Remembering Ganga Stone
October 30, 1941 – June 2, 2021

Statement from God’s Love We Deliver

With great sadness, God’s Love We Deliver shares the passing of our founder Ganga Stone. In 1985, Ganga saw an urgent need – to feed those who were desperately ill and homebound from AIDS – and rose to address this need by bringing meals and dignity to those who were suffering.

Ganga’s vision changed New York City. Through the efforts of Ganga and those of her co-founder Jane Best, people who had been starving, shunned, isolated, and alone now had a delicious, nutritious meal brought to them by a caring volunteer. Ganga and God’s Love We Deliver immediately relieved the suffering of so many, simply by recognizing that being sick and hungry is a crisis that demands an urgent response.

God’s Love is proud to carry on the mission that Ganga began all those years ago. We will continue to work to ensure that all those who are too sick to shop or cook for themselves will get the nutritious, delicious, love-filled meals they need. Rest in peace, Ganga. You are forever in our hearts.

Quote from Karen Pearl, President & CEO:
“Ganga was fearless in her vision for a better New York City, with caring New Yorkers giving their time, love, and energy. I delighted in her stories and in her unwavering belief in the triumph of human compassion and the joy of service. We are honored to continue her legacy of life-saving work for everyone who needs God’s Love We Deliver.”

Quote from Blaine Trump, Vice Chair and Lifetime Board member:
“Ganga changed our world and my life. She was determined that Gods Love We Deliver would feed the most vulnerable and critically ill
New Yorkers. I’m very grateful to have been a part of her journey. Today we send out 2.5 million meals annually... what a legacy she leaves. We will miss her voice and constant “can do” spirit!

Quote from Jane Best, Co-Founder:
“Ganga was a visionary, a leader, and a dear friend. It was a great honor in my life to work side by side with her at God’s Love We Deliver, to feed so many people in such a desperate situation, bringing a meal and a smile, and to create the opportunity for so many to experience the joy of volunteering.”

Ganga's Story of God's Love We Deliver

“If you give food to a hungry person, you’re giving your love in the form of something that can be used right away by that person.” – Ganga Stone

Today we are deeply saddened to share of the passing of our founder, Ganga Stone. We remember Ganga’s vision, fearlessness, determination, and most of all, love. We send our love to her family and friends.

In the 1980s, when AIDS was ravaging New York City, Ganga had a vision of ensuring that no one who was homebound with AIDS would go without a meal and a smile. Many of you know her from our founding story, below:

In 1985, a hospice volunteer named Ganga Stone paid a visit to an AIDS patient that changed her life. The patient, Richard Sale, was too ill to cook for himself. Ganga’s compassion took hold, a meal was prepared and delivered on the next visit, and an epiphany was born: Something as basic as delivering a meal could bring dignity and recognition to a desperate situation.

Ganga’s experience then drove her to a second epiphany. The severity of Richard’s situation demanded something more than simply delivering food. It required preparing nutritionally tailored meals that would support an individual’s specific medical treatment. She researched his needs and was on her way again, with a new meal in hand, when she was stopped by a minister in the neighborhood who recognized her. He asked what she was doing, she told him, and he replied, “you’re not just delivering food … you’re delivering God’s love.”

And Ganga said, “That’s the name.” And God’s Love We Deliver was born.

After Ganga delivered that first meal, she went home and started preparing the next. She cooked meals for Richard and his friends living with AIDS in her small apartment with her friend and co-founder Jane Best. But soon, they turned to restaurants like Claire, Quartorze, and the Four Seasons to donate meals. Jane, who managed logistics and finance, would receive a call from a hungry client, call the restaurant to arrange for pick-up, and Ganga would pick up meals on her bicycle and deliver all over town.

“I love giving something that’s really wanted. And when people are hungry, what’s really wanted, is food, the good food, the best food that we could find.” – Ganga Stone

Despite delivering to people who were often in their last days, Ganga felt joyful when making deliveries, as she knew she was bringing high-quality food to New Yorkers who were suffering and, so often isolated and alone. Ganga started raising funds for her mission with donation cans. It didn’t take long for anyone to hear her pitch to let her have some counter space at their register for a God’s Love can.

God’s Love We Deliver grew quickly with Ganga’s vision. She knew that people who felt helpless in the face of AIDS could find purpose in volunteering. In 1987, the God’s Love We Deliver operation moved to the basement of the West Park Presbyterian Church on the Upper West Side, making up to 100 meals each day.

And while God’s Love We Deliver grew, so did Ganga’s joy with the work, knowing how many more people were being fed each day by God’s Love We Deliver. Even after Ganga moved out of the City, she stayed with us: visiting when she was in town, reading everything on our website, sending us notes on our newsletters, and staying in touch with staff.

Ganga led with compassion and love with everything that she did. From that first meal with Richard, she knew that being sick and hungry is a crisis that demands an urgent response. We are honored to carry on this life-affirming work, and we know that she is so proud of our volunteers, staff, and entire community for answering the call to be there for our most vulnerable neighbors. Thank you, Ganga. You will be forever in our hearts.

Ganga, in her Own Words
A Tribute to Ganga from Friends
Read Tributes

The New York Times

Ganga Stone, Who Gave Sustenance to AIDS Patients, Dies at 79

NY Daily News

Ganga Stone, visionary co-founder of God’s Love We Deliver charity launched in NYC during AIDS epidemic, dead at 78

POZ

R.I.P. Ganga Stone, Who Fed People Living With AIDS and Cofounded GLWD

The Economist

Ganga Stone died on June 2nd
Ganga in Pictures
Ganga Stone, founder of God's Love We Deliver, dies at 79

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