



Annual Garlic Festival Benefits Always Home

In September, Olde Mistick Village held their 14th Annual Garlic Festival. Organized by the Olde Mistick Village Merchants' Association, this two-day event attracted large crowds eager to sample all things garlic. Following the event, Jim Holley, Kim Roche and Dan Price presented Always Home with a generous \$1,000 donation from the Olde Mistick Village Merchants' Association. Joyce Olson Resnikoff, Owner and Executive Director of the Martin Olson Irrevocable Trust/Olde Mistick Village, surprised us further with an amazing \$5,000 matching gift!

For decades, Olde Mistick Village's philanthropy has supported area nonprofits. In 2022, Always Home will be the beneficiary of the Village's legendary Cabin Fever Festival and Charity Chowder Cook-Off. This annual event in February is an opportunity to sample local restaurants' signature chowders and vote for your favorite. Don't miss the fun! **Save the Date-Saturday, February 26, 2022**. Interested in volunteering for the day? Contact atumolo@alwayshome.org

Courage to Share



There is a stigma attached to homelessness. It's not a moment in life anyone wants to relive. But Michelle chose to share her story with you to show how homelessness can happen to anyone, even when they have a full-time job.

Michelle works a 40-hour week as a leasing agent for a major apartment complex. She's a proud, single mother who glows when she introduces her 15-year-old son. He's a polite young man and a good student at the Catholic school he attends. Every month, Michelle sets aside \$200 for his tuition. Although she doesn't make a lot of money, Michelle works hard and budgets carefully. She was raised on the notion that hard work pays off. When she lost wages during the pandemic, she used her stimulus check to pay her rent. It was a point of pride not to fall behind or take a hand-out. She never imagined that a few months later, she and her son would be on the doorstep of homelessness.

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Cruthers: Heart to Heart Honoree

When considering who to honor at our Heart to Heart Gala in May 2022, we all agreed. David Cruthers checks all the boxes. For many years, he has been a devoted and passionate supporter of Always Home. As a volunteer, former employee and community ambassador, David furthers our mission, inspiring others along the way. But what makes David a special honoree is the abundant goodwill he shares every day. It is our good fortune to call him a friend. Please **SAVE THE DATE** and join us on **FRIDAY, MAY 13, 2022** to honor David!



Keeping Kids Housed

The stress of homelessness is known to adversely impact the long-term health and well-being of the youngest members of our society. Children who experience housing instability are more likely than their housed peers to have physical and mental health issues, emotional and behavioral disorders, and learning disabilities. They log more school absences and have lower graduation rates. Childhood homelessness can cast a long shadow over adulthood. But with generous community support, Always Home is keeping kids safely housed. This is how...

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STAFF FLICK PICK

MAID is a Netflix miniseries adapted from Stephanie Land's bestselling memoir, "Maid: Hard Work, Low Pay, and a Mother's Will to Survive". Main character Alex (Margaret Qualley) flees an emotionally abusive relationship only to find that she and her 2-year-old daughter, Maddy, are penniless and homeless. Over 10 episodes, we follow Alex as she struggles to rise above her own world of hurt to create a safe and better life for her child.

MAID doesn't soften the rough edges and sharp corners of living in poverty. Alex cleans houses for \$12.50 an hour. (Connecticut's hourly minimum wage is \$13). After paying for her own gas, cleaning supplies and childcare for Maddy, days of grueling work still don't add up to a livable wage. Even with access to welfare benefit programs like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to put food on the table, Alex and Maddy still live every day on the edge of homelessness.

Alex encounters the same setbacks and barriers to sustaining housing that Always Home's client families face: lack of childcare, loss of transportation, shortage of affordable housing, and insufficient family support. Andie MacDowell plays Paula, Alex's bi-polar mother and on-again/off-again support system. MacDowell and Qualley are real-life mother and daughter which gives the on-film relationship extra emotional depth.

This is a story about a hard life. It's about good and bad choices, falling yet finding the endurance and perseverance to start again, unexpected kindnesses, and delayed but never-forgotten dreams. Click on the photo above to view the MAID trailer. Like us, we think you'll want to watch more.

Please consider making a difference every day with a monthly recurring gift. A donation of \$50 a month has the power to change a family's life.

[**Donate Now**](#)

Deep gratitude to generous supporters of Always Home, including recent foundation grants from: Anderson-Paffard Foundation; Dominion Energy Foundation; Elizabeth Carse Foundation, Bank of America, N.A., Trustee; George A. & Grace L. Long Foundation, Bank of America, N.A., Co-Trustee; Nordson Corporation Foundation; Town Fair Tire Foundation; and Webster Bank.



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