



Food Bank  
Social Services

Summer Quarter 2024

# FOOD for THOUGHT

## A Hub for Hope

ALL ARTICLES BY KAREN WEST

**Some call it** “the most important 60-square-feet on Bainbridge Island.” For 39-year-old Hank, it is **“survival from the streets”** – a safe place to warm up. For 71-year-old Kathy, who once owned a thriving local business, it’s a last resort to fill her fridge.

For everyone, the bustling Helpline House lobby/Food Bank is a Hub for Hope.

**“I see the heart of Bainbridge Island in Helpline House’s food bank,”** Food Bank Manager Lianne Ristow says. **“A cup of coffee, a pastry, and a warm lobby to sit and share conversation with friends and neighbors. A food bank to shop filled by the donations of a generous community and staffed by volunteers who are here because they believe everyone deserves nutritious and delicious foods.”**

While most people know that Helpline House provides free food for households in need, they might not know what goes on behind the scenes, in upstairs meetings with social workers and in adjacent offices with counselors throughout the day.

Helpline House Volunteer Services Manager Kerry Lavigne says: **“We are fortunate to have a wide range of volunteers who give their valuable time to make the services we provide possible: from teen students to those in their 70s, 80s and 90s, local business owners and retirees, parents of young children and grandparents, recent college graduates and those working in Fortune 500 corporations.”**



### A SNAPSHOT OF A TYPICAL DAY IN THE LIFE OF HELPLINE HOUSE

**9 am:** Helpline House Front Desk Administrator opens the front doors. Two clients are already waiting to come in.

**9:45 am:** Food Bank checks in clients to the Food Bank for groceries, dry goods and even toiletries. Three households at a time are allowed to shop between the hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

**10 am:** A group of Helpline House clients chat with each other in a small waiting area. “This place literally saved my life,” Hank tells a visitor.

**10:30 am:** Helpline House volunteers return from Town & Country and Safeway with “Grocery Rescue” products that will soon hit the Food Bank shelves: fresh bread, soup, veggies, pastries, etc.

**10:45 am:** John Chang from Peaceful Morning Farms delivers 83 pounds of potatoes to Helpline House. The food bank manager records the delivery. Northwest Harvest delivers one to two pallets of food half an hour later.

**11 am:** Upstairs, Helpline House social workers help clients navigate the Medicare maze and counselors use art therapy with young clients.

**11:30 am:** A food bank client fills her bag with fresh vegetables while carefully selecting the groceries available, including produce, milk, eggs, bread, desserts, canned goods, pasta, and rice.

**1:30 pm:** Helpline House Volunteer Services Manager briefs new shift of volunteers and goes over their afternoon duties.

**3:30 pm:** A young man in need is given a jacket from the Helpline House Barn storage area.

**4 pm:** Last call for Food Bank shoppers. Volunteers make sure the outside bins, known as the Porch Pantry, are fully stocked for those who come after shopping hours. Final Food Bank shopping tally of the day: 98 households.

\*Names changed for confidentiality.



## Giving Back is Way of Life for Helpline House Volunteer

"Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any map of the world.... unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere." – Former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, chair of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Longtime Helpline House Volunteer Alice Mendoza was just a few months from being born when that message was reflected in the global human rights declaration, which was adopted by the UN in 1948. Eleanor Roosevelt's words made a lifelong impact on the former Wilkes (newly named: Haliits) Elementary School teacher and have shaped the person she is today.

**"I believe in making a difference in the world locally and globally and have had this be the core of my teaching philosophy,"** Alice says.

When Alice turned 75 this year, all she asked for (in lieu of gifts) were donations for Helpline House, which she has passionately supported since 2015. At her recent birthday party, a large gathering of friends, coworkers and family granted her wish to the tune of \$16,000 and 400 pounds of donated food.



## Baking a Difference

Everyone is entitled to have Birthday celebrations at Helpline House. Whether you can afford it or not.

Kristy Olson, Helpline House's Front Desk Administrator, also manages the Happy Birthday Project. She helps families celebrate a child's birthday by coordinating volunteers who provide personal gifts and a cake or cookies.

**"One mom started crying when she came in and saw the birthday cookies,"** Kristy says.

Helpline House has also teamed up with Cake4Kids to provide beautifully decorated cakes or cookies to households who enroll at least two weeks in advance. **To learn more about the program, contact Kristy at Helpline House: 206 842-7621.**

## What's Next?

May  
15

**BainbridgeGives.org**  
Annual Fundraiser for Local Nonprofits  
New Households Surges 20% in FY23

May  
16

**Welcome to Medicare**  
Free, Unbiased Presentation  
Thur, May 16, 2:30 - 4 pm  
1270 Madison Ave N, Bainbridge Island

June  
15

**Stand By Your Neighbor**  
Helpline House's Annual Appeal  
New Households Surges 20% in FY23



# Welcome New Board Members



**Bruce Eremic**  
**Board Member**

Bruce has been a banker on Bainbridge Island since 2006. He is the current manager of Kitsap Bank's Bainbridge Island branch. He is committed to community stewardship and has been volunteering for various community projects. Bruce has served the treasurer of Housing Resources Bainbridge for six years and serves on the board of Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce. He has been managing the Shred to Fed annual fundraiser for Helpline House since 2020 to fight food insecurity.



**Charlie Foushee**  
**Board Member**

Charlie Foushee leads Skanska USA Commercial Development in Seattle, building sustainable office and residential properties across the US. He graduated from Seattle University and serves on the advisory board for Bainbridge Island Little League. Charlie was previously on the board of directors for Rebuilding Together Seattle.



**Rachel Hofer**  
**Board Member**

Rachel is a marketing professional and photographer who moved to Bainbridge Island seven years ago with her husband and two children. She has traveled extensively and has been actively supporting the World Food Program to eliminate global hunger. She is honored to be on the board and looks forward to contributing locally with Helpline House.



**Stacy Marchesano**  
**Board Member**

Stacy is a partner at a Seattle-based law firm where she practices commercial real estate and finance law. She moved to Bainbridge Island in mid-2020 with her husband and two young daughters. Stacy enjoys helping clients with transactions that improve the built environment and boost the economy. Giving back to the community is important to her, and she is serving as an ambassador of Helpline House in her magical island community.



**Michael Reeder**  
**Board Member**

Michael is the Founder of the Bainbridge Island based, brand constituency, Smiling Lions, where he is focused on crafting empathetic and effective marketing strategies for global brands such as ADT, Amazon and Starbucks.

# Thank you!

to our supporters who contributed \$7,511 to enable Helpline House to purchase nutritious foods at a better value with your generous donations during Kitsap Great Give.





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**Go Green**     
Subscribe to our e-newsletter at [HelplineHouse.org](https://www.helplinehouse.org)

# Neighbor helping Neighbor

## Thank You!

**12,742**  
**volunteer**

hours operated the food bank  
and seasonal programs.



"It's in your kind help that helps me direct my efforts toward greater independence after losses due to domestic violence." -Helpline House Client



**1,525**  
**individuals**

served through the food bank  
self service shopping program.



15,045

full service shops



2,190

porch pantry visits



939

kids' pantry bags

**NEW HOUSEHOLDS SERVED SURGES 20% IN FY23**

Our community showed, again and again, how much they care about their neighbors and our whole community by supporting the food bank with food drives, individual gifts of food, and donations of gift cards. [HelplineHouse.org/annual-report](https://www.helplinehouse.org/annual-report)