

SPRINGFIELD FAMILY CENTER

October 2026 Newsletter

SFC Welcomes a New Executive Director

After several months of thoughtful searching for the right candidate, the Springfield Family Center Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of a new Executive Director.

We are excited to welcome our new leader to the Family Center and look forward to the experience, energy, and vision she will share with our organization and the community we serve.

Melissa Valcourt brings more than 20 years of progressive leadership experience in nonprofit, community-based, human services, and advocacy organizations.

Throughout her career, she has been committed to strengthening organizations, developing community partnerships, supporting staff and volunteers, and expanding programs and resources that make a meaningful difference in people's lives.

Melissa has served in executive leadership roles with community organizations, including as Executive Director of Spark! Community Center in Lebanon, New Hampshire, where she provided leadership in operations, programming, fundraising, partnerships, staff development, and community outreach.

Most recently, she served as Executive Director/Senior Center Director of the Charlestown Senior Center, overseeing daily operations, programming, budgeting, grants, fundraising, volunteers, community partnerships, communications, and board reporting.

Her professional background also includes experience in financial management, residential human services, advocacy, administration, and program operations. She holds a Master of Leadership (MLSD) from Granite State College, as well as bachelor's and associate degrees in business management. She has also completed coursework in Nonprofit Management and Professional Grant Writing through New Hampshire Technical Institute.

Melissa believes that strong community organizations are built through collaboration, compassion, responsible stewardship, and meaningful relationships. She is passionate about bringing people and resources together to strengthen communities and ensure that individuals and families have access to the support they need.

As Executive Director of Springfield Family Center, Melissa looks forward to getting to know the Springfield community, working alongside the Board, staff, volunteers, donors, community partners, and supporters, and building upon the important work already being done by the Family Center.

Please join us in welcoming Melissa to Springfield Family Center!



SFC’s 7th Annual Basket Raffle Kicks Off!

Every year, we have so much fun showcasing the creativity and generosity of our community through the unique and entertaining baskets that are donated.

As we head into our 7th year, we can’t wait to see what wonderful and imaginative creations our community comes up with this time around!

Want to participate? This is a great opportunity to promote your business, showcase a hobby or talent, support a favorite cause, or simply have some fun putting together a collection of items to be raffled off.

Basket themes have ranged widely over the years and are limited only by your imagination!

Check out the list below for some ideas to get you started.

And don’t feel limited to an actual basket! Your container can match your theme—a pail, pot, box, tote, or just about anything that works.

Each donor is invited to provide a short description of their basket, which we will use to promote your donation alongside a photo of your creation.

Basket donations will be collected starting October 1st through November 30th.

Donations can be dropped off at the Springfield Family Center office Monday–Friday, between 9am-2:30pm.

Thank you for helping make this fundraiser such a fun community tradition and for supporting the Springfield Family Center!

Basket Raffle Theme Ideas

- Movie Night
- Car Wash/Maintenance
- Baby
- Arts and Crafts:

o Knitting, Crocheting, Sewing, Needlepoint

o Children's/Adult Coloring

o Paints, Stickers, Scrapbooking

o Jewelry, etc.

- Pets – Cat/Dog Etc.
- Coffee Lovers
- Tea Lovers
- Wine and Cheese
- Beer Lover's
- Lotto Theme
- Golf Theme
- Sports Themes
- Man-Cave Theme

- She-Shed Theme
- Bath Theme
- Fishing Theme
- Toy/Stuffed Animal Theme
- Jewelry Theme
- Makeup Theme
- Picnic Theme
- Household Cleaner Theme
- Hot Cocoa Theme
- Food Themes:
  - Specialty Foods/ Samplers
  - Nut Theme (Walnuts, Cashews, Peanuts, etc.
  - Breakfast Theme
  - Veggie Lovers Theme
  - Natural Food Theme
  - Snack Theme (Chips, Special Dips, etc.)
  - Candy Theme
  - Chocolate Lovers
  - Meat Lovers (Sausage, Pepperoni, etc.)
- Technology Theme
- Travel Theme
- School Time Theme
- Aromatherapy Theme
- Essential Oil Theme

- Stress Away Theme
- Health Theme
- Meditation Theme
- Music Theme
- Couple's Romantic Theme
- Car Care Theme
- First Aid Theme
- Fruit Basket
- Fall Festival Theme
- Mechanic Theme
- Teacher’s Theme
- Household Cleaner Theme
- Bird Lover's Theme
- Gardener's Theme
- Gift Card Theme
- Candle Theme
- Bath Theme
- Storage Theme
- Kitchen Theme
- Mom Theme
- Dad Theme
- Teenager Theme (I-tunes gift card, earbuds, etc.)
- Book Lovers Theme
- Game Theme

● DIY Theme- various

● Christmas Theme

● New Year’s Theme

● Birthday Theme





Help Us Fill Our Shelves This Fall

As we enter October, autumn is already in full swing. The days are getting shorter, temperatures are dropping, and before we know it, the holiday season will be upon us.

For many of our food-insecure neighbors, this time of year can bring difficult choices:

Which bills get paid first?
What groceries can we afford?
How will we keep our homes warm?

The Springfield Family Center’s goal is to help ease some of that worry by providing supplemental access to our Food Shelf food resource.

To help us continue meeting that need, we turn to our wonderful community and friends throughout the surrounding area to help keep our shelves stocked and our neighbors supported.

There are lots of fun and creative ways to organize a food drive!

Straightforward Food Drives:

Set up a collection outside your local grocery store or another community location.

Friendly Challenges:

Create a little competition between office departments, school classes or grades, organizations, teams, or groups. See who can collect the most!

Food Item Challenges:

Pick two items and let the competition begin!
Pasta vs. sauce
Peanut butter vs. jelly
Canned tuna vs. canned chicken
Canned vegetables vs. canned fruit
…and so many other possibilities!

Meal Kit Drives:

Put together a complete, shelf-stable meal for a family of four for under $20. Simply place the ingredients in a 2-gallon zip-top bag and you have an easy, ready-to-donate meal kit. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

Chicken Casserole: canned chicken, stuffing, cream of mushroom soup, canned vegetables

Chicken Alfredo: canned chicken, Alfredo sauce, Italian seasoning packet, pasta

Shepherd's Pie: canned beef, powdered brown gravy, canned peas and carrots, instant potatoes

Taco Soup: vegetarian baked beans, canned corn, canned diced tomatoes, tomato soup, taco seasoning packet, Fritos, dehydrated onions

Protein Drives:

In addition to traditional shelf-stable food items, we are often in great need of protein-rich foods to help our neighbors create healthier, more balanced meals. Protein donations can include a wide variety of items, from eggs and dairy products to canned or frozen meats, beans, peanut and other nut butters, fish, and more.

Consider organizing a protein-focused food drive for the Springfield Family Center!

These donations provide our food shelf recipients with greater variety and more nutritious options they need for their households.

Have another idea? We'd love to hear it!

When you or your group are planning or organizing a food drive, please contact our Food Shelf Manager, Keegan Mack-Chase, at sfcfoodshelf@gmail.com.

Keegan can help coordinate the receiving of your donations, as well as assist with advertising and promoting your event.

Upcoming Food Drive:

A reminder that the Springfield Democrats will be hosting a food drive on behalf of the *Springfield Family Center on Saturday, October 3, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., outside the Springfield Shaw's.*

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who helps fill our shelves and, in turn, helps us fill the plates of our neighbors. Thank you for being part of the community that makes this support possible!



Springfield Family Center Wish Lists

Food Shelf

- Canned Meats
- Canned tomato products
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Assorted Dry Pastas
- Canned Pasta
- Rice
- Cereal
- Oatmeal
- Pancake mix
- Canned Soups
- Canned Beans
- Canned Fruits
- Canned Veggies
- Shelf Stable Milk
- Non-Dairy Shelf Stable Milk
- Condiments
- Cooking oils
- Seasonings
- Mac & Cheese
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly
- Halal, Kosher and Gluten Free Foods
- No Sugar Added
- No or Low Sodium

School Pantries

- Cereal
- Oatmeal
- Mac & Cheese (microwavable is great)
- Canned Pastas
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Assorted Dry Pasta
- Canned Soups
- Canned Fruit
- Applesauce
- Canned Tuna
- Canned Chicken
- Canned Veggies
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly
- Halal, Kosher and Gluten Free Foods
- No Sugar Added
- No or Low Sodium

Other Useful Items

- Can Openers
- Plastic utensils
- 1 or 2 Gallon Ziplock Bags

Hygiene Products

***Travel-size preferred**

- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Body Wash
- Deodorant
- Bar Soap
- Hand Sanitizer
- Feminine Hygiene Products
- Hair Brush or Comb
- Razors
- Shaving Cream
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste

Want to help but don't have time to shop or drop off items? Scan the QR code to make your donation today!

Donation to Springfield Family Center, Inc.



Help Us Prepare Emergency Cold Weather Bags

SFC has been working with local agencies to help provide emergency cold weather bags for individuals in need throughout our community. As temperatures begin to drop, preparing these bags is at the forefront of our thoughts, and we're reaching out to our generous community for support.

We welcome donations of new items that can be used to create these bags, including:

Backpacks

Emergency thermal blankets

Hand and foot warmers

Winter hats

Mittens and gloves

Socks

Body wipes

Bar soap

Travel-size toiletries, including toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, and deodorant

First aid supplies, such as Band-Aids, antibacterial ointment, gauze, medical tape, alcohol wipes, and more

Shelf-stable, ready-to-eat meals

MREs

Manual can openers

Batteries

Sleeping bags

Tents

Please note: While they are also greatly needed, we will **not be collecting outerwear, such as coats, boots, or shoes, at this time.**

During the winter of 2025–26, we were able to distribute 38 emergency cold weather bags to individuals in need.

We're hoping to build on that effort this year and provide even more support as the colder months arrive.

Every donation, whether it's one item or a full backpack of supplies, can make a difference.

Thank you for helping us prepare for the winter and, in turn, helping our neighbors stay a little warmer and safer.



October Community Events

There's lots of events to choose from this month, so have a peek at some of the fun gathering listed below and have a **Happy Halloween** season!

Croft + Crumb at the Annual Harvest Festival

When: Saturday, October 3rd

Where: Governor Hunt House Community Center in Vernon, VT

Time: 10:00am - 3:00pm

Cost: Free Admission

For more information visit the Governor Hunt House website by clicking the link below:

Governor Hunt House Harvest Festival



Project Action 5k & Picklefest

When: Saturday, October 3rd

Where: Toonerville Trailhead, Springfield VT

Time: (race) 10:30am, (Picklefest) 11am-2pm

Cost: Race requires registration of $10 per runner

Follow Project Action on facebook or contact info@projectactionvermont.org for more details



Springfield Apple Festival

When: Saturday, October 10th

Where: Riverside Middle School, Springfield VT

Time: 9am - 4pm

For more information: springfieldvt.com/apple-festival

Wellwood Orchards Car Show

When: Saturday, October 10th

What: Car Show

Where: 529 Wellwood Orchard Road, Springfield, VT

Time: 10am-2pm

Cost: Free



Springfield Town Library

What: A Literary Escape Room!

You've been trapped inside a library! Do you have the literary know-how to find the clues and escape? Use your knowledge of books, language, and puzzles in this thrilling activity for the Halloween season!

When: Tuesday, October 13th

Time: Block #1 from 3-4pm, Block #2 from 4-5pm

Ages 6-12

Registration Required

For more information, visit the Springfield Town Library website link below:

Springfield Town Library

Springfield VT Rotary 72nd Annual Penny Sale

When: Saturday, October 17th

Where: Riverside Middle School Gym, Springfield, VT

Time: Doors open at 5pm, auction begins at 6pm

For more information, please visit them at:

Springfield Rotary

The Edgar May Health and Recreation Center

What: Pumpkins in the Pool

When: Friday, October 23rd

Where: Edgar May Rec Pool

Time: 5pm-8pm

Get into the Halloween spirit with one of the Edgar May's favorite annual events, Pumpkins in the Pool, for ages 6 to 10.

The evening includes time to retrieve your pumpkin from the pool, decorate it, open swimming, and more.

Pizza and beverages will be provided.

Parents can drop off or choose to stay with their children.

Grab your friends and join us for seasonal fun.

Space is limited and registration is required.

For more information, contact Zoe Lirakis

edgarmay.org/upcoming-events/pumpkins-in-the-pool-oct2026

VFW Post 771

What: Halloween Dance

When: Saturday, October 24th

Where: VFW Post 771, 191 River Street, Springfield, VT

Time: 7pm-10pm

Cost: $15 per person, including buffet meal



Springfield Moose Lodge

What: Halloween Dance

When: Saturday, October 30th

Where: 39 South Street, Springfield,VT

Time: 7pm-10pm

Cost: $10 per person





Heartfelt Thanks to Our September Donors

To everyone who donated food, contributed financially, or gave their time to support Springfield Family Center’s food programs in September, we are deeply grateful.

Because of your generosity:

Families in our community have nourishing meals.

Seniors can access healthy food.

Neighbors facing challenges feel seen, supported, and cared for.

You are the heart of this work.

Your kindness strengthens our community, making it healthier, more compassionate, and full of hope.

From all of us at Springfield Family Center, thank you for standing with us and with your neighbors.

September Food Donors:

American Legion Post 18

VFW Post 771 Auxiliary
Willing Hands

Plains Brook Farm

Thrive Thrift Store & Community Resource Center

Springfield Hospital

Springfield Housing Authority

North Springfield Baptist Church

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

United Methodist Church

Unitarian Universalist Church

Mari Csiszer

Danny Sanborn

Neal

Diane Kimble

Christina King

Keith & Judy Stern

Angela Trauth

Daryl

Amanda French

Donna Builder

Ginny Thulen

April Coen

Ling Wang

Tara Anderson

September Monetary Donors:

Mascoma Bank

Alwin Schuller

Mason Simoneau

Carol Hansen

Ian Speers

Carol Lynn Knight

Joanna Alix Watercolors

Christina Pujdak

Caroline Comley

Steffanie Baker

Paul Cioffi

Jenna Martin

Alan Gottesman

Mark Gomez

Tessa Daniels

Kathryn E Waters

Jeannine & Richmond Hughes

Carol Hitchcock

Pat Hill & Angela Trauth

Elizabeth & Fred Willis

September Grant Donors:

The Holt Foundation

Thank you to all of our donors; large or small, all efforts contribute to making a difference in so many lives.

With gratitude,

The Springfield Family Center staff

See you in November!

Your Friends at the Springfield Family Center

802 885 3646

Click Here To Donate Today To SFC!

Please note the recent change to Springfield Family Center's mailing address.

New mailing address is: 130 Springfield Plaza Road, Springfield, VT 05156

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