

The Good Samaritan

Donna has found more than housing at Tranquil House



Donna has found a home and a community at St. Vincent de Paul Louisville.

"They're always there for you," Donna said. "So I'm really glad I got with St. Vincent de Paul because they'll help you with anything."

As a resident of Tranquil House since 2001, Donna says she has "no idea" where she would live without SVDP's help, but "probably would have been on a psych floor."

Tranquil House opened in 1992 and has 12 efficiency apartments for clients with a chronic mental illness, such as suffering from schizophrenia, a bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, panic disorder, or post-traumatic stress disorder.

Each person has access to individual and group counseling with licensed mental health professionals on staff. These services are the primary driver of real change in the lives of our clients (see the chart).

Donna has struggled with cutting and burning herself over the years, but has seen significant progress.

"I think Donna's learned to use better coping skills, and she knows that there's support out there because she doesn't have a lot of support otherwise," said Matt Weaver, SVDP's Associate Director of Clinical Services. "We need to try to help clients think, feel, and act differently, and that takes time."

Donna has been grateful for the genuine care she's experienced at SVDP.

"Anytime I want to, I can call Matt," Donna said. "He tells me that every time group ends, if you have a problem or something, you know my phone number. And see, I called his number so many times, I don't even need his card. I know his number by heart."

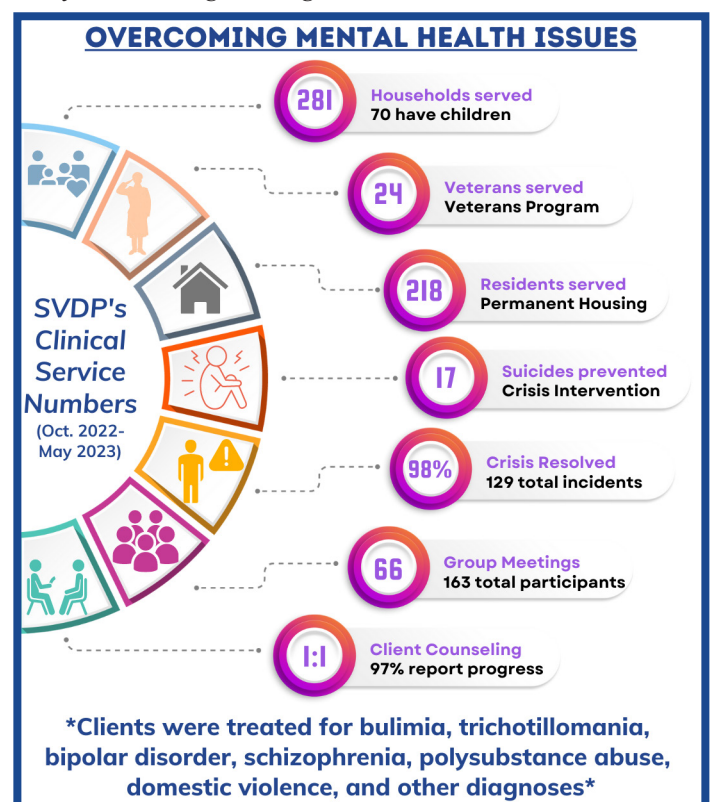
Donna has also found friendship with her Tranquil House neighbors.

"Here at Tranquil House, it's like we're all friends," Donna added. "I can go out there and sit at the picnic table and—if someone sees me—they'll come out and sit down and we'll just talk and stuff."

Residents can attend a weekly Tranquil group on campus, or Weaver will regularly take residents on trips. They've been to the Waterfront Park, Big Rock in Cherokee Park, Cave Hill Cemetery & Arboretum, and Fat Rabbit Thrift & Vintage. This allows them to enjoy the Louisville area because "they're not able to do things like that on their own."

Donna hasn't just found housing at Tranquil House, she's made it home for her and her cat, Midnight. Her single-bedroom apartment is fully furnished with enough movies to last a month, crosses spread across the wall, two framed Beatles' albums, a Huffy bike, books, and various trinkets.

"I just like living here. I guess I'm used to it now," she said.





ST. VINCENT
de PAUL

LOUISVILLE

The Good Samaritan

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Our Mission

We house, feed, and support those in
need with compassion and dignity.

Support SVDP

To find out more about our work or
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Food Pantry meets needs one bag at a time



Hunger isn't just in third world countries, it's right here in our own community.

You may not know Jerry—who's 63-years-old with cancer—or Melissa, or James—who lost his mother and has mental health challenges—but they receive groceries at St. Vincent de Paul Louisville's Food Pantry.

"Some of their stories are really heart-breaking," said JoAnn Haner, a longtime volunteer. "And it's not easy to take your groceries because they're heavy ... you may live on 8th street and it's hard to get those there or you're going on the bus."

Nine out of ten times, clients don't drive, so they walk several miles to the Food Pantry, which is in a former garage and warehouse on the SVDP campus. It serves our existing clients and those in the surrounding Smoketown and Shelby Park neighborhoods.

Every Tuesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., clients receive fresh produce, frozen meats, poultry, fish, and pantry staples. This is all made possible because of the two dozen volunteers and influx of donations from Dare to Care, SVDP conferences, and individuals.

"A mere thank you is not enough for the individuals that give of their time in the Food Pantry every week," said Donna Young, SVDP's Director of Conference Affairs & Volunteer Services. "Those who make regular donations of perishable items are equally appreciated. The dedication to serving and feeding our guests is remarkable."

For example, in March and April, Dare to Care donated a total of 36,019 pounds of food to our pantry, which is an estimated in-kind gift of \$23,541.83.

"Our partnership with SVDP is so critical because it meets both of our missions and what we're essentially looking to do is really to help all of our neighbors reach their full potential," said Vincent James, CEO of Dare to Care. "They all have the opportunity to do that when you have organizations like St. Vincent de Paul."

Food Pantry History



After a Dare to Care food bank closed in the Shelby Park and Smoketown area, it left quite a void for residents. In early 2014, Dare to Care approached SVDP about starting a Food Pantry. Upon visiting a variety of food pantries, where clients are handed a pre-packaged bag of groceries, the SVDP staff and board felt it would be best to give people a choice.

"I think you shouldn't go to bed hungry at night."

Clients are allowed to choose items depending on the day's donations, giving them a degree of self-sufficiency.

SVDP also wasn't sure they could get enough help, but nine years later, the Food Pantry is 100% volunteer run, and the majority of its original volunteers are still serving. Volunteer Steve Hennessey has seen the Food Pantry take flight since it launched on July 1, 2014.

"When it initially opened, I think we thought we'd maybe feed 30 or 40



households per month," Hennessey said.

The need to eat has been much greater.

Every month, more than 500 households get groceries at our Food Pantry, which is almost 20 times what Dare to Care estimated we would serve when we initially opened.

The statistics show that food insecurity touches everyone's lives.

- The food insecurity rate in Jefferson County is 11.7% of the total population—or 89,690 individuals—and the child food insecurity rate is 16.2%—or 27,760 children.
- According to Feeding America, one in six children face hunger in Kentucky, and 41% of households receiving SNAP benefits have children. Only one in five Kentucky children who eat free or reduced price lunch during the school year have access to such meals during summer break.

- Kentucky has the highest rate of food insecurity among 50- to 59-year-olds at 17%, above the 11% national average.
- 67% of households receiving assistance from food banks in Kentucky said they had to choose between paying for utilities or food.

Food Pantry Process

We serve people with a variety of backgrounds, from toddlers to veterans to seniors (see the chart).

When clients arrive at the Food Pantry, they check in with a volunteer, hand them their ID, and must live in the 40203 zip code. The volunteer hands the client an SVDP Food Pantry card. They then get their groceries. For a client's first visit, they receive USDA meats, fresh produce, and donated items. On their second visit in the same month, they can have produce and donated items. If they come again, they can only receive produce until the following month.

Kaaren Westlund has been volunteering at the Food Pantry for 5 years.

"I like serving people and the camaradery with the group makes it fun," Westlund said.

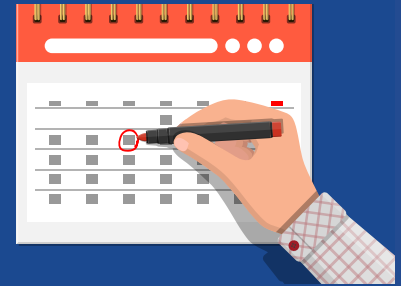
The cost—whether measured in donation dollars or volunteer hours—for a family to be able to sit around the dinner table and eat a well-balanced meal is worth it.

"Why do we do it?" said Deacon Scott Haner, a longtime volunteer. "There are people in need, and it's like, I think you shouldn't go to bed hungry at night. So we ask, 'What can we do in some small way because we've been blessed?'"

If you would like more information about volunteering or donating to the Food Pantry, visit www.svdplou.org/get-involved/.

Save the Date

UPCOMING EVENTS AT
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL LOUISVILLE



Come Join Us!

Garden Group

Mondays & Thursdays this
summer at 10 a.m.

Clubs & Cocktails

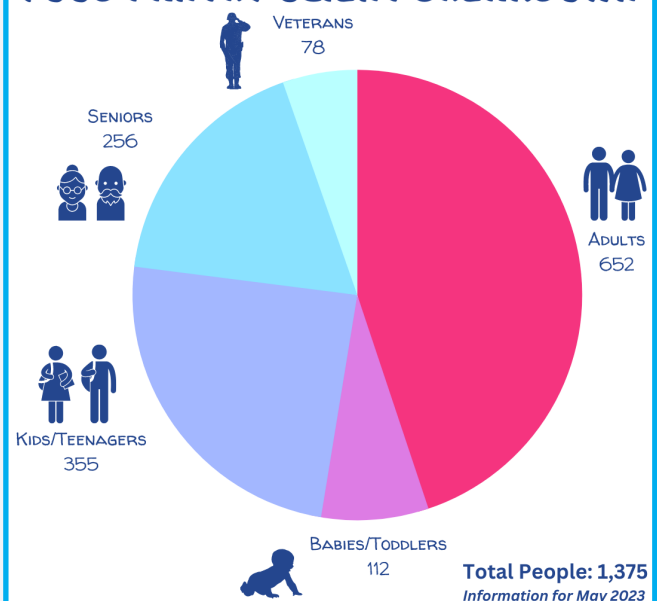
August 6th and 7th

For event information, please contact
Makenzie Smith at (502) 272-2134 or
msmith@svdplou.org.

Our thanks to Louisville Metro
Government for their support



FOOD PANTRY CLIENT BREAKDOWN



Donating your vehicle to SVDP goes a long way

What do Madonna and St. Vincent de Paul Louisville have in common?

Cars.

As part of SVDP's vehicle donation program, a donor gave us a car that they had named "Madonna." A few others were called "Betsy" and "Tiger Lily."

"People are often sentimental about their cars," said Wanda Selph, SVDP's Coordinator for Store and Vehicle Donations. "They represent family vacations, their teenagers learning to drive, bringing home a child after birth, or dependability in getting them to work and back for years."

SVDP receives around 115-135 vehicles per year. All profits directly support our campus facilities for those in need.

"I think it's easier to part with a vehicle when you know it can be used for a good cause," added Selph.

While you could take your car to a salvage yard, sell it on Carvana, or trade it in with CarMax—and ultimately receive a profit—it's often "new life" for people who can't afford a car or don't want to go into debt.

"They think maybe someone will get this vehicle who needs a way to work," she said. "We've had clients purchase a vehicle. We've had parents purchase a vehicle because they have a child with disabilities or for their teenager who just got their driver's license. Vincentians have bought cars for people who needed transportation."

You can donate a vehicle, running or not, and we'll do the rest.

Here are reasons people donated to SVDP:

- The number one reason is the donor believes that the vehicle still has life, so they would like to see it repaired and used by someone who needs it.
- To claim a tax deduction (donors are generally allowed to claim the gross amount of the sale).



Ron Paris donated a 2002 Ford Escape.

- The owner can no longer drive.
- The owner of the vehicle has passed away, so the executor gives it to us.
- They haven't driven the vehicle in months, and their spouse wants the extra space.
- They've donated "classic" vehicles that they thought they would restore, but lost interest or couldn't do the work.
- They're required to remove a non-drivable vehicle from their premises by a Homeowners Association.

What will your reason be? Here are the steps to donate your vehicle today.

1. Contact us at (502) 468-8953 to get more information.
2. While we prefer you drive your vehicle to the SVDP campus, if it's not in driving condition, we will tow it free-of-charge.
3. On the day of the donation, have the title ready (free from liens) and make sure the taxes are up-to-date.

For more information, visit www.svdplou.org/vehicle-donations-2/.

To: **St. Vincent de Paul Louisville followers**

Subject: **Send us your stories...**



Dear St. Vincent de Paul Louisville reader,

We would love to know about your personal, family, or corporate experiences at SVDP. As we officially celebrate 170 years on Dec. 11, 2023, we're asking that you send us any stories or photos that tell us why you're invested in our mission to house, feed, and support those in need with compassion and dignity. The memories of all those times are so meaningful. Maybe your roots trace back to a relative who was devoted from our founding, or it's volunteering with your grandson at the Santa Shop, or being inspired to donate to a specific program, or having a life-changing conversation with a client. We want to know about it! Please email your stories or photos to communications@svdplou.org.