

Soup kitchen fund raiser packs in diners

By Susan Field, sfield@michigannewspapers.com, [@sfield_msun](https://twitter.com/sfield_msun) on Twitter • Posted: 11/21/15, 11:57 AM EST • Updated: on 11/21/2015

Even though Genny Sobaski retired after being director of the Isabella Community Soup Kitchen for several years, she can't stay away from the place.

She likes to volunteer at the soup kitchen, located at 621 S. Adams St. in Mt. Pleasant.

On Friday, she was among the crowd gathered at the facility to dine on soups, breads and desserts during the annual "Soup and Bread" fund raiser.

Noting that dinner was wonderful, Sobaski said she ate too much, but that's a good thing for the soup kitchen, which relies on donations to operate.

Cost of the dinner was a free will donation, and people who arrived ready to eat foods donated from various local eateries were generous.

In addition to the soup kitchen's own vegetable soup, area restaurants donated other varieties, including egg drop, steak and barley, chicken noodle, creamy chicken and two kinds of chili; one from Central Michigan University Food Services and another from neighboring Freddie's Tavern, which wins awards for its chili.

Other restaurants donating soups were Bennigans, Bob Evans, Buck's Run, China Garden, Crankers, Erbert and Gerbert, Max and Emily's, Ponderosa and Stan's.

Bread donations came from Cottage Inn, Hungry Howie's, Stan's and Lone Star Steak House.

Desserts, including cheesecake, pie and cake, came from Bob Evans, Central Michigan Catering, Max and Emily's Classic Cheesecakes, Ponderosa and Ric's Food Center.

As guests dined, many volunteers from student groups at CMU served up bowls of steaming soup, including the International Student Organization, Alpha Phi Omega, the NAACP, Circle K Internationals, Alpha Pi Alpha, the Physical Therapy Group, the Counselor Education Program, and Human Development and Family Sciences.

Soup Kitchen Director Kim Freidrich was pleased at how many people attended the event.

"We're busting at the seams," she said. "It's awesome."

Other volunteers worked side by side with students, serving more than 100 bowls of soup an hour into the event.

"It's a great turnout," Freidrich said. "The weather is perfect."

"Everyone is in the mood for a bowl of soup."

Sue Woods, chair of the soup kitchen board of director for 13 years, was among the diners Friday night.

In the early days of the fund raiser, it was tied to the hunting sea-



Susan Field-The Morning Sun **Eman Alshami (left) serves egg drop soup to Sister Marie Kopin of Our Lady of Hope Parish at the Isabella Community Soup Kitchen soup and bread fundraiser Friday, Nov. 21, 2015.**

son, Woods said.

The idea was that hunting "widows" and others who don't hunt could go to the soup kitchen and celebrate some of the area's food businesses.

"It's still in the same format," she said. "It's a nice night of fellowship and good soup."

Freidrich said the number of people eating at the soup kitchen has increased, and that she's seeing young families stop in for food.

On Friday, the soup kitchen served 116 meals, Freidrich said.

Woods noted that with colder weather arriving, more homeless people should go to the soup kitchen to stay out of the elements during the day.

Isabella County Restoration House, a homeless shelter that operates in Mt. Pleasant, takes in those who qualify at night, and the shelter users can stay inside at the soup kitchen during the day, Woods said.

Isabella Community Soup Kitchen takes donations and is always in need of volunteers.

Donations can be made online at <http://www.icsk.org/index.php/donate>, and there are donation canisters at various locations in Mt. Pleasant.