



Food for Thought !

Eden Food Bank

Quarterly Newsletter, October, 2006

www.edenfoodbank.org

From the Editor.....

For this issue, we invited several people connected with, or close to, Eden Food Bank, to contribute an article. We are grateful for their contributions. You may notice some repetition in details, but in the belief that this would help bring the points home, we decided to leave it all in.

President Dave says.....



The hunger crisis in our community is growing, not contracting. Daily Bread's annual survey this fall found that this was the 6th consecutive year of increased food bank usage in the GTA.

More people are relying on food banks, and they are hungry more often. The need in our own community has grown to the point that we have found it necessary to open our doors for a third time each week. (See Anne Green's column, later, for details of this).

Unfortunately, the need for foodbanks is systemic. Almost half of those affected are children. They do not have a fair chance to succeed in life because they are living in such extreme poverty. Each of us, as individual stakeholders in our economy, has a responsibility to take action to help make a difference. Some systemic issues which we encounter daily in working with our clients, are:

- **A lack of affordable housing.** People using foodbanks pay an average of 67% of their income on rent,

placing them in serious risk of homelessness. Once their rent is paid, they have only \$3.63 per person, per day to pay for ALL other expenses, including food.

- **Working Poor:** Employment no longer ensures financial security. Many are employed part time, at minimum wage, with no benefits. More than half the people using foodbanks earn more than \$10 per hour, but they also work less than 25 hours a week. The fundamental issue they face is the number of hours they are able to get to work.
- **People with Disabilities:** 41% of foodbank clients according to a Daily Bread survey in Peel Region report that a disability or serious illness prevents them from working. As a society, we need to improve how we treat those who are most vulnerable.
- **Immigrants:** 54% of clients were born outside Canada. Many are prevented from working in their field because Canada does not recognize their professional credentials. They are unable to find jobs, even though over half have graduated from College/University, and nearly one in ten has a post graduate degree. We must improve the system by which foreign training, education and credentials are accredited.

Yes, the issues are systemic. Most of us push it to the back of our minds saying "there is nothing I can do to fix that". But there is. I challenge each of you to reflect on the issues—and then contact one person (a knowledgeable or influential friend, your MPP or MP, for example), and take just one step further to

address one of the above issues.

You CAN effect change!

Now opening on Monday evenings,.....

(by Anne Green)

The summer months showed still more growth for Eden Food Bank. In July we provided food for 789 people, and August showed us jump to 835, with 26 new families. Because of the increase, and limitations of space, we decided to open for a third time each week. So, since October 2, 2006, we have been opening on Monday evenings from 6:00 to 8:00 pm, as well as our regular hours of 1:00 to 3:30 pm on Mondays and 6:00 to 8:30 pm on Thursdays. We hope this will take the pressure off Thursday evenings where our clients have experienced long wait times.

We are very fortunate to have had enough people to call, wanting to volunteer, that we started the extra shift with a wonderful crew. As we run with 15 to 17 people each opening, we are very pleased that these people have stepped up to the plate to welcome and help our clients.

Eden Food Bank - serving our community.....

(by Councillor Pat Saito, Ward 9)



In an ideal world, food banks would not be needed. Unfortunately, we do not live in an ideal world and there is a growing need for food bank services right here

in our own Community.

An outsider, looking at the Meadowvale area, could assume that we are a fairly stable, affluent community. While a large segment of our population might fall into that category, we also have a growing number of families which need services like the food bank and other social assistance programmes.

As Councillor for this community, I know how important it is to have good, reliable services to help those in need. However, Peel is woefully under-funded by the province for our social, daycare and health services, making it harder for us to deliver the necessary programmes to our citizens. This leaves a gap which is being filled by local organizations such as Eden Food Bank.

Each month in 2006, an average of 248 families (about 770 people) used the services of Eden Food Bank, and each month about 20 new families are added to that number. These numbers are amazing when you consider that the food bank only served about 5 families when it was first started in 1999.

The people who need and use the foodbank are our neighbours and friends. In 2004, across the GTA, there were 175,000 people using food relief programmes each month. Of this number, over 40% have some college or university education; 50% of foodbank recipients and 33% of the children go hungry at least once each week.

In the Region of Peel, 48% of households with at least 1 person working still need to use the foodbank. The good news, is that 63% of clients feel that their situation will improve.

We can ALL play a role in helping those who need this service by supporting Eden Food Bank. Whether it is by donating food or money, by organizing food drives at home, church or work, or by volunteering time, all contributions are welcome and needed.

I encourage all residents to support the food bank in some way, and thereby help your neighbours.

Operations Report.....

(by Anne Green)

As usual, some of our shelves emptied out over the summer months. As we get away from holiday times, (Thanksgiving, Easter etc), our sup-

plies tend to dwindle. Thanks to those of you who thought ahead to hold food drives or make individual contributions at this low time.

Fortunately, while our clients missed out on macaroni and cheese, canned soup and pasta during the summer, the amount of food they received did not decrease, thanks to the wonderful farmers who show up bright and early every Thursday morning at the Erin Mills Farmers' Market. I am speaking especially of Ralph Lise, Valerie Blyleven and Jeffrey McNeice who once again came through with donations of vegetables and fruits.

As this market runs from May to October, our clients have the benefit of healthier food that they see through the winter.

Food Drives

This is a note for all you generous and thoughtful people who keep our shelves filled throughout the year. If you are planning special food drives around holiday times, please remember that for our clients to receive food for that holiday, we need to get it ahead of time. Most clients are allowed access to the foodbank only once each month, on a Monday or a Thursday.

If you are planning a food drive, please let us know in advance so that we can plan ahead. We have a team of people to help with sorting and stacking, and it would be nice to be able to schedule them in advance.

Thank you for all your help.

Just one more thing!

If you have extra storage space in your business where we might be able to store excess food around holiday periods, please contact me. Last December, we were blessed with so many groups doing food drives, that we had a problem storing all the food. So, if you have any space available to store non-perishable foods, please call us. In the past 2 years, the Dufferin/Peel Separate School board came through for us with space in different locations. Our association with Esther O'Toole, school board trustee, afforded us a 'fix' for this problem. Our thanks to the Principals and custodians at (among others) the Streetsville Campus, St. Edmund Campion SS and St. Albert of Jerusalem, for being so helpful in making space available.

The next "Toonie Tuesday" Programme.....

(by Esther O'Toole)



Another school year is here, and I would like to thank all the schools for participating last year, and for their commitment to continue the Toonie Tuesday programme this November.

A few new schools have been added to the L5M and L5N schools, which are outside the ward 9/10 boundary. Thanks to Sue McFadden (our Peel Board Trustee) for her support and encouragement. Also, special thanks to Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board Superintendent, Mike Prospero, for facilitating the communication to our schools.

I am encouraged by the number of students who have contacted me asking to volunteer time, and for showing a sincere desire to help those less fortunate in our community.

The Toonie Tuesday drive last year, raised over \$17,000 from our schools, and we hope to match, or beat that number, with this year's programme.

Thanks again - this is a wonderful Community in which to serve. I am proud and honoured to be the school liaison person for Eden Food Bank.

Eden Food Bank Provides More Than Just Food.....

(by Carrie Fisher)

At Eden Food Bank, we realize that the issues facing our clients are much larger than just the need for food. That is why we are reaching out to our community through our Advocacy Programme. Our amazing team of trained, volunteer Advocates is available to meet with food bank clients three times each week, with the goal of easing their daily struggle, by empowering clients to advocate on their own behalf.

By listening to our clients' voices, we can provide them with the information they need to chip away at the barriers which create the level of poverty that they are experiencing. This is accomplished by giving information and referrals on such issues as:

- Employment search
- Affordable housing
- Eviction related problems
- Newcomer settlement

- English as a second language
- Community legal clinics
- Income support such as Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support and Employment Insurance
- Abuse and violence
- Prenatal care
- Child welfare
- Clothing and furniture.

Our Advocates are always available to help a client through a rough patch, and empower them to speak up for themselves. After all, knowledge is power, and it is amazing how a sympathetic ear and a piece of information they didn't have before (such as a phone number for a legal clinic) can make such a difference in someone's life.

The people who come to our foodbank for assistance often experience very diverse issues. We see many newcomers to Canada who require assistance so basic as how to secure housing, register children at school, and how to navigate our head-spinning social service system.

We also see a large number of families (now termed "the working poor"), who are on the brink of becoming homeless. One or more parents work one of more minimum wage jobs, and are forced to juggle to see which bills get paid this month.

People with such persistent issues as struggling to 'make do' each month on a disability payment that doesn't even pay their rent, are often frequent users of our foodbank.

These are just a few examples of the barriers which people in our community face, and which bring them to Eden Food Bank. Fortunately, our advocates can help our clients address these (and other) issues head-on, and work with the client toward climbing out of the poverty which threatens to overwhelm them.

We are proud of our Advocacy programme at Eden Food Bank. We are fortunate to have numerous "success stories", and words of gratitude for the help we have been able to provide to our clients. One of the best things we can ever hear from our clients, is that they won't be needing our services any longer! Some of these successes even offer to volunteer at the foodbank themselves in order to give back to the community which helped them.

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Tony's Corner.....

(by Tony Hill)

This is another article in my series started by my shock, when I read that



75% of foodbank clients thought that they should be eating meat, and 60% of clients think that they should be getting milk products for their health and well-being, but cannot afford them.

Often, the first question asked about a vegetarian diet, is:

How can I get enough protein?

Protein is an important nutrient required for the building, maintenance and repair of tissues in the body. Amino acids (the building blocks of protein) can be synthesized by the body, or ingested from food. There are 20 different amino acids in the foods we eat, but our body can only make 11 of them.

The 9 essential amino acids which cannot be made by our bodies must be obtained from our diet. A variety of grains, legumes, and vegetables can also provide all the essential amino acids our body needs.

It was once thought that various plant foods had to be eaten together to get their full protein value, but we now know that intentional combination is not necessary to obtain all of our essential amino acids. As long as the diet contains a variety of grains, legumes and vegetables, our protein needs are easily met.

Protein Requirements.....

The average North American consumes about double the protein his or her body needs. The main sources of protein consumed tend to be animal products which are high in fat and saturated fat. Most people are surprised to learn their protein needs are actually much less than what they have been consuming.

The Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for protein for the average sedentary adult, is only 0.8 grams per kilogram on body weight.

However, even this RDA has a large margin of safety, and the body's true need is even lower for most people. Protein needs are increased for women who are pregnant or breast feeding. Needs are also higher for very active people. Extra servings of legumes or other high protein sources can help meet needs which go beyond the present RDA.

Due to space constraints in this issue, we will publish more of Tony's article on the problems of high protein diets in our next issue.

The 11 Division Police Community Liaison Committee....

(by Jaya Mootoo-Szpulewski, PCLC Chair)

The PCLC is a group of Community members which cares about policing in our community. Our goal is to develop and promote a positive relationship between residents, community stakeholders and Peel Regional Police, through pride, communication, prevention programmes, public awareness and guidance.

This year, PCLC held its 17th Annual Open House on Saturday September 16. This event was attended by thousands of people from in and around 11 Division. In conjunction with our Open House, we hosted a food drive that we coined "CRAM-A-CRUISER FOR FOOD PATH AND EDEN FOOD BANK". This event was launched at Loblaws on Glen Erin Drive at Eglinton Ave.

The basic concept was that we wanted to "cram" a police cruiser with non-perishable items for the two food banks that service the 11 Division area. On the day of the Launch, we were able to obtain the new Peel Regional Police Charger, and a Prison Escort Van.

With the assistance of a couple of officers, we were able to "CRAM A CRUISER" and "PACK A PATTY WAGON" with over 3200lbs of non-perishable food items during one day at Loblaws. We also managed to raise \$250, and a lot of awareness for the foodbanks.

PCLC hopes to continue its support of



Eden Food Bank with more "CRAM-A-CRUISER" events in the coming year.

If you are interested in Peel Regional Police, and would like to make a difference in your community, join us at our meetings, which are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 11 Division Police Station at Erin Mills Parkway and Dundas Street West. For more details, call 905-453-3311, ext. 1160, and speak with our Community Liaison Officer.

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



We thank the Ontario Trillium Foundation for their two year investment to facilitate the hiring of staff to manage the operations of Eden Food Bank.

“Toonie Tuesday” November 21, 2006.....

(by Donna Behmer)

Some things bear repetition, and although mention has been made earlier of our Toonie Tuesday campaign, this major fund raising initiative can not suffer by being mentioned again, so here goes.

The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board and The Peel District School Board have joined forces again to participate in the second annual “Toonie Tuesday” Campaign to raise funds for the Eden Food Bank.

The elementary and secondary schools in the L5N and L5M postal codes are participating. We are hoping that everyone who is able will donate a Toonie to help support families in our community. Just one Toonie from everyone, will make a huge difference to help get food to the hungry in our neighbourhood.

If you are interested in holding a “Toonie Tuesday” event at your workplace please contact Donna Behmer at 905-785-3651. You are free to choose any Tuesday you wish.

At times in our lives, we all need a helping hand. At other times, we are in a position to extend one. **Together we do make a difference.**

A Plea from Dave.....

Donna has negotiated with General Electric and they have offered to provide us with a semi trailer, free of charge for 6 months, that we can use as "offsite storage" for food donated at this coming, very busy, time of year.

The challenge is that we need a place to park the trailer. If anyone has a contact that might be able to facilitate a parking space, please speak with them and get back to Donna Behmer, Anne Green or myself.

You can find our contact information by going to the Eden Food Bank web site at www.edenfoodbank.org, and going to

the “Contact Us” link.

In the meantime, our most sincere thanks go to the great folks at General Electric.

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Recipe of the month.....

CHOCOLATE CHIP ORANGE OAT-MEAL COOKIES

Adding a hint of orange zest to beloved chocolate chip oatmeal cookies gives them a faint citrus aroma and fresh bite.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 3/4 stick (6 tablespoons) unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 3/4 teaspoon finely grated fresh orange zest
- 1/2 cup bittersweet or semisweet chocolate chips, or chopped bitter-sweet chocolate (60% cacao maximum).

Preparation:

Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 375°F. Butter a large baking sheet.

Stir together oats, flour, baking soda, and salt in a bowl to combine.

Whisk together brown sugar, butter, egg, vanilla, and zest in another bowl.

Stir egg mixture into flour mixture until just combined. Stir in chocolate chips.

Make 12 mounds of batter 1 1/2 inches apart on baking sheet. Bake until cookies are golden and edges are crisp, about 15 minutes.

Transfer cookies to a rack to cool.

Makes 12 cookies. (Save some for the kids!!)

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Here we Grow Again!

In some of the articles above, mention has been made of the fact that Eden Food Bank is still growing in size, and therefore demand. While one of our goals is to get us to the point where we are no longer needed by the community, growth is a fact of life. Profit-making concerns love the word

“growth”, but we would love to see the need for our services diminish.

However, the reality is that for the foreseeable future, it seems as though Eden Food Bank will be needed to serve the community for a good while yet.

As we have shown you in previous Newsletters, the statistics in the following box will tell the story of the past three months.

People served	July '06	Aug '06	Sept '06
Adults	416	435	398
Children	321	338	290
Babies	52	62	62
Families	250	270	242
New Fam's	17	26	37

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E.F.B. Personnel.....

Here are the names of the key personnel at Eden Food Bank. To contact them, you can find their contact information on our website.

Operations Managers:

- Anne Green
- Donna Behmer

Executive:

- Dave Pratt, President
- Bill Bates, Vice-President
- Gayle Morais, Treasurer
- Karen Skyba, Secretary

Board Members:

- Bill Crawford,
- Rakesh Gupta,
- Tony Hill

School Liaison:

- Esther O'Toole

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The final word.....

.....as usual, goes to the editor, who—this month—really was the editor, having left most of the writing to other people. I am grateful to all contributors for having taken a load off my shoulders this quarter.

If any of our readers, clients or other friends of EFB have anything they wish to contribute to a future issue, please contact me via an email sent to me at michael.burgoyne@edenfoodbank.org

.....***So, here's to the next time!***

Please note: The opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the various contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the official position of Eden Food Bank.