

Gift of socks and sleeping bags made to Isaiah 61 Cafe

By THOMAS P. CALDWELL
FOR THE LACONIA DAILY SUN

CONCORD — Gov. Chris Sununu welcomed Kevin Larson of Laconia and Malden, Massachusetts, into the governor's office to present socks and sleeping bags to Dawn Longval of the Isaiah 61 Cafe on Dec. 9. The gifts are targeted for the homeless.

Isaiah 61 Cafe is in its fourth year of operation, providing continental breakfasts to anyone wishing to stop by, as well as a place to take showers, do laundry, store belongings, and simply relax in a welcoming atmosphere. Longval and her husband, Dave, established the cafe after she had been inspired by a similar operation for the homeless in Manchester, the 1269 Cafe.

The Longvals are looking to expand and provide winter shelter to the local homeless population.

Larson said one of the biggest needs of the homeless is socks, not just for warmth but also for dignity. Sleeping bags also are very important, he said.

In helping to administer the Friends of Eddie Larson fund, established to honor the memory of his brother, who died on April 17, 2014, at the age of 55, Kevin said he was trying to think of worthy recipients and settled on helping the homeless. He delivered three cartons of socks and three sleeping bags during Thursday's presentation.

Eddie Larson, a lifelong resident of Malden, had owned and operated Edgeworth News Agency and he was member of several local clubs before his death. He also was a Hall of Fame recipient and treasurer of the Intercity Baseball League.

Kevin Larson said that although he's from Malden, he grew up on Squam Lake and used to set the pins at the bowling alley where Walter's Basin sits today. He also has been friends with the late Bob Lawton and said his son Brian's name was in the first "Happy Fifth Birthday" message to be put on the sign at Funspot.

"I love the area," Larson said.

For Longval, operating the Isaiah 61 Cafe is her calling. The Bible verse Isaiah 61:1-4 calls upon the faithful to rebuild, restore, and renew. Besides the homeless, the cafe has helped those with addictions, but she said they welcome everyone.

The cafe is located at 100 New Salem St., Laconia, and is open Monday through Friday.



Gov. Chris Sununu joins Kevin Larson in presenting a donation of socks and sleeping bags to Dawn Longval, founder of Isaiah 61 Cafe, to be distributed to the homeless. (Thomas P. Caldwell photo/for The Laconia Daily Sun)



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Dr. Lara Niemela was born and raised in New England. She attended both college and medical school in Virginia and returned to New England to complete her residency in pediatrics at the Connecticut Children's Medical Center in Hartford. She has spent the last 22 years in the Monadnock Region of NH and is excited to be expanding to the Lakes Region to be practicing alongside Catherine Holub-Smith, APRN-C DNP, at HealthFirst.

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