



Annual Report 2012

PARTNERSHIP WEST FOOD BANK
REPORT TO THE
COMMUNITY
for the Year 2012

HUNGER IN ONTARIO

The Ontario Association of Food Banks (the OAFB) recently reported that the number of Ontarians assisted by Food Banks has increased from 374,000 in 2008 to almost 412,000 in March 2012. A disturbing fact is that approximately 39% of those assisted were children. In Burlington the number of people assisted, annually, by Partnership West Food Bank since 2008 has risen by 63% from 4,977 to 8,126. The increase in 2012 over 2011 was 13%. There is no compelling reason to believe that, in the foreseeable future, these unfortunate trends will stabilize, or reverse. Economic growth in Canada and Ontario is forecast to be quite modest and governments at all levels wrestle with deficits which will eventually result in lower spending and higher taxes. While most of us will get by, or even prosper, during this period of societal and economic adjustment, there will be those who will need help. A quote from the OAFB report *The Faces of Hunger* "We consistently find that the stereotypical image many people hold of what a typical food bank user looks like is very ill-informed. The truth is that those accessing our food banks are most often hard working people, young families, or those who encountered unforeseeable situations that require a helping hand to get them back on their feet"

Children are important beneficiaries of food banks. They deserve our unquestionable support. Beyond the basic value that no child should go hungry, are the devastating societal impacts. The relationship between hunger and poor diet, with low scholastic achievement and poor health, for children, is well known.

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Our Board is very conscious that we are servants of a caring community. We are a channel of outreach with a responsibility to serve both those who receive, and also those who give. At Partnership West we are continually heartened by the response of the community of Burlington to those in need of food. The response comes from every part of the community, from organizations large and small, individuals, churches, schools, service clubs, social and sports clubs, all of whom contribute generously.

With such wide spread support it is not possible to thank all by name but we especially appreciate long-term consistent donors such as Old Timers Hockey, Cumis Group of Companies and Tim Horton's Smile Cookie Campaign.

During the year there are two major community food drives, with one at Easter and the other at Thanksgiving. These food drives are organized and promoted by Burlington Food Share, a long standing partnership between us and the Salvation Army with donations of food being facilitated with the cooperation of local grocery stores and city Fire Stations.

We are also the recipients, along with our friends at the Salvation Army food bank, the Carpenter Hospice and Halton Women's Place, of Burlington's biggest food drive which is The Annual Gift of Giving Back Community Food Drive. This event is organized by Burlington Eagles Youth Hockey Club along with their friends, the Burlington Barracudas Girls Hockey Club, and in 2012, the students and staff at Notre Dame High School.

In March 2012, in Ontario, 160,000 children depended on food banks for food. It is a basic value of any community to make sure children have food available. The Burlington Eagles Youth Hockey Club event is an excellent example of children and youth working hard to provide food for other youth and children and others in need in the community. It is also very encouraging and an excellent example for all of us.

We also give special thanks to the people who consistently drop off cheques that might be for a small amount of money but always with a large amount of caring. We also want to recognize young people who come in with their mom or dad

with a trunk full of food that they asked their friends to bring to their birthday party instead of birthday presents.

Last but by no means least, we would like to take this opportunity to thank our staff and the volunteers who serve so faithfully in the many tasks needed to keep our operation functioning. The help from students from Notre Dame High School who have sorted food and stocked boxes at Thanksgiving, Easter and Christmas for many years is very much appreciated.

WHAT WE DO

Our mission is to serve the needs of the community of Burlington by providing emergency food to residents in need in Burlington and to co-ordinate food and financial donations from local churches, organizations and individuals. We are located on Plains Road near Maple Avenue and we are open every Monday to Thursday and Saturday from 9:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. We are a member of the Ontario Association of Food Banks (OAFB) and we operate our organization in accordance with the OAFB'S Standards of Operations, Client Policies and Best Practices. We are also a member of the Canadian Association of Food Banks. More information is available on our website.

As a result of the community of Burlington's generosity we have been able not only to respond to the ever growing numbers of people needing help, but also to increase both the amount and the nutritional value of the food supplied. By using the cash resources that have been generously donated, we have been able to acquire and increase the amount of fresh food available to our clients. Fresh and perishable food such as beef, chicken, milk, cheese, bread, margarine, eggs, fruit and vegetables.

We have recognized that mothers need to have available snacks for their children to take to school. By using the funds received from Tim Horton's Smile Cookie Campaign, we been able to continue to supplement the food supplied to families with school age children, with a bag containing specific items required for school snacks and lunches. Over 2,200 snack packs have been provided since we started the program in late 2011.

We receive support from all areas of Burlington and in response we have been started a program to stock food cupboards in various locations in Burlington and have helped support Community Dinners and lunches held by churches and other organizations in Burlington.

We are currently working on a project together with St Christopher's Anglican Church to extend our service to the community of Burlington by opening a satellite food bank in a more accessible location. We had hoped that operation would be in place by this time. However, as volunteers, our enthusiasm at times exceeds our understanding of the problems that need to be overcome. We, together with our friends at St. Christopher's, are overcoming the problems and expect the operation to be up and running by late summer.

We are proud of our operation and the many people in our organization who work hard and are committed to ensure that the resources given to us are used wisely, fairly and efficiently and that we serve all in our local community in need of food. We ask for your continuing support, as we receive no government money. We pledge to continue using the resources the community provides to serve the needs of the community effectively. We live in one of the best communities in Ontario. Help us to be the best food bank in Ontario and respond to the increasing needs of our fellow residents.

On behalf of the Board of Directors,

David Jack, Chair