



Brunch January 2013



"If you wish to experience peace, provide peace for another."

-Tenzin Gyatso, The 14th Dalai Lama

The New Year is a time of fresh beginnings and renewed commitments and at House of Sufism, 2013 is off to a running start! What better way than in the service of friends to strive for perfection? **January Sunday brunches have brought smiles and laughter, feasts and friends, to our blossoming community.** It is impossible not to see God's love in the gratitude of our honored guests and the volunteers' joy in preparing and serving meals! We have many reasons to be particularly excited this month - **new partnerships** with other charitable organizations in the Boston area, **renovations** in the building, and delicious **homemade additions** to our menu. Most important of all is the knowledge that the places we serve **is not just housing but a true home** - with warm meals, joyful company, and true friends to turn to in times of hardship or loneliness. That love was contained in the various meals that we served this month.

On Sunday, January 6, our **wonderful, giving volunteers Stephanie, Sandra, and Karim served a delectable meal** with meatballs, basmati rice, salad, American cheese, oranges & apples, and fruit juices. The residents were joined by the volunteers in savoring the food and the warm atmosphere and friendship. Yasin & Mary were special guests on Sunday, January 13, **changing their vacation plans for the joy of serving our friends.** The brunch was a real feast, including a fragrant eggplant dish, chicken & rice, mashed whole potato, a salad with cherry tomato, and bananas. There were **two secret ingredients** to the brunch that week! - Yasin's mother's hand-ground seasoning from Morocco and the lively companionship at the table. Dessert was particularly sweet - James, all the way from Vermont, brought in his mom's home-baked carrot cake. Sandra once again joined the volunteers. Her presence and contribution is invaluable as her church has become interested in our project and has offered its support for the brunch program! We are so excited to have them on board.



The third Sunday in January proved that **love has no geographic boundaries** - Fatima from Switzerland, Karim from France, and Mark from the US served up an international spread: Smoked tuna casserole and patties, Moroccan soup, beans, French bread, and American salad. Mark prepared the food with an eye to its **beautiful presentation** as well as taste and nutrition.

By pre-cooking some of the meal, volunteers made ample time for socializing as they exchanged stories of their week with each other and **shared food and loud laughter.** Karim & Fatima, under the supervision of Finette,





made 15 dishes for residents who were not able to make it to brunch. Walter Higgs, the house manager and is our emergency contact, was also present. We were also delighted to hear a suggestion from one of our resident friends for Super Bowl Sunday on February 3rd! We will be happy to serve Game Day classics like pizza, chips, popcorn, and Coke.

One of our friends starts her day at 4 am in order to arrive to the airport where she works. Due to bus cancellations and fare hikes on the MBTA, her already difficult commute has become a real challenge. We were happy to buy her a monthly pass and ten-minute-dinner packages for her long week-days. We would love to get her Charlie pass on a monthly basis to help with travelling expenses. On Sundays, volunteers made sure to prepare a vegetarian option so she can enjoy brunch with everyone. Our project is effective in that it can address the unique concerns and needs of all our friends, support them in their work, and make their lives a little bit easier!

On Sunday the 27th, Ali, Mark, Fatima, and Khale Fazi served up **delicious lasagna** along with Mexican soup, basmati rice, toast, fruits, and salad. We were joined by Mary Ellen, a registered nurse, who provided **key services to the residents** by checking in on their blood pressure, prescriptions, health consultations, and referral for further medical attention where it was necessary. Fatima made sure we forgot no one by lovingly preparing 15 dishes for our friends who were not able to make it to the brunch. To ensure safety **and well-being** of our friends (formerly homeless) as bedbug and scabies plagued their home, new **hardwood maple floors replaced the carpeting**. Granite tile is a shining addition to the kitchen. A nonslip tread cover in the entire building **protects our friends from dangerous slips and falls**.

*In January, we were particularly grateful for the support of **Dr. Sherry of Mass General Hospital and Rev. Rona of Hospice of North Shore & Greater Boston**, which made this month's brunch possible.*

We are so pleased to report that our brunch project continues to make incredibly **efficient use of contributions** thanks to our volunteers and the focused use of funds where they are most needed. Please **consider joining us** on a Sunday afternoon for brunch service. We are well aware that not everyone has time to volunteer doing charity work. **Any help at all is appreciated** and we would ask that you consider making a monetary gift or donating clothes. **Your kindness will make this winter a warm one for our friends and neighbors!** The winter can be long, dark, and cold when there is nothing to look for



ward to, no steps in the hallway indicating the arrival of friends, nor the smell of a delicious meal being prepared. We would like to think that for “our friends”, those long days are shortened and brightened by the anticipation of brunch every Sunday. That special afternoon is always an occasion for kindness, laughter, and the deep satisfaction of enjoying a lovingly prepared meal with friends, old and new. This experience of community is priceless and we are so blessed to be a part of it every single week!

How to Get Involved

1. **Volunteer:** 2-4pm every Sunday. Help us cook and clean or just by spending time with our friends.

2. **Monetary Donations:** If you would like to make a contribution to the House of Sufism Charity Initiative, you can write a check (payable to KN), use any credit card, or wire money through PayPal. All your donations are tax deductible.

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