I’m pretty much a lone wolf,” shares Glen Fishbaugh, a United States Air Force veteran and regular guest at the Dining Center. “I’m not much for joining things … I tend to be too honest with my opinions and that gets people upset at me.”

Fiercely independent, Glen served as a Security Policeman for the Air Force and then returned home to his native Rochester in 1984 with an honorable discharge. Since then, he has held a number of odd jobs, but they usually don’t last. “It’s that honesty thing again, I can’t help it. I say what I think, that’s who I am, but that gets me in trouble.”

But he never complains. “I don’t do self-pity. . .When you’re an adult and you have a problem, it’s up to you to fix it. You can’t moan and complain, you need to take action. There are resources out there but you have to go find them.”

Glen remembers his first visit to the Dining Center clearly. “It was 2006. I came because someone told me about the bike giveaway, but the most important thing the Dining Center’s done for me is get me hooked up with the VA so I could get health benefits.”

Until coming to the Dining Center, he had no idea that veterans’ benefits were available. “It’s a crime,” Glen says, “you wouldn’t believe how many vets are homeless and a lot of these guys have no idea of the benefits available to them. It’s an embarrassment to our country.”

Glen has since become a regular at the Dining Center and moved into his own apartment not long ago, thanks to a housing program for homeless vets. Life has gotten a lot better for Glen and he credits his involvement with the Dining Center for much of it. “They don’t judge you [at the Dining Center], they just want to help. So many people, they judge you for being poor and I can’t deal with that.” He continues, “I tell anyone who needs help to go to the Dining Center. They have it all. I call the Dining Center ‘a one stop shopping center for people who need help.’”

“Glen adds a real richness to our Dining Center community,” shares Executive Director Michele Cooley. “He’s smart and incredibly well-read … he keeps things lively and interesting and we’re grateful for his presence. … In his own way, he serves as a real mentor to a lot of our guests. … His can-do attitude is a great example for all of us.”

Honoring Veteran Glen Fishbaugh
Honoring Glen Fishbaugh

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This Veterans Day, as we pause to honor our servicemen and women, we at the Dining Center are humbled to journey alongside the estimated 15 percent of our guests who are veterans. “As Glen indicates,” says Michele, “I’m continually amazed at the number of veterans who do not know about the services available to them. They’ve served our country honorably and are now struggling to meet their most basic needs. ... One of the best parts of my job is working with our guests individually to help them access services. People’s lives are complicated and to watch someone like Glen rebuild a stable life for himself brings all of us at the Dining Center great joy.” To Glen and all of our veterans, thank you.

What’s for Dinner?

IT CAN BE HARD enough to answer this question when you only have to feed a few people and know ahead of time what’s in the refrigerator. Now imagine figuring out what to feed 100+ people when you can only guess what you will have on hand. That’s what cooks Jeanette Taylor and David Stuver do each week when they prepare Sunday dinner. Says David, “Especially with the produce, we never know for sure what we’ll have. It all depends on what we can find at Foodlink. ... it took me a couple of weeks to stockpile enough veggies for the chicken and biscuits we served this past Sunday, but it was a huge hit.”

You may not need to make chicken and biscuits for 100, but you could easily scale back David’s recipe and serve it for sure what we’ll have. It all depends on what we can find at Foodlink. ... it took me a couple of weeks to stockpile enough veggies for the chicken and biscuits we served this past Sunday, but it was a huge hit.

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