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At the Table

Volume 5 Issue 11
December 2017

A year of unexpected gifts

We started out 2017 with the words, “expect the unexpected”. This truly was a year of unexpected challenges and blessings. Thank you to all our Sous Chefs who gave so generously of your time, materials and finances.

JANUARY

We received a call from a family that Leigh-Ann and I had never met to donate a house to IMFK. The elderly gentleman who lived in the small, Syracuse home had no children, and his relatives had no use for the house. You can read more about this house on page three of this newsletter. IMFK was invited to participate in the Believe in Syracuse Birthday Party at the MOST during this month. IMFK featured our Taste and See products and had chance to visit with other vendors who have a heart for the betterment of Syracuse. IMFK travelled to the Kallet Theatre in Pulaski to hold our annual January Winter Give Away. Closing out the

month, IMFK was the recipients of the Skaneateles Girls JV and Varsity Basketball teams Foul Shot Fundraiser.

FEBRUARY

IMFK was the featured charity at Funk' n Waffle . We also spoke at Fay Road Baptist Church and the Orchard Church's Youth Program.

MARCH

John stepped back into the kitchen to cook a “Spaghetti Dinner” at Plainville Christian Church to raise funds for IMFK. It was exciting to be a part of the Syracuse Crunch's winning season in March as the featured charity at one of their games. We ended the month speaking to Eagle's Wings Academy.

APRIL

We held our annual Spring Give Away at the Syracuse Nepali Church. Thank you Pastor Bhim for opening your doors to IMFK.

MAY

This was a big month for us with the release of the “Common Ground” CD. To celebrate friends and supporters gathered at the Palace Theatre to hear 16 talented bands play the 17 original songs written by Andrew Ruddy. Before the concert that night, IMFK was at Clinton Square as the featured charity for Operation Northern Comfort's Crawfish Festival. Thanks to our Cajun Chef Steve Joule who traveled from OKC to cook in the IMFK Cajun Café. You can visit IMFK at the Cajun Café during the 2018 Crawfish Festival! Also in May, John had the opportunity to join a group from the Syracuse Homeless and Housing Collation as they met with Congressman Katko to discuss the challenges facing the homeless and

those working to helping them.

JUNE

IMFK was invited as the key note speaker for the **Food Bank of CNY's Partner Agency Conference**. The annual **"You're Not Invisible" 5k walk/run** was held on a beautiful June morning. Thank you so much to the **Midgley family** who always help to make this event such a great success. Finally in June, **IMFK went to Vander-Kamp Center** to share with a group of young people from **Good Shepherd Lutheran Church** the importance of service in your community.

JULY

IMFK a chance to do a **sauce tasting at the James Street Wegmans**. IMFK also had a group of young people from **the Brady Faith Center 's Summer Servants** program come share a day at IMFK. Leigh-Ann shared **the mission of IMFK at the Cicero United Methodist VBS**. John addressed the **Greater Syracuse Community Service class** to close out the month.

AUGUST

Saturdays were packed with events in this month with: **IMFK Neighborhood Clean-up, Beautiful Mess and IMFK Lot Party** with food and music for neighborhood and the **Summer Give away**.

SEPTEMBER

IMFK spoke at **Dewitt Community Church** and the **United Church of Fayetteville**.

OCTOBER

This was another busy month with, **IMFK** speaking at; the **Haylor, Fryer & Coon Shareholders meeting, Primitive Methodist church in Johnston City, Collamer United Church** and the **NOEP Conference in Albany**. **Leigh-Ann shared the vision and purpose of Life House** with the congregation of **the Orchard church**. We closed out the month of October with a **Halloween Party** for the neighborhood **in partnership with the Northeast Community Center**. **Thank you to Giovanni Foods** whose generous donation helped make this evening such a great success.

NOVEMBER

IMFK partnered with the **River of Life Church** for a combined give away. 500 turkeys were given away by River of Life and over 325 people came to receive at the **IMFK Fall Give Away tables**. **Thank you to the PSLA Jr. ROTC recruits** who helped to make both the Halloween party and this give away a great success.

2017

We were able to **assist 20 individuals find shelter and housing** in 2017. This makes a total of **84 men and women over the past six years** IMFK has been able to help.

Closing out the year **we still have a month to expect the unexpected**. Looking toward **2018 we are excited to stretch and move into new areas** to help those who feel trapped and

invisible. **What will the word be for 2018?**

Thank you to all the individuals, families, churches and corporations who gave financially to IMFK in 2017. Without your support we would **never be able** to build hope and change the lives of so many. With your continued support we are able to expand our scope to include a new demographic of people in need. Thank you!

Please prayerfully consider making your best year end donation as we close out 2017. **All donations are tax deductible.**



John & Leigh-Ann



Life House Update

The small house given to IMFK was perfect for a vision John and I had. We wanted to provide a safe place for women who have been arrested for prostitution. They could stay there while working to break free of the bonds of the men who are pimping them out. I like to say it this way, "It is a place where they will learn to live again..one step at a time." A place where shame is taken away and they see there is good in them.

The location is being kept secret for the safety of the women who will one day live there. The idea is that the women will be referred to the home, called "Life House," by Syracuse City Court Judge Ted Limpert, who runs the Syracuse Human Trafficking Court.

Judge Limpert does not use the word "prostitution;" instead the women are victims of human trafficking. They are often coerced into selling sex to pay for drugs, and they are often threatened with violence by the men who pimp them out, Judge Limpert said.

IMFK's idea is to use the home as a safe place for the women while they get back on their feet. Women going through the treatment court have been arrested for prostitution but are offered services and treatment in lieu of jail.

"Housing, safe housing, is something we've been struggling with since we started," Judge Limpert said. We had the opportunity to sit and talk to Judge Limpert a few weeks ago to discuss our idea. Our plan is a first step toward filling a gaping hole in the community. "It's awesome that they are willing to do this," Judge Limpert said.

The plan is to have space for two women

from Judge Limpert's program. Right now, 24 women are going through the court. The third bedroom in the house would be occupied by a woman who has successfully graduated from the court and has found success. She will oversee the others and the house in off-hours. The women would continue to receive services through the court and other agencies.

When women decide to leave a life of being sold for sex, the men who control them over try to pull them back and threaten them. Kimberly Rhoades, a 47-year-old mother of three, died after being brutally beaten. Prosecutors say Kevin Johnson, her pimp, broke into her home and attacked her. He was charged with murder.

The home's location will be kept secret, and IMFK has already signed a con-

tract and began security installation. Thank you to Eastern Security Systems who priced us a first rate system. This will help us provide a place that promises to keep women safe while restoring their self-worth that has been lost.



There's still many months of work to do to fix up the house before it can be used.

Our budget is \$27,500 to renovate and for security and installation. Thank you to all who have given so generously to the IMFK Life House. Together we are making a difference in the lives of those who feel invisible.



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There's still time to order your Christmas Baskets. Go to site below and click on 2017 Christmas Baskets. Cost is \$50 each.

Baskets are available for pick up any Friday between the hours of 12-4pm. All proceeds from sale of baskets go to help IMFK continue helping those who feel invisible.