



Food for Thought !

Eden Food Bank

Quarterly Newsletter, March, 2006

www.edenfoodbank.org



Many great things have happened at the Eden Food Bank in the past year, especially in the areas of organization, fundraising, and public awareness. However, we all recognize that there are still ways in which we can improve.

It is for this reason, that we hold our annual "Strategy Planning Meeting", where all volunteers and Board members are invited to help establish directions to fulfill the vision for Eden Food Bank. At these meetings, we've been fortunate to be able to call on the professional facilitation skills of Fred Simons and Danette Romard, who provide their services through the Management Advisory Service (MAS), a volunteer bureau that provides no-fee management help of all kinds to non-profit groups throughout greater Toronto.

There was a lot of lively discussion in a number of key areas at this year's meeting, which was held on January 14 2006. While I do not intend to present a full report in this newsletter (it is neither the place nor the time), suffice to say that we had informed input in many areas, such as matters we see as potential blockages to our vision

and strategic directions aimed at removing those blockages. I was pleased with the efforts of all attendees towards making the outcomes of the meeting meaningful, and all we have to do now, is make it all work - and I assure you that we are committed to doing just that.

There are a couple of key new initiatives that I do want to highlight.

1. We continue to be overwhelmed by the needs in our community. Demand is so high that we're unable to serve everyone during the two times that we are open each week. **Effective the beginning of May we will also be opening in Monday evenings**, in addition to the current Monday afternoons and Thursday evenings. We'll provide everyone with additional details, as the time comes.

2. **Tuesday, June 6, 2006 is National Hunger Awareness Day**. This day serves as a platform to raise awareness about hunger and the work we do. It was created in 2002, at a time when there was a significant increase in the number of people in our own country who were unable to feed their families. Food Banks are coping with this increased demand, while working in an environment with less food surplus and fewer charitable dollars available. This year, Hunger Awareness Day

just happens to fall on a Tuesday, so we encourage YOU to host a "Toonie Tuesday" at your place of work, to help eliminate hunger in our community.

It seems unbelievable in this day and age, that over 825,000 Canadians use food assistance programmes on a monthly basis? Did you realize that over 40% of all Food Bank users are children?

When you go to work tomorrow, ask if your Company will be supporting our Toonie Tuesday campaign on June 6. If they don't know about the campaign, send us an email, and we'll take it from there.

Then, don't forget to drop a Toonie in the jar on that date, as your contribution towards alleviating hunger in your neighbourhood.

You can make a difference. Help us to feed the hungry.

National Volunteer Week

April 23 to 29 2006 has been designated "National Volunteer Week in Canada, and since this is the last newsletter we will send out before that date, we would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere and deep gratitude to all our volunteers.



on the 80 or more people who freely give of their time and efforts to the continuing success of Eden Food Bank.

While we could name a few names, and write about their achievements, to single out any one person from this team would be grossly unfair to the rest. So, please join with me in thanking ALL of our volunteers for so tirelessly contributing to the success we have enjoyed to date.

Your efforts are highly valued.

Quotes & Quips

Success is what happens when hard work and motivation meet ambition.

Today's preparation and determination are tomorrow's achievements.

Recipe of the Month



With the promise of spring and summer being just around the corner, we can turn our attention to those lighter meals and side dishes which are less hearty, and more refreshing, such as salads.

Personally, I can eat a good salad plate at any time of year, but most people associate salads with the warmer months. So, give this one a try as a light and healthy option:

Recipe for Mixed Greens and Fruit Salad.

- 1 pound salad mix
- 1 seedless orange
- 1 cup of seedless grapes
- 1 cup of broccoli florets
- 2 tablespoons of almonds (optional)

Dressing:-

- ½ cup of orange juice
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon olive oil

Directions:-

1. Wash the salad mix and grapes in cold water, and set aside to drain. Spin or pat the greens dry if necessary,
2. While the salad is draining, cut up the broccoli, peel and separate the orange into wedges. Make sure that you remove the white 'pith', since it can be very bitter.
3. In a large salad bowl, combine all the ingredients,
4. In a small dish, mix all the dressing ingredients together until the sugar has dissolved, pour over the salad and toss well.

Serves 5.

You can sprinkle the top with pine nuts if you wish just before serving.

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Help Wanted.

One of the problems associated with having a Board of Directors made up entirely of hard working volunteers, is that from time to time, these volunteers find it difficult to devote the time necessary to stay on the Board.

Our President, Dave Pratt, does a great job of steering the Board in the right directions, but there are times, as now, when he could use a bit more help at the Board level. Constraints such as increasing pressure of business, conflicting dates, demands from families, and even poor health, have all made it difficult for some Board members to continue to lend their expertise to the Bank over the past few months.

As a result, we do have a couple of opportunities for people who might be interested, and have the time, energy and experience to work with us, to join us at the Board level.

If you think that you are such a person, please get in touch with Dave. To do this, go to our website at www.edenfoodbank.org to find out more about us, then go to the "Contact Us" link on the left hand side of the home page, to find Dave's e-mail address. Of course, I could have given his address right here, but I want you to visit the

web site first!!

Send Dave an e-mail, including your telephone number, and he will get back to you as soon as his own very busy schedule will permit.

Corporate Assistance.



Help from the Corporate sector is always appreciated, and while we have to be careful about Confidentiality, we could not let this month pass without mentioning two Companies which have helped us out.

Running a food bank is one thing, but we have to think about what happens after the client leaves the Bank. How do they get their food and other sundry items back home? Well, the answer is really obvious - we need to provide shopping bags to our clients. However, plastic shopping bags do not grow on trees. However, they do get manufactured in Oakville, by a Company called PCL Packaging Corporation.

All it took, was a couple of e-mails and one phone call, to this Company, for them to agree to donate several thousand plastic bags to Eden Food Bank.

Our sincere thanks and gratitude is extended to PCL for this donation.



We are also grateful to Curves Fitness in the Battleford Centre, for the generous donations by their members, of over 1000kg of food over the past little while.

Think on this...

"Never be afraid to do something new. Remember, amateurs built the Ark, professionals built the Titanic."

A Word from a Volunteer

One of our student volunteers offered me the following recently, and I thought his words might strike a note with you, so here it is:-

“My summer at EFB”
by John Donovan.

During last summer, I helped out at the Eden United Food Bank in order to complete my mandatory 40 hours of community service for school. I had heard about the food bank from a friend who had told me that she helped volunteer at Eden Food Bank during the previous summer to complete her volunteer hours. I had previously wanted to volunteer at a library to finish my community service, but changed my mind because I decided that I would rather help out people in need rather than be standing around at a library.

My mom phoned up Eden Food Bank and asked if it was possible for me to volunteer there during the summer. I was lucky that I signed early in the summer to avoid missing out on a chance to help out. At our school, the guidance councilors tell us to finish our community hours before we reach Grade 11 because that's when most students find a part-time job.

The first time I helped out at the food bank, I was surprised to see how many people were in need for help. It surprised me because I didn't think that there would be that many people in my neighbourhood who were in need of help. Not only did they get food from the food bank but there was also a kiosk for guidance from a councilor, if they needed some guidance for job opportunities, family, immigration and unemployment.

Helpers would guide customers around to pick out their groceries and would help them fill their shopping cart. Customers had to choose how much soap, pasta, cereal, deserts, fruits and vegetables they want. They had to follow a list of how much they could take of each

food item, according to the size of their family.

After they had finished picking up their groceries, we would help customers carry their bags to their cars and in most cases, upstairs where we would fill their own shopping carts. I soon realized that some people were unable to afford a car and had to take the bus, or even walk their groceries home.

After we packed their cars or shopping carts they would thank us countless times for helping them out. Some were so grateful that they would offer us tips, but it would be very wrong of us to collect money from people who are unable to regularly purchase groceries for their family, so I politely refused to take any money.

During the last week of my summer holidays before I started school again, I finished my community service hours. I was pleased to finally complete my hours for school.

During this time, I learned to be appreciative of the things I have, when other people in my own city are not able to even afford groceries for their family. I am thankful for being allowed the opportunity to help out at the food bank because it made me realize just how fortunate I am, and how important it is to be able to help people in need.

Thank you for this, John - Ed.

A Challenge to Try This

Very recently, our office staff ran a confidential computer query on our database of clients who have used the Food Bank in the past six months, and came up with some startling and (in my opinion) shocking information.

Let me share some of this information with you, and I will be surprised if you are not as shocked as I was.

Out of our list of clients, we have over 100 clients whose living expenses, net of living expenses, was less than \$0. Yes, you read that

correctly - less than zero dollars.

We can add another 56 families who, after basic housing costs have been met, have between \$0 and \$10 to live on **for a month**.

If you still do not believe that food banks are an essential service in our neighbourhood, I challenge you to empty all of the money out of your pockets, purses, and secret stashes, and as of next Monday morning, try to live (exist?) on \$10 for the week - let alone for the month.

What “luxuries” would you have to go without? Consider it - no trips to the movies, not even a visit to Block Buster; no lunches out; no gas for the car at \$0.95 per litre - if the bus can't get you there, you don't go; no trips to the beer store; no popping in for a beer on the way home from the office; forget the T-bone steak for dinner; no treating your children or grandchildren to an ice cream cone; no birthday presents for your spouse or kids; forget the office hockey pool; just learn to survive.

I bet you can't last the week, let alone a month, even on your own - never mind for your entire family.

Then think long and hard about the value of a Tooney on Tuesdays. In fact, why not take a jam jar, take all your loose change (just the pennies, nickels and dimes) out of your pockets and purses every night, and plop that change in the jam jar. You won't miss those small coins, I assure you.

When the jar is full, bring it to the Food Bank, and see how grateful we are.

Go on, I challenge you.

A d v o c a c y

Did you know that we have volunteer advocates to help anyone needing advice or information. Client's needs are kept in strict confidence. Advocates refer clients to agencies or groups that could help them become less dependent on the food bank. This includes but is not exclusive to: youth shelters;

women's halfway housing; AIDS information; legal help; distress lines; immigration support groups; nutrition for infants and children and adult education programs.

Many clients have already taken advantage of the free courses offered at the Peel Adult Education Centre, such as skills training and English as a second language. They realize the need for improving their skills in this highly technological and competitive market place.

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Toonie Tuesday up-date.

In our last newsletter, we reported on the success of the Toonie Tuesday programme which we ran in the schools, with the full support of the School Boards, Principals, and staff of the schools in our area. We can now report, that with just one school left to submit their collection, we brought in a super, grand total of \$16,638.48. Thank to you all.

At least one school has asked if we could do it again next semester, and at the Strategic Planning meeting in January 2006, the suggestion was made, and accepted, that we would do it again next November.

We will try to enhance the programme, building on the success from last November. We challenge all the schools participating to BEAT you own donations from last year, and perhaps get into some friendly competition by challenging the school "next door" to some form of event to help the cause. We will leave the imaginative efforts to you! You have about seven months to think about it this time, so let's see how inventive you can be.

More Quotes & Quips

Nostalgia is like a grammar lesson - you find the present tense and the past perfect.

Sometimes our light goes out, but it is kindled back into flame by another human being. Each of us owes deepest thanks to those who have rekindled this light.

Cawthra Sings 2



These trees will be around for ever, but for a once in a lifetime experience, plan to come out and hear the Concert Choirs of Cawthra Park Secondary School, at 7:30 pm on Friday April 7 at Eden United Church. **Admission is free if you bring a donation of a non-perishable food item.**

Based on an earlier concert a year ago, this is an event you should not miss. We thank Cawthra Park SS for all their efforts and the contributions we just know will come from their audience.

Chase away those winter blues—come and hear how Cawthra sings!

Four great choirs to warm your heart and inspire your soul.

Trillium Foundation

We would not be able to do many of the things we are presently undertaking, were it not for the assistance we get from the Trillium Foundation.

We thank the **Ontario Trillium Foundation** for their two year investment to facilitate our hiring of staff to manage the daily operations of the food bank .



The Ontario Trillium Foundation annually receives \$100 million of government funding generated through Ontario's charity casino initiative. The Foundation allocates grants to eligible charitable and not-for-profit organizations in several sectors, and this includes Eden Food Bank.

Attention: Condo Dwellers

Do you live in a condominium? Are you on the residents committee? Have you ever considered what might happen to the Condo funds if the association were wound up, for whatever reason?

We have just heard from a former member of the Board of Directors of the Lisgar Residents' Association, that they have written into their by-laws, that in the event that they disband, any money left in their account is to be donated to Eden Food Bank. We thank them for this.

Why not bring this idea to the attention of your Condo Committee, and tell us what happens.

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Here we Grow Again!

Growth is normally a good thing, but not when you are talking about the people who use our services every month. In the last three months for which I have data available, this is how we have grown:-

People served	Dec '05	Jan '06	Feb '06
Adults	352	385	402
Children	268	304	325
Babies	29	35	39
Families	206	238	251

Personnel

Operations Managers:

Anne Green and Donna Behmer

Executive:

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

Board Members:

Pat Bardon
 Bill Crawford,
 Mary Lou Ling,

Newsletter:

Written, assembled, edited and published by Michael Burgoyne, with contributions this month from far too many people to mention individually, but our thanks go to you anyway!

..... so, here's to the next time!