



Food for Thought !

eden community food bank

"Quarterly" Newsletter, October, 2007

www.edenfoodbank.org

The President's message



At the time our editor was putting his words on paper, and assembling this newsletter, we were all getting ready for Thanksgiving, which made me think that as Thanksgiving is a time to give thanks, so it is a time to reflect on our many blessings over the past year. Here, at Eden Community Food Bank, we have much to be thankful for since our last newsletter.

¶ In July, we purchased a new 50 cubic foot commercial fridge with funds graciously donated by the Karen Shank Foundation, allowing us much more storage space for fresh produce.

¶ We began getting donations from the Square One Farmers' Market on Sundays. Now, with this great new source of produce combined with that from the Erin Mills Town Centre farmers, we were blessed with an abundance of fresh items all summer and fall. In July and August alone, we received over 2,420 kg.

¶ Our birthday programme is now underway (see our last issue) and we are giving out birthday bags to all children under 14, on their birthday.

¶ We now have new brochures, posters and client cards. As well,

we have a professional 6-minute video which tells the story of our food bank. This will be an invaluable tool when talking to schools, service clubs, corporate partners, and other organizations. My special thanks to Chris Fisher for producing this video.

¶ Our community BBQ on September 1st was a huge success, and was attended by many of our client families, as well as the public. More on this later in this issue.

¶ The Kraft Hunger Challenge in September saw us receive record donations of over \$10,000, exclusive of matching funds from Kraft

¶ Tim Hortons Head office has offered to pay all of our trucking costs in picking up supplies from Foodpath. A very much appreciated gesture which will save us over \$4,800 this year alone.

¶ This summer, we have not experienced the shortages in food which we had last year. With the major food drives now underway, it looks like we should be in good shape, in terms of stock.

¶ As if all this was not enough, we have many exciting events in the works for the next few months. For example, we have been working on our Dickens Christmas Carol event scheduled for Sunday, November 25. We have just got word that we are on the CBC list of official events. Keep your eyes open for more information as it becomes available.

We will also be adopting our new re-usable shopping bag policy in the new year, and there is also more on this later in this newsletter.

Finally, we are very fortunate to have a very welcome addition to our staff. Her name is Jennifer Dominey, and she is a second year Social Work student at Sheridan College, and will be with us until April 2008. Jen is doing her Practicum with us, and will be involved in many aspects of the food bank. She has already shown an aptitude for Advocacy.

There will be more from me in the next issue. Just remember, please, that while this has essentially been a "good news" story, more demands are placed on our resources every week, and we mustn't let up on our fund-raising and food drive efforts. No matter how much we have, we will always need more

Message from the Editor..

We like to put as many photographs as we can into the Newsletter, but to make them more interesting, we like them to be in colour.

To keep our costs in check, we print the front and back pages only in colour, and the inside pages in B&W. Thus, we ask you to refer to the back page to see if your picture is in this issue.

Re-usable bag initiative.....

Acting on a recommendation from one of our volunteers, Jo Saunders, we have made the decision that, no later than January 1 2008, we are implementing a programme to reduce the use of plastic shopping bags in the food bank.

The purpose of this is twofold:

1. To be environmentally responsible and proactive, bearing in mind that plastic bags are gradually being eliminated from grocery stores, and
2. To increase storage space for food, since plastic bags take up a surprisingly large amount of our valuable space.

As we implement this policy between now and January 1 2008, you will see signs posted inside the food bank, there will be an appropriate posting on our website, and our phone message will be changed to let clients know that they must bring their own re-usable grocery bags.

Our Advocacy volunteers will be discussing this with all new clients, and those who are renewing. We will also be adding a paragraph to the client guidelines sheet which we hand out.

In addition, all our servers will discuss this with clients as they are serving them.

We are looking for a supplier of these bags, and hopefully give them away as a "personal needs" item.

Finally, please note that we do not intend to spend any money on this programme.

Since most of the donations we receive come in plastic bags, we anticipate that we should always have some on hand for emergency purposes, for those clients who arrive without their own bags.

River Grove Seniors Club....

We would like to offer a special thank-you to the seniors who meet at the River Grove Community Centre. Our food bank seems to be always on their mind, and they have become year-round contributors of both food and money.

We really appreciate their support of our mission to feed the hungry families in Mississauga.

Here we Grow Again!

As in previous issues, we want to let you see how our Foodbank is increasingly needed in this community. In the last four months for which I have data available, this is how we have grown:-

People served	May '07	Jun '07	July '07	Aug '07
Adults	452	419	449	406
Children	338	345	334	311
Babies	46	42	31	19
Total people	836	806	814	746
Families	257	263	260	239
New Fams	15	16	22	19

Hunger Awareness Day...

We carried a report on this event in our last issue, and we are now pleased to be able to thank everyone who participated in any way, in helping us to generate a total of \$21312.45, plus 2359 kg of food. A great effort, and a great response. Thank you, everyone!

It's Toonie Tuesday time....

Once again, the Peel District School Board and the Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board have joined forces to participate in our annual Toonie Tuesday fund raiser. This will be our third annual such event.

As you will have noticed from the chart above, our Food bank serves an average of about 800 people every month, of whom some 45% are children and babies. The children under the age of 18 attend schools in the L5M and L5N postal codes.

Toonie Tuesday will be held this year on November 20, and we hope that everyone who is able to, will show their support by donating a Toonie to help the hungry in our area.

Even if you have no school-aged children at home, why not just drop by your nearest school and donate to their programme.

Can you help us, please....

Eden Community Food Bank is in need of about 400 square feet of 'back room' storage space. During the busy

holiday periods, we receive such an abundance of canned goods, that we do not have the space in our food bank property to store it all.

The space must be climate controlled so that the product does not freeze or get overheated. Proximity to the food bank is a consideration, and the closer, the better.

If any of our readers can help, please contact Donna Behmer at 905-785-3651, or write to her at donna.behmer@edenfoodbank.org

End of Summer BBQ...

We held our first ever Community BBQ on September 1, from 11 am to 3 pm. The event was meant to be a celebration of the end of summer and a free, fun event for our clients and families. As well, the general public was invited making it a community event. We also raised a little money to cover the cost of the event, with any excess going to the food bank.

It was a beautiful day, and almost 200 people attended over the course of the afternoon. We had many free games (with prizes) for the children, a large bouncing castle (courtesy Brenda Harrison), face painting and balloon animals thanks to our clowns Dumpling and Dilly-Dally. There was food and pop as well as free popcorn courtesy Councillor Pat Saito who also donated a large road sign advertising the event.

Over 20 volunteers ran the games, handed out popcorn, and BBQ'd for us. The Mississauga News and Rogers Community Cable attended and provided media coverage for us.

All in all, it proved to be a marvelous success, particularly for the children—one of whom was heard to remark at the end of the day that "it was the best day of my life". The pictures on Page 4 speak for themselves!

Many thanks to all who helped plan and staff the event. We could not have done it without you. Next year's event will be better now that we have the first one under our belts. See you then, if not sooner.

Ontario's "ROOF" plan..

"Rental Opportunity for Ontario Families" (ROOF) is Ontario's new \$185 million housing allowance programme. A "housing allowance" is a financial supplement given directly to a tenant to help pay the rent.

Under "ROOF", eligible families will receive up to \$100 per month, starting in January 2008. It is anticipated that ROOF will provide assistance for approximately 27,000 families in Ontario, and first payments will be made to qualified applicants in January 2008.

ROOF is a 5-year programme, but there is one time entry window. In order to receive the allowance, individuals must complete and submit the application form by November 15 2007. Applications will not be accepted after this date, and individuals will not have another opportunity to enroll in the programme.

There is a list of 9 criteria which applicants MUST meet, and forms to complete. President Bill has sent off for these forms and brochures, so take a look for them next time you are in the Food Bank.

Criteria include the following:

Be a resident of Ontario and have status in Canada,

Have one or more dependent children under 18 yrs of age, or an adult disabled dependent, as of Jan 1 2007,

Have filed a 2006 tax return,

Have a Family Earned income of at least \$5,000 and adjusted family net income below \$20,000,

Are not currently receiving any rent subsidy or any social assistance,

Do not own a home ,

etc.

Pick up more information from the Food Bank, or if you have a computer, go to www.gov.on.ca and put "ROOF" in the search box.

Tony's Corner.....



In our last issue, Tony gave us some insight into diets and heart problems. This time, he will give us some surprising facts about canned food, and how they fit into healthful eating.

Once the cans containing food are sealed and heat processed, the food maintains its high eating quality for more than two years, and is safe to eat as long as the container is not damaged in any way.

Canned food retains its safety and nutritional value for well over 2 years, but it may have some variation in quality, such as a change in colour or texture. Canning is a high heat process which renders the food commercially sterile. So, food safety is not an issue in products kept on the shelf for long periods of time. In fact, canned food has an almost indefinite shelf life at moderate temperature (75°F and below).

Some canned food as old as 100 years has been found on sunken ships, and is still microbiologically safe!! I don't recommend keeping canned food for 100 years, but if the can is intact, the food is probably edible. External rust and dents do not affect the contents as long as the can does not leak. On the other hand, if a can is leaking, or if the ends are bulging, the food should not be used.

Most canned fruits and vegetables contain no artificial preservatives. They are picked and packed at the peak of ripeness, cooked quickly at high temperatures, and sterilized in steel cans to keep nutrients in, and impurities out.

Most commercial canneries are located just a few miles from the fields, ensuring that canned food is packed at the peak of freshness. Canneries use only top quality ingredients which are picked, prepared and canned within hours.

Almost all canned vegetables and fruits are fat-free.

Based on epidemiological studies, canned carrots as part of an overall healthful diet, have the potential to reduce the risk of cancer. Canned tomatoes are higher in lycopene than their fresh counterparts. Lycopene appears to be effective in helping to reduce the risk of cancer - in fact, it might be even more effective when consumed after tomatoes are canned or cooked.

Canned foods only need to be warmed through before serving, since the food has already been cooked in the can.

Canned apricots, carrots, peaches, pumpkin, spinach and yams are all high in carotenes, which are antioxidants which provide protection for the cells of the body. Beans also have antioxidants—the darker the colour, the more antioxidants they have. Canned beans of all kinds (black, red, butter, garbanzo etc.) are high in fibre and rich in protein, and can be used to add flavour, colour and texture to meatless meals ranging from salads to casseroles.

Join me in eating canned food — it is nutritious, tasty and fresh!!

A Christmas Carol....

Eden Community Food Bank, in collaboration with CBC Radio, is proud to present a dramatic reading of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" on Sunday, November 25 2007 beginning at 7:30pm at Eden United Church.

A first for the Meadowvale area, this fundraising event will be a great kick-off to the Christmas season.

Readers will include Jim Grieve (Director of the Peel District School Board), Michael Bator (former Director of the Dufferin Peel Catholic School Board), talk show host Sharon Caddy, teacher/poet Michelle Muir and others. Seasonal songs will augment the programme, performed by local choirs and musicians.

Tickets cost \$20, and will be available from October 25 by calling 905-542-9545, or at the Eden United Church between 3pm and 7pm, on November 12 to 15 and 19 to 23, or at the door on the night (If there are any left by then!!)

Pictures from the BBQ...

Take a look at these pictures, and see if you recognize anyone.



It got quite busy from time to time!



The bouncy castle kept the kids out of Mom and Dad's hair for a while.



A pair of the "Old Folks" managed to find somewhere in the shade where they could take the weight off their feet for a moment, and chat with an animal. If the animal in question could drop me a line and tell me what you were all talking about, I would appreciate it!!



Some of the adults managed to get into the fun as well.



Dilly Dally looks on as Dumpling applies body paint to one of the older children.

As you can see, our BBQ drew a lot of attention, and everyone seemed to have a good time.

We plan to do this again next year, and if you want to help out in any way, please contact any of the committee with your ideas. We can always use a fresh idea and another pair of willing hands.

Your Committee.....

The committee for the present year comprises:

Executive:

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

Appointed Committee Chairs:

- Advocacy, Open
- Fundraising, Open
- Marketing, Ron Saito
- FoodPath Rep, Dave Pratt
- Eden United Rep, Dave Pratt

Just think about it...

From Andy Warhol...

"They always say that time changes things, but actually, YOU have to change them yourself."

From 'Dr. Phil'...

"You will never stand taller than when you stoop to help a child in need".

One from Henny Youngman...

"I read about the evils of drinking, so I gave up reading"

And from my favourite, Oscar Wilde...

"If one hears bad music, it is one's duty to drown it out with good conversation."

From Homer (the Greek)...

"The charity that is a trifle to us can be precious to others". How true!!

Smile with me.....

I was going to buy a copy of *The Power of Positive Thinking*, and then I thought: What the hell good would that do?"

I fear that one day I'll meet God, He'll sneeze, and I won't know what to say.

After twelve years of therapy, my psychiatrist said something that brought tears to my eyes. He said, "No hablo ingles".

The final word.....

Well, that's another newsletter put to bed. The usual recipe column had to be taken out this issue to make room for Charles Dickens. It will reappear next time. I would just like to thank the various contributors to this issue, including Bill Bates, Donna Behmer, Tony Hill, Oscar Wilde, and Homer.

- 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 Community Food Bank.