



Building Community through
CONNECTIONS
HOLIDAYS 2008

Listen Is The Safety Net

We Will All Be Warmer For Our Efforts

Listen strives to identify need within the confines of our mission and our vision. As an agency that seeks to help where help is needed, we stay connected to our Upper Valley communities to ensure that we are able to provide meaningful services. Listen's success means there will always be a safety net to feed the hungry, warm those who are cold, keep families and individuals housed and nurture our youth. **Our success means there will always be a Listen where the community can come together to form bonds and create goodwill; a place to work out solutions that make our neighborhoods stronger by building upon the strengths of our neighbors.** When we come together in that spirit, "all things are possible".

2008 saw Listen provide record assistance for heat, housing and food. By mid-October, households receiving heating assistance increased by 250% over 2007. Households receiving rental assistance increased by 600%. These numbers are staggering and they are very real. **The cost of food, fuel, housing and heat are heavily impacting households that never needed to ask for assistance in the past.** Listen is their safety net.

What will we accomplish in 2009? How will we serve our communities in 2010? It is all up to you. We are not the ones who make things happen in the Upper Valley, you are. So much depends upon the generosity of our supporters as well as the needs of our clients. You are the ones who lead us forward. You are the ones who set the pace and the direction. Listen is simply a reflection of your acts.

The Listen Board of Directors and staff send you our best wishes for the Holiday Season and for Peace in the New Year.

Merilynn Bourne
Executive Director

Although we continue to use thrift store revenues to fund our service programs, community contributions are essential if we are to meet increasing needs.

Your Donations in Action

Listen assists those facing the threat of hunger.

Food Pantry: \$60,299 worth of groceries

Listen helps clients create and follow realistic budgets.

Financial Management: 200 households

Listen shares the joy. Reaching out is especially heartwarming during the holiday season.

Holiday Baskets Program: 228 families and seniors

Listen provides at risk children the lifetime benefits of a summer camp experience.

Summer Camp Scholarships: 289 children

Listen Volunteers build a healthy community through the giving of time, experience and wisdom.

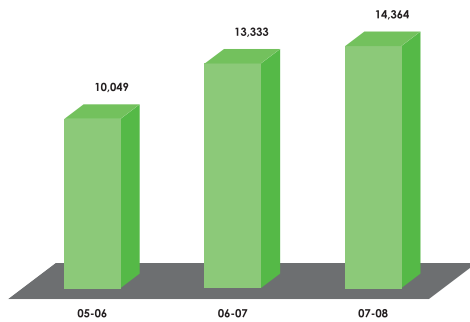
Volunteer Hours: 13,251

SHOP LISTEN

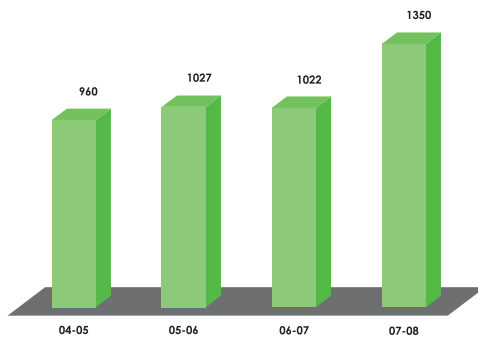
Lebanon • Canaan • WRJ

LISTEN MEETS THE NEED

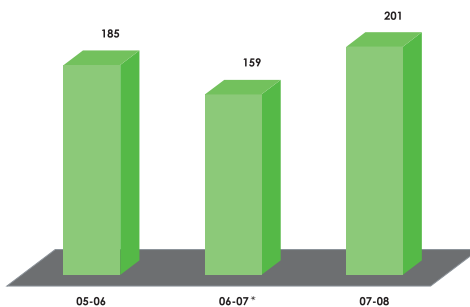
2007-2008 Services with Comparisons



Listen Community Dinners - Meals Served

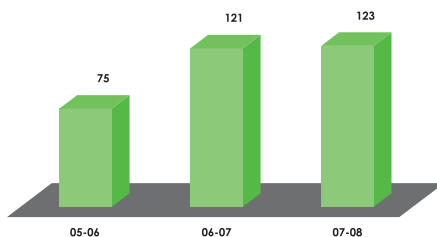


Listen Food Pantry - Household Visits



Listen Heating Helpers - Households Served

** 06-07 winter: record breaking warmth*



Listen Housing Helpers Loan - Households Served*

** Housing Helpers loans are interest free and long term to keep payments small.*

Special thanks for their significant support

- The Aloha Foundation
- Anne S. Segal Advised Fund
- Argo Foundation
- Balinda Rojek 1997 Charitable Lead Trust
- Barrette Family Fund
- The Byrne Foundation
- The Dickey Fund
- The Friendship Fund
- The Handley Foundation
- Hanover Rotary
- The Hardy Hill Fund
- Helena Rasche Baier Family Foundation
- The Help for People Foundation Trust
- Hypertherm
- The John M. Shapiro Charitable Trust
- Lebanon Riverside Rotary
- McLafferty-Skinner Fund
- Saul O. Sidore Memorial Foundation
- Simple Energy
- The Stettenheim Foundation
- Tele Atlas
- Timken Aerospace
- Upper Valley United Way
- WC & MT McCracken Charitable Lead Annuity Trust



LISTEN'S MISSION

Listen provides services and support to meet the critical needs of Upper Valley individuals and families

LISTEN'S VISION

An Upper Valley Community generously supporting individuals and families in their efforts to achieve and maintain successful independence



supported agency

IN OUR OWN BACK YARD

A Little Bit of Hope

IN 2001, Michelle was referred to Listen so her daughter could receive a scholarship to attend summer camp. It was discovered that Michelle was barely meeting her monthly expenses and her rent was 80% of her take home pay. (Housing costs should not exceed 30% of gross monthly income.)

Listen provided Michelle with a no interest Housing Helper loan as a deposit on a more affordable apartment. Although Michelle was not going to be able to get ahead, she would at least be able to meet her obligations.

In 2004, Michelle injured her back and could not continue to work full time. Listen helped her apply for food stamps and other state assistance. In the meantime, she and her daughter began attending Listen's Community Dinners. Listen also offered her groceries from the food pantry and vouchers to shop for necessities in the Thrift Stores.

Michelle continued to manage for the next couple of years. She healed and returned to work full time and was "holding her own."

Just recently, Michelle came to visit us again. This time it wasn't due to a back injury but to the rising price of fuel. The

cost of living has outpaced Michelle's earnings for years. And because the federal guidelines are seriously out of date, Michelle does not qualify for fuel assistance or other state benefits. What was enough to barely get by last year, won't be enough this year.

Michelle expressed to us that asking for help is humbling and she would prefer not to. She gives back by volunteering in the food pantry or making a donation any time she has a little extra cash. She is forever grateful that when times are tough, Listen is here.

High heating bills are creating anxiety about staying warm this winter. The high cost of food is creating anxiety about staying fed. Some of our clients have lost their jobs, some have illnesses, others are on a fixed income and cannot stretch their dollars to make it all work.

At Listen, we have the opportunity to meet many members of our community in their greatest time of need. People come to us overwhelmed by their struggle . . . By the end of the appointment, these same individuals can breathe a sigh of relief knowing that there is help. A little bit of hope can go a long way.

When you support Listen,
you support the entire community
one family at a time.



LISTEN COMMUNITY SERVICES

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60 Hanover Street
Lebanon, NH 03766
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Community Services
www.listencs.org

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The Green Wristband Connection

IN THIS TIME of high energy prices and inadequate government assistance, Listen's *Heating Helpers Program* protects vulnerable seniors and families from having to choose between warmth, food and/or medicine.

To protect our at-risk neighbors, Listen Community Services, Simple Energy, Mascoma Bank and a number of local businesses have joined forces to keep our at-risk neighbors warm by selling green "Simple Energy Solution" wristbands for \$5.00 each. Your donation will be set aside for emergency deliveries for Vermont & New Hampshire families who either do not qualify for federal assistance or who have exhausted it.



When Listen calls, Simple Energy will make a crisis fuel delivery at no additional cost **so 100% of your contribution will go to Listen's Heating Helpers Program.**

Help Listen meet the need. Join us by purchasing and wearing your "Energy Solution" wristband today! We'll all be warmer for the effort.

In 2007-08, Listen provided \$70,018 in heating assistance to 201 Upper Valley homes. By November 15th of this year, due to oil prices that are higher than last year, we served 136 households at a cost of \$ 43,400. At this rate and with 5 of the coldest months ahead of us, we expect to provide assistance to an additional 300 households for a total annual "Heating Helpers" cost of \$120,000.

**This heating season,
Listen expects to provide
\$120,000 in heating assistance
to 400 households.**