



Food for Thought !

Eden Food Bank

Quarterly Newsletter, May 2005

www.edenfoodbank.org



We thought that it would be a good idea if we were to take a few minutes to let our President tell you what has been happening recently at Eden Food Bank. So, here—in his

own words—is his message to you:-

The Eden Food Bank is a non-denominational, charitable corporation dedicated to providing food assistance to those in need, in the area of North West Mississauga. We have been in operation since 1989, and each month, on average, we distribute over 4,000 kg of food to more than 700 people (225 families).

Unfortunately, poverty is NOT going away. Every month, there are new families within our area who are added to our client roster - approximately 10% of those who are served at this time.

We thank all of you who have contributed to the work of the Eden Food Bank; both those who help to keep our shelves full through donations of food and/or money, and those who volunteer their time and talent.

We have over 85 volunteers who help us ensure that our neighbours' needs for food are met to the best of our ability.

Volunteers work the two shifts during which the Bank is open each week. They offer invaluable assistance in many ways, including picking up food donated

by local stores, they organize food drives, mail and deliver newsletters, conduct fundraising events, and so on. Volunteers are our life blood, and we could not operate at the present service level without their dedication and hard work.

You will see later in this and later newsletters, that there have been a number of changes in the last year, including the establishment of our first paid staff position. It became clear that we must have a staff person to oversee all the day-to-day operations, and in particular to coordinate the activities of our volunteers.

The focus of our message on how you could help has always been to provide food donations or money to buy food.

However, we now need to shift our focus so that **our #1 priority is to raise money to facilitate the distribution of food, while maintaining and expanding our base of food donations.**

Specifically, we must raise \$20,000 by the end of this calendar year, and at least \$30,000 next year.

Volunteer Appreciation Evening

On March 7 2005, we held a Volunteer Appreciation Evening, which was

attended by some 40+ people.

During the meeting, several certificates were handed out to express and demonstrate our appreciation for the work done by the volunteers.

While it would have been impossible to thank everyone involved, special mention was made of the length of service and dedicated effort put in by John and Jenny Van Runt, who are considered "pioneers" of the Eden Food Bank, having been here for 12 and 8 years respectively.

They used to drive to FoodPath to pick up fresh food each week, buy groceries for the cupboards, and also work in the Food Bank as well.

In the days before the elevator was installed, John worked with Ken Rutter to carry all the food down the stairs from the Daily Bread deliveries, and generally keep the food bank in order.

Nothing was too difficult for John - and no job was too trivial. He could be found breaking down boxes, sorting them for recycling, looking after the coffee, repairing cupboards, installing new hinges and locks, setting mouse traps, and even improving our sign-in and record keeping procedures. Sincere thanks to John and Jenny, and to all our hardworking volunteers. We will highlight the work of other volunteers in future issues.



Nerds at Work

On Saturday, April 30 2005, technology solutions experts from Nerds-on-Site gathered at the Sobey's store at 5602 Tenth Line in Mississauga, to offer support to the Eden Food Bank.

The Nerds gathered in their signature red Volkswagen Beetles, encouraging shoppers to "Fill the Beetle to Feed the People", from 9 am to 4 pm. During that time, they collected 507 kg of food for us. That's over 1100 lbs for our bank.



Thank you, Nerds.

While our local Nerds were helping us, other Nerds across Canada were hosting similar drives, in an event which was first held in 2002. The Nerds do this annually as an opportunity for them to give back to their community, in appreciation of your continuing support for their services.

If you have a computer related problem, why not check out these devotees of red Beetles, at www.nerdsonsite.com.

Trillium and the Eden Food Bank.

A significant change among a number of changes recently, which we would like to mention here, is the award of a grant from the Trillium Foundation.

We have experienced unprecedented growth in the number of people requiring the services of our Food Bank. We routinely service 700+ clients and without an Operations Manager to oversee the operation, we were in danger of collapsing. The Trillium Grant has given us the opportunity to put the Manager in place, and streamline our operation.

Our sincere thanks and appreciation must go to the Trillium Foundation.

It had become clearly apparent to us that it was totally unrealistic to expect any volunteer to oversee all the tasks involved in serving our clients, and so last October, Anne Green agreed to assume the responsibilities and function of Operations Manager for the Eden Food Bank. As of March 2005, she has been joined by Donna Behmer, and so they now share that role. Between them, they manage the work of serving all our clients, and coordinate the efforts of the more than 85 volunteers.

Due to the limited amount of space available to us, it became necessary to restrict our service area to clients residing in the L5M and L5N postal codes. Former clients who are in other areas, have been referred to other Food Banks serving their residential areas and hopefully no-one has been lost in the shuffle.

We must re-iterate that our #1 priority is to raise money sufficient to facilitate the distribution of food, while maintaining and expanding our base of food donations.

Basically, this means that we have to mount a vigorous fund raising effort to provide permanent funding once the present, 2-year grant expires.

It is planting time!

For those of you who plant a vegetable garden, right about now, you will be thinking about turning the soil over, and deciding what to grow, and how much you should target for this year.

Every spring, I face this problem, and decide to go ahead. Then, at harvest time, I always seem to have more beans, tomatoes, peas, etc., than I can possibly consume in the comparatively short time that the vegetables are ready to harvest. If this is a situation you face, then don't forget that the Eden food bank will take your excess with open arms.

If you are one of those people who knows exactly how many seeds to plant to satisfy your own needs, why not simply take the time to plant a second row or two, just for the food bank?

Recipe of the Month



If you only think of parsnips and squash as the kind of vegetables you hated as a child, maybe you should think again. This month, we feature these vegetables in our:

Parsnip, Potato & Squash Purée:

2 large potatoes (about 10 oz each)
1 orange fleshed winter squash (acorn, butternut, etc),
4 large parsnips
4 large garlic cloves, peeled, (optional)
1 teaspoon kosher or other salt
1 to 2 tablespoons butter or oil
Nutmeg

Peel the potatoes, squash and parsnips and cut into fairly equal chunks. Combine in a saucepan with garlic and salt and add water to almost cover. Simmer, partly covered, until vegetables are soft (about 20 minutes). Set aside 1 cup of the cooking liquid. Strain the rest of the contents of the pan and transfer the vegetables to a mixing bowl. Use a potato masher to make a fairly smooth purée. Scoop the purée back into the pan, beat in a little (as necessary) of the reserved cooking liquid, smoothing and fluffing with a whisk over low heat.

When heated through, whisk in the butter. Grate nutmeg and sprinkle over purée to serve. Salt and pepper to taste.

Recipe serves 4.

Food Donations.

The majority of the donations we receive, come in the form of food. We rely very heavily on food donations to provide nutritionally balanced meals for our clients. When you are shopping for yourself, please consider purchasing an extra bag to help a family in need.

Some items you might want to consider, and of which we are always in need, are given in the following list (see over):

Assorted beans, chick peas and lentils,
 Baby formula, food and diapers,
 Canned fish (tuna, salmon), meats,
 Canned fruit and pastas
 Cereal (all kinds),
 Cookies and crackers,
 Fresh items—fruit, veges, eggs, yogurt,
 Flour, sugar, salt, oatmeal, soups
 Instant coffee, tea bags, hot chocolate,
 Stewed tomatoes
 Plastic bags
 Macaroni & cheese,
 Peanut butter, jam,
 Rice, noodles, pasta,
 Tetra packs of juices.

To see what we need at any given time,
 please feel free to visit our web site at
www.edenfoodbank.org.

We thank you for each and every dona-
 tion.

Thanks to Whirlpool

One of the major limitation which we
 have experienced at the Food Bank, has
 been our inability to carry significant
 quantities of milk (and related products),
 especially during the summer, due to a
 lack of refrigerator space.

The Dairy Farmers of Ontario have been
 very generous in donating milk to us
 weekly, and so we needed the ability to
 keep it cool for our Thursday clients.

We had the space all mapped out for a
 refrigerator, but nothing to put in that
 space - until May 6!

That was the day that Whirlpool came
 through with the donation of a fridge for
 Eden Food Bank, and needless to say,
 we were thrilled, and most grateful, for
 the donation.

Our own Donna Behmer got in touch
 with Whirlpool, and the two gentlemen
 pictured here (Roch and Nick) were in-
 strumental in arranging for the fridge to
 be donated, and with the assistance of
 Mike McEathron and his trusty pick-up
 truck, the fridge was somehow delivered
 down the stairs, and installed.



Roch



Nick

Our sincere thanks to Whirlpool, their
 employees, and everyone involved in
 this coup.

Toonie Tuesdays

Most Canadians are very generous, and
 we do not want to interfere with other
 charities and food drives to which any
 individual might contribute.

However, we have a plan to contact ma-
 jor employers in the area, and ask them
 to support “Toonie Tuesdays” in their
 organization. By way of this pro-
 gramme, we will be asking every em-
 ployee to donate a ”Toonie” on a speci-
 fied Tuesday, the proceeds coming to
 Eden Food Bank.

We will ask for each employee to join in
 this effort just once a year, but an offer
 to expand the frequency will not be re-
 jected!!

The reality is that through this kind of
 support, the proceeds could keep us in
 operation for a whole year.

**Taken from the
 Toronto Star.**

In the May 4 2005 issue of the Toronto
 Star, it was reported that nearly 4 million
 Canadians worry that they do not have
 the money to get enough to eat, or for
 the right kind of food.

The report, based on information col-
 lected from the Canadian Health Survey,
 found that nearly 15% of all Canadians
 - about 3.7 million people—have some
 form of “food insecurity”.

Households were considered to be food
 insecure if, due to a lack on money, at
 least one family member :-

- Worried about not having enough to eat,
- Hadn’t eaten the quality or variety of food they wanted (or needed),
- Hadn’t enough to eat.

It found that more than 40% of house-
 holds earning less that \$20,000 annually,
 reported some degree of food insecurity.

The number fell to 11% of households
 earning over \$30,000.

The authors of the report expressed sur-
 prise that only 7% of senior citizens
 claimed any food insecurity, though ac-
 cording to Sue Cox of the Daily Bread
 Food Bank in Toronto, it was probable
 that the percentage of those claiming
 food insecurity at lower income levels is
 understated.

Fund Raising at EFB

To those of us “on the inside” of the
 workings of the Eden Food Bank, it has
 always been obvious that an active fund
 raising effort had to be in place to gener-
 ate the funds necessary to enable us to
 have sufficient money in the bank to
 allow us to go out and purchase, and
 then distribute, the food and other prod-
 ucts required to meet the needs of our
 clients.

A great deal of our food comes from private donations, food drives, and the weekly deliveries from Food Path, and while the generosity which allows us to benefit in this way is much appreciated, the fact simply remains, that we have to do some additional shopping on a weekly basis - not just to increase the amount of food available to our client base, but also to adjust those donations to provide the mix of foods required to enable us to provide a balanced and nutritional diet.

Members of the Board of Directors and our volunteer workers, met recently for an all-day planning and strategy session, out of which came some great ideas for generating more income, streamlining our operation, necessary publicity efforts, and many other topics which needed to be addressed in order to maximize the level of service we can provide.

If any of our readers feels that they could organize a neighbourhood street sale ("multi garage sale" idea), a school dance or a dance-a-thon, a food drive at their workplace, a Toonie Tuesday at the office, a silent auction, or any one of many other ways to raise money for Eden Food Bank, please contact one of the names given at the end of this newsletter.

All donations and fundraising efforts will be gratefully acknowledged, but please contact us before you start so that we can help coordinate those efforts.

Just remember, the message is:

Help a Family,

Help a Neighbour,

Help a Friend.

Who's Who at Eden Food Bank?

We hope to be able to publish several newsletters over the course of a year, and in each future issue, we will print a thumbnail sketch and photograph of the various Board members and the vitally

important volunteers and advocates, (one per issue) so that you will know who, in your community, is already involved.

If you want to see your photo and bio in print, all you have to do, is get involved. Think about it. Call our office, leave a message, and someone will get back to you as soon as we can.

Drivers Wanted



One of the areas in which we can always use more help, is in doing food pick-ups.

If you have some time available, and have a van, we could definitely use some help in making occasional food pick-ups at Meyers transport, and occasionally other locations. This could be on an as needed, on-call basis.

We also need help from someone with a van or truck, to make regular pick-ups on Thursday afternoons from the Farmers' Market at Erin Mills Town Centre, and then delivering to Eden Food Bank. This task generally take 1½ hours, starting at 1:00 pm every Thursday.

If you are available, and willing to donate your time to the Food Bank, please leave a message on our phone number, and someone will get back to you.

The telephone is not manned (personed??) all the time, but messages are retrieved on a regular basis.

Alternatively, why not drop us an e-mail. The phone number and e-mail address are given at the end of this newsletter.

The Value of our Volunteers

If you were asked the question "What is the most vital part of the Food Bank?" I wonder what your answer would be. Maybe a place in which to operate; good supplies of food; clients in need?

What about our wonderful volunteers.

With their donation of time, expertise, energy, smiles, caring, a listening ear, a joy in serving others, they form the centre, the heart of the Food Bank operation. (Thanks to Brenda Rutter for these sentiments).

In future issues, we will tell you more about the individuals who form our volunteer pool, and without whom we would simply not be able to operate.

Want to join in? Use the contact information below.

Contact Information

If you want to get a message to us, or have one of the Board of Directors call you back, get in touch with us by calling us at (905) 785-3651, and leave a message. Alternatively, you can send an e-mail to info@edenfoodbank.org, and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

Personnel

Operations Managers :

Anne Green
Donna Behmer

Executive:

Dave Pratt, President
Esther O'Toole, Vice-President
Gayle Morais, Treasurer
Vacant, Secretary

Board Members:

Bev Wozniuk, Privacy Officer
Michael Burgoyne
Benny Cuevillas
Bud Harris
Ann Ottemiller

.....Here's to the next time!