

I was asked to clean out an old office space and it was daunting. This space had decades of other people's documents and a history that didn't belong to me, but I was charged with the purge. Many things I had to recycle and save only a copy or two for historic preservation and then I found the keys. Hundreds of keys of doors, drawers, lock boxes for spaces that no longer existed. It was overwhelming and frankly too heavy to deal with that day.

I took a few keys home to my kids to play with and then thought about what I could do with the excess. I didn't want to throw them in the trash but didn't know if I could take them to the transfer station and dump them in the plastic/glass/metal compactor. A quick Google solved my problem. Keys are metal. Metal that is valuable and is worth money in larger quantities. How could I turn the lost history of the building into something valuable?

Thankfully another organization figured it out for me. Key For Hope Foundation based in Avon, MA. They take the keys and "recycle" them but have a mission of feeding the hungry. As an organization they have the buckets, posters, advertising AND will give 100% towards your local food pantry.

Southborough HAS a food pantry. One that is supported by many people, schools, organizations but will always need more provisions for the families that rely on them.

I mentioned this idea to my 6 year old. Her eyes lit up with excitement about collecting keys everywhere, and shopping for the food pantry. She wants to talk to her principal and extend the idea to the schools. I love her enthusiasm and I am equally excited about this endeavor.

Starting August 25th and ending on Heritage day I'm running a Key For Hope campaign. Buckets will be at the food pantry drop off locations, the library, the swap shop. On Heritage Day we will have a full day campaign of information and as those who know me, an art project to go with it. If you bring your keys there will be an opportunity to do a rubbing of them, both for your memory and a copy for the future town collaborative art project, a series of art created from all of the keys in the town.

So, how many old cars, houses, locks, doors keys are sleeping in your house? Dig through drawers and bring them to help the Southborough Food Pantry stock their shelves. This key campaign will unclutter your house, recycle some forgotten metal and help our community.

Sincerely,
Emily van Nort