household items. Shoppers can fill small or large bags, \$3 for a small bag, and \$5 for a big bag. “You never know what we are going to have in the clothing room,” said Jackie. “Right now we even have Halloween costumes. It really depends on what comes in.” After Thanksgiving

shoppers will begin to see Christmas trees arrive. The Program is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 9:30am to 3:00pm, and Thursday 9:30am to 4:30pm

You Can Help

For a list of acceptable donations, volunteer opportunities, or how you can hold a food drive please visit www.communitysurvivalcenter.org **“Our pantry shelves are just about empty. We are always looking for people to do food drives for us,”** said Jackie. **Donors can also drop off cash and specify that it is for the purchase of food and the Center’s knowledgeable staff will ensure that each dollar goes as far as possible.** “We are always looking for volunteers,” added Jackie. “Everything that comes in needs to be sorted and looked at. Other volunteers help clients with their shopping.” Jackie shared a very special volunteer situation, “We have people that have been a client, then things turn around for them, and now they are donating to us!”

For more information on how you can help or host a food drive, call 413-543-3930 and ask for Jackie or Michelle, or stop by their Main Street location in Indian Orchard.

Come one, come all, to the 15th Annual Festival of Trees!

The Springfield Boys and Girls Club invites you to celebrate the holidays with them during their 15th Annual Festival of Trees. The festival is located at Tower Square in downtown Springfield from November 27th through December 13th, 2015. The 140 trees donated and decorated by businesses, civic and social organizations, schools, hospitals, families and individuals are on display throughout the event and raffled off at the conclusion.

The event is a signature holiday activity for thousands of families and children as well as raises much needed funds for the youth served by the Springfield Boys and Girls Club. All proceeds of the event will help the Springfield Boys & Girls Club to continue our 124 years of charitable work by providing children in the community with hope, opportunity, and a safe place to learn and grow.

“Last year, the event raised \$115,000 and welcomed over 13,000 visitors,” said Bevin Peters, Special Events and Marketing Coordinator for the Springfield Boys and Girls Club. **“This wonderful community event enables the Springfield Boys & Girls Club to provide a variety of educational and recreational programs for more than 1,500 Springfield youth. The need for these crucial services only grows each year; Festival of Trees is integral in making sure we are able to meet those needs. We hope to see you to see you at this year’s event!”** added Bevin.

A long list of entertainment has already been slated. Attendees will be entertained daily from multiple choirs, instrumental groups and dance studios. For a complete listing of entertainers please visit www.sbgc.org and click on Festival of Trees.

Ballots will once again be taken for most beautiful, most original, and children’s favorite tree. Nowak Funeral & Cremation Services hopes the tree they sponsor takes home a title. “Our theme this year is Winter Warmth,” informed Nydia Nowak Gallagher, Funeral Director at Nowak Funeral & Cremation Services. “We are excited to be putting a variety of gifts under our tree for the winner, including an electric fireplace! The festival is such a beautiful assortment of different trees, themes, sizes and prizes. It’s such a great event to attend as a family or alone.”

A Volunteer’s Story

Each year attendees can try their luck at winning their favorite tree! That is just what happened to Lauri Lavell last year and she has great things to say about the festival, **“I LOVE the Festival of Trees!”** In 2014 Lauri spread her tickets over a variety of beautiful trees at the festival. One of her raffle tickets happened to be pulled as the winner for the Boston Medical Center HealthNet Plan tree.

“My family and I go every year,” said Lauri. “I have a few different color trees at my home. I don’t have a black one, so I saw a beautifully decorated black tree and put my ticket in. I won! It was a 6 and a half foot black lighted tree called “To A Healthy New Year,” set up by Boston Medical Center Health. Underneath the tree I was pleasantly surprised to find a crock pot, food scale, regular scale, an assortment of spices, a cook book, and storage containers. Plastic band aid holders adorned the tree along with countdown-themed ornaments. On the top sat a black top hat. I was very excited!”

Lauri enjoys the festival so much that she will be volunteering there for this 2015 season. “I love that the festival supports the Boys and Girls Club, that’s important. The amount of money they raise is phenomenal! They do an awesome set up and arranging of the trees. There’s so much to see.”

Tree donors are still being registered. Registration deadline is November 10th. Parking is validated and admission prices are low. Current and active military personnel and their families are admitted free. Volunteers are always welcome and needed for set up and tear down, as well as greeting guests and selling raffle tickets. If you would like to help please call Bevin Peters at 413-785-5266, or email her at peters@sbq.org.



Last year Nowak Funeral & Cremation Services donated a beautiful Tree of Peace and Harmony.



Frequently Asked Question

Do you have any pointers for handling grief during the holidays?

The holidays can be difficult for those of us who have lost a loved one, particularly if this is the first holiday season without that person. This usually joyous time of year is often accompanied by intensified grief and apprehension about how we will cope with the festivities all around us.

“At a time when everyone is supposed to be happy and enjoying themselves, grief can often feel amplified,” said Nydia Nowak Gallagher, Funeral Director for Nowak Funeral & Cremation Services. “It’s a time when you see things on TV, in the stores and on the radio depicting holiday fun. It might not be a fun time for you as you handle your grief, and that is okay.”

The key to managing grief during this time is to give yourself permission to be flexible and to try to anticipate changes you may wish to make. “Do what makes you happy,” added Nydia, “and at your own pace.”

We have listed suggestions below which we hope will offer you practical coping strategies as you face the coming season.

1. It is important to acknowledge that adjustments will be necessary in the traditions and celebrations of the holiday season.
2. Use a journal to write down your feelings and fears concerning the holidays. Clarifying your thoughts will help you feel more in control and less overwhelmed.
3. Plan ahead to participate in certain holiday activities to avoid having to make decisions under pressure. If you are not sure about an invitation, be



- tentative. Explain that some days are better than others and you may attend if you feel up to it.
4. Build in quiet time to your schedule so you don't resent having too much to do.
5. Getting into the spirit by decorating can bring warmth into your home. Ask family and friends to help if it all seems too much to do alone.
6. If you are not ready to celebrate this year, that's OK. If you have children, discuss holiday changes with them so they don't feel confused or punished.
7. If you find yourself alone for the holidays, use the time to pamper yourself; do something you've wanted to do and haven't had the time for.
8. If you don't want to be alone, make a plan not to spend the holidays by yourself. Call family and friends and

tell them you'd like to spend time with them.

9. Do for others: Put together a holiday gift package or basket of food for a needy family.
10. Start a new tradition in memory of your loved one.

At Nowak Funeral & Cremation Services, we offer helpful reading material on coping with grief. Stop by or call us at 413-543-1892. We'll be pleased to help you select one that is right for you.

Remember that there is no right or wrong way to experience grief; nor is there a time limit for our feelings. We hope that the suggestions in this article will help you find coping strategies for this time of year that work best for you.