

CAPE ANN Museum

Cape Ann Museum teams up with Grace Center to offer meals to area residents experiencing food insecurity and homelessness

GLOUCESTER, MASS. (April 2021) – In keeping with the Cape Ann Museum’s community outreach efforts during the pandemic, including the placement of banners on the Museum’s Pleasant Street façade stating “Storms Rage, Gloucester Endures,” the Museum is continuing to partner with the Grace Center throughout this year to serve lunch twice a month to residents who are experiencing food insecurity and in some instances homelessness.

The lunches, which have been underwritten by a series of CAM Board members and other generous members of the community, are provided by a local restaurant and serve to up to 50 people at the Gloucester House in the banquet room with a fireplace, tables adorned with flowers, and views of Gloucester Harbor. The Gloucester House is housing the Grace Center temporarily due to the pandemic which restricted the number of guests they could serve in the day shelter at the Gloucester Unitarian Universalist Church.

“ ‘Food is love’ is the mantra of my Sicilian family,” said CAM Board Member Nina Goodick who spearheaded the Museum’s involvement along with a local “We Are All in This Together” Facebook group. “You cook with love, and you share what you have. My father’s words to me are always in my heart and head.” A ceramics artist, Goodick also created ceramic mugs for all of the participants.

Through this initiative, the Museum is supporting local restaurants and chefs by paying for the preparation of the meals twice a month and offering free memberships to the participating restaurants. To those who receive the meals, the Museum is offering art education activities and access to its Video Vault of lectures. The partnership began last year when the Museum provided the group meals at the YMCA facility in downtown Gloucester when it was used as an emergency shelter during the height of the pandemic. Residents also then learned how to paint their own self-portraits as part of an ongoing community portrait program, and several of the works are now hanging in the Museum on Pleasant Street.

The Museum also initiated a charitable connection to The Open Door in Gloucester during that time. Four local photographers, Jason Grow, Shawn G. Henry, Paul Cary Goldberg, and Bill Sumner, started taking portraits of local families last April. They captured images of more than 245 households and helped raise \$30,000 for The Open Door which was experiencing a 40 percent increase in demand for food. The result was *The Porch-Rait Project*, a selection of 40 portraits exhibited at the Janet and William Ellery James Center at Cape Ann Museum Green off Grant Circle in September 2020.

“During the pandemic, we felt it was so important to demonstrate support for the community by hanging the banners prominently on our downtown campus, showing support for front-line workers

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with a light installation and road rally at CAM Green, and highlighting the work of our local food pantry through an innovative photography exhibition,” said Museum Director Oliver Barker. “In many ways, we wanted to remind our community of its proven resiliency throughout history as a fishing community and one that comes together in times of challenge.”

That is also why Goodick feels strongly about the Museum’s support of the Grace Center residents. “We are sharing not only nourishment for their bodies by providing meals to some of most needy people in our community but also nourishment of the mind and soul through education and entertainment by sharing our video vault lectures series,” she said. “Education is such an important key to lifting people up and changing circumstances. Maybe what we are doing will touch someone in a way that can bring comfort, hope, and dignity through kindness.”

For more information about the Museum, its programs, exhibits, and collections, visit www.capeannmuseum.org.

The Cape Ann Museum, founded in 1875, exists to preserve and celebrate the history and culture of the area and to keep it relevant to today’s audiences. Spanning 44,000 square feet, the Museum is one of the major cultural institutions on Boston’s North Shore welcoming more than 25,000 local, national and international visitors each year to its exhibitions and programs. In addition to fine art, the Museum’s collections include decorative art, textiles, artifacts from the maritime and granite industries, three historic homes, a Library & Archives and a sculpture park in the heart of downtown Gloucester. In Summer 2021, the Museum will officially open the 12,000 square foot Janet & William Ellery James Center at the [Cape Ann Museum Green](#). The campus also includes three historic buildings – the White Ellery House (1710), an adjacent Barn (c. 1740), and the recently acquired Babson-Alling House (c.1740), all located on the site at the intersection of Washington and Poplar Streets in Gloucester.

The Cape Ann Museum is located at 27 Pleasant Street in Gloucester. Due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation, operating hours have been reduced to better protect the safety and well-being of visitors, staff and volunteers. The Museum is currently open Thursday through Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Timed tickets are required for all visitors at this time and can be reserved online at www.camuseum.eventbrite.com. Admission is \$12.00 adults, \$10.00 Cape Ann residents, seniors and students. Youth (under 18) and Museum members are free. Cape Ann residents can visit for free on the second Saturday of each month. For more information please call (978)283-0455 x110 or visit www.capeannmuseum.org.

For a detailed media fact sheet please visit www.capeannmuseum.org/press.

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