

EDEN COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

NEWSLETTER

October 14 2008

Another message from on high!!



Even as I write this article, Summer has officially ended. It will remain in peoples' minds as the wettest summer on record for us. However, at Eden Community Food Bank, we can breathe a sigh of relief that we "weathered" what had promised to be a lean summer in terms of food on our shelves. Thanks to a couple of timely food drives, large amounts of fresh produce from the Square One Farmers' Market, and judicious food purchasing, we made it through.

Our new off-site storage facility is working really well, and thanks to the Karen Shank Foundation, we now have a large commercial freezer to match our fridge, allowing us to store more frozen meats.

Changes continue to happen at Foodpath with the advent of their new "Hub and spoke" concept. As a consequence, Eden will be taking on a new postal code, L5L, effective on October 1 2008. We do not expect any major changes to our operations as a result of this, other than we will be looking for more volunteers for our opening times.

Our Hunger Awareness initiative is now over for 2008 and it was our most successful ever, raising awareness in the community as well as over \$23,000 in funds. Many thanks to all of our volunteers and participants who worked so hard to make it such a success.

We held our end-of-summer BBQ on August 23rd, and roughly 100 clients enjoyed a beautiful day of fun, games and food. The weather cooperated and the children were treated to many games, prizes, face painting, and a bouncy castle. See the back page for pictures.

Looking ahead, this fall we are gearing up for our annual Tooney Tuesday programme in the schools, on November 18th. This year's event will be the biggest ever, particularly with new schools potentially coming on board with the expansion into L5L. Donna Behmer is already working hard with the school boards to promote this event.

As we move into fall, we will be holding another strategic session on November 29th, to help in planning our future direction. In particular, we will be looking at how we can best serve our clients and put our hard-won fundraising dollars to work for them. All interested parties are encouraged to come to this all day session from 9 am to 4 pm (or part thereof), at Patti's Good Food, 2500 Meadowpine Boulevard.

I should also mention that we are planning our second annual Dickens Christmas reading, slated for 7pm on Sunday, November 30th at Eden United. It will be hard to top last year's event, but we will do our very best.

That wraps up my thoughts for this issue, hopefully leaving space for articles bumped from the previous newsletter.

Here We Grow Again.....

Our client base, and the number of clients served every month, seems to be on a continuing upward trend. Of course, as with any trend, there are 'blips' in the graph, but in general, we always seem to be helping more people than ever. With the economy going the way it is, I doubt that we are going to see this change in a positive sense in the foreseeable future.

Here are the numbers for the past three months. (September statistics were not available at the time of publishing this issue).

People served	June '08	July '08	Aug '08
Adults	461	413	380
Children	329	294	255
Babies	34	25	20
Total people	824	732	655
Families	250	222	212
New Families	21	13	24

We can expect these numbers to take another jump any time now, with the addition of another postal code, L5L, to our mandate.

Within Peel as a whole, recently published statistics show that 46% of clients are children, 57% were born outside Canada, 82% of client's income is spent on rent and 12% of children go hungry at least once a week. That number rises to 27% for adults. The median amount of money left over in client families, after rent has been paid, is \$212 per month, to cover everything including food, clothing, transportation, health care, etc.

I challenge you, our readers, to set aside \$212 on November 1st and only use that money for everything for the entire month. Could you do it?

More from Hunger Awareness Day

In our last issue, we printed a story which was told by one of our clients at the Hunger Awareness Day breakfast. I promised another one, space permitting, in this issue, so here it is. Those of you who were at that meeting will recall shedding a tear (or two) as you listened.

"I was born and raised in Mississauga, living with my Mom, Dad and sister. From the out-

side, we appeared the perfect family. However, my life was a nightmare which no-one could have imagined. My home was a house: a cold, ugly, violent and empty space in which I feared for my life some nights. My parents were both struggling alcoholics with drug addictions, and my sister was trying to take care of me. Some nights, we would hide in a closet and share the remains of a meal days old.

My Dad spent some time in jail after attacking my Mom, and I lost contact with him. My Mom lost her job, and soon after that my Grandfather died, sending Mom into a tail spin causing her to drink away her savings. With no more money left, and unable to feed her habit, she suffered two seizures from alcohol withdrawal.

I began working after I turned 13, in order to keep the house we were living in. By 15, I was exhausted and alone in a world with so many unanswered questions. I was hungry for my life, a childhood I had never experienced, and the parents I wish I had. By the time I was 16, I realized I would no longer be able to put up with the neglect and misfortunes for which my Mom had continuously held me responsible.

I chose to be brave (perhaps even stupid), and called my Dad to ask if he would take my sister and me in with him. He agreed. Not knowing what to expect, my sister and I promised each other never to give up.

I had overcome so many obstacles. My drive, determination and desire to live had gotten me this far, so I thought I was finally in the clear. After moving in with Dad, I had to change schools, and this marked a new beginning in my life, and a change which would affect my future. I was elected Prime Minister of Student Council for 2 consecutive years.

Not long after I moved in with Dad, things returned to the way they were before. Sad to say, Dad turned out to be the same bitter, cold person he used to be. However, he seemed even more frustrated with everything.

The summer going into grade 12, my Nana passed away. She was the one person in my life who had brought me joy and made me feel like I mattered. She was the one who filled my heart, and she is why I never quite starved.

Unfortunately, things didn't work out with my father, and we were forced to move yet again. Although it might seem simple, it was the hardest

thing we had ever done. We were forced to take whatever we could in just one night of moving. We found a place not far from here. It was a safe place—a place we could finally call home. We had little money, and no food. I was working full time while balancing university level courses, and on top of that, knee surgery had taken its toll on me.

So, out of desperation, I decided to come to this foodbank. With a warm welcome from Donna and the volunteers at the foodbank, I somehow knew that everything would be okay.

Each one of you in front of me is staring at the face of hunger. I survived because I refused to give up. Surviving is the choice I followed without any hesitation, regret or fear. With your help and support, I was able to grow into the person I am today. You helped fill my soul, my stomach, and the shelves of my house. For all that, I would like to thank you.

I am now just days away from completing high school. Sooner than I could ever have imagined, I will be fulfilling my dreams of becoming a nurse. In September, I will be attending Ryerson University, and I can't wait. If there is any one thing that I would like each of you to take with you today, it is the power of change that one individual can make in someone's life. You can be the change, and together we can end hunger." "

Tony's Corner - Calcium.....

Maintaining healthy bones is a must, and calcium is key to this. However, keeping your bones strong depends more on preventing the loss of calcium from your body than on boosting your calcium intake.

Some cultures consume little or no dairy products and typically get fewer than 500mg of calcium per day. (Physicians in N. America generally recommend that adolescents, especially girls, consume 1,300mg and post-menopausal women consume 1,200mg of calcium daily.) Nevertheless, these people generally have low rates of osteoporosis. Many scientists believe that exercise and other factors have more to do with osteoporosis than calcium intake does.

In the West, many people avoid milk because it contains saturated fat, cholesterol, allergenic proteins, lactose sugars etc. Milk has also been linked, in some instances, to juvenile diabetes and other serious conditions, but happily, there are other good sources of calcium.

A number of factors affect calcium loss from the body, such as:

- Diets high in protein cause more calcium to be lost through the urine. Protein from animal products cause more calcium loss than proteins from plants, which is one reason why vegetarians tend to have stronger bones than meat-eaters.
- Diets high in salt increase calcium loss through the urine.
- Caffeine increases the rate at which calcium is lost.
- Smoking increases calcium loss from the body.

In the next issue, we will take a look at factors which INCREASE bone building in the body, and why all this is important.

Proceeds from Hunger Awareness

The final tally for proceeds from our Hunger Awareness programme keeps getting updated as more proceeds come in. We had two hugely successful tag days at the LCBO store. Meadowvale brought in \$1969.78, and Heartland generated \$1254.96. We also garnered over 1880kg of food.

Trios College held an international food fair, and generated the most money they have ever raised in a single fundraising event. They presented us with a cheque for \$500. (See picture on back page)

The total for Hunger Awareness 2008 now stands at a wonderful \$23,282.07. Thank you to all the contributors, volunteers and supporters for a wonderful job, well done.

Thanks to Torchfire.....

The expansion to our new storage facility, most generously donated by Torchfire Canada, was effected in much less time than anticipated, and the word from Maria Glidden (our Operations Supervisor) is the "we love our new storage site. It is so accessible, friendly and safe". Believe it or not, it only took five people in 5 cars, under two hours, to complete the move of 120 cases of food to the outside facility.

Thanks to some great muscle-power from students and teachers at Mount Carmel, we did a mammoth spring cleaning job. And what a great job it was, cleaning every cupboard in the Foodbank. And timely, too, since shortly thereafter, we had a surprise visit from Peel Health. We passed our inspection with flying colours, and we now

proudly display our "Green Card" on the food-bank door, for all to see.

Bits and Pieces from Donna.....

Our cupboards at Eden are looking fairly sparse as of August, and we have been buying items such as cereal, oatmeal and canned veggies. We like to have our storage areas empty by mid-October every year, since this ensures that our stock has been rotated at least once per year. It also makes room for the Christmas donations.

Our new freezer has been delivered and installed, just in time to receive two large cases of whole chickens from Foodpath. We also hope to be seeing an increase in pork products from the CAFB.

Our 4th annual Toonie Tuesday campaign to raise funds for the Eden Community Food Bank will be held Tuesday November 18, 2008. Once again both school boards have agreed to join forces to participate in this local endeavor. One Toonie on Toonie Tuesday will make a huge difference in the lives of those we serve.

Mr. Albert Giovannini of St. Faustina Elementary school had a busy summer in his garden. His garden consisted of a variety of vegetables and he donated much of it to the Eden Community Food Bank. Thank you to all those who participated.



Eden Food Bank received a cheque from the Meadowvale Rotary Club for \$500.00. The cheque was presented at Sue McFadden's ward 10 Barbeque held on Sunday September 28th.

The Rona Store at Winston Churchill and Eglinton planned a food/funds drive for us. They also planned a barbeque on Friday October 3rd. If a customer brings in a donation for the food bank they will receive a 5% discount on their pur-

chases.

We will have a report on this event in the next newsletter.

Below, just a few of the smiles at Trios College CSW class, presenting cheque to Donna:- Lynette Bissessar-Kalladeen, Ruta Kairys, Sudesh Sethi, Preetma Verraich, Musharif (Faiza) Iqbal, Joseph Enwerem and Margaret Perry.



The ECFB BBQ was enjoyed by everyone, and the weather was great....



Well, I seem to have run out of space yet again. Check out our website for more information on our people and our current needs list. The web address is on our front page, and the website is worth a moment of your time.

So, here's to the next time!!

Note: The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Eden Community Food Bank